

A UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME IN TAIWAN: THE PUBLIC PERCEPTION IN TIMES
OF CRISIS

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Abstract

The idea of sending people an amount of money without strings attached has been drawing public attention worldwide. Concerning the impacts of unexpected crises, automation and Artificial Intelligence on unemployment, and the increasing economic disparity trend, proponents of Universal Basic Income (UBI) argued that it could be a catalysis for stagnated economies and the wellbeing of humans.

However, there have been many critiques. The most controversial debates encompass the impacts of tax reform for the existing systems of the countries, the influence of the domestic employment rate, the social security problems caused by unemployment rates and poverty, and social injustice.

Whereas UBI may stimulate the money supply in circulation, opponents viewed the UBI-related policies should be a one-off stimulus package instead of an assistance program when facing a crisis. Yet, with only a handful of scholarly research on the public attitude toward UBI, the political and financial viability in Taiwan is limited.

The research is aiming to explore the correlation between the public attitude toward UBI and the four variables: political affiliation, socioeconomic status, costs of implementing UBI, and the crises.

This research has four significant findings. First of all, the data of 205 respondents shows that political affiliation plays a significant role in respondents' preference toward policies in Taiwan, including the UBI policy. Secondly, the self-perceived socioeconomic status does not correlate with the respondents' perceptions of UBI. Thirdly, the tax levels in

Taiwan have no statistically significant correlation to the perception of UBI. Lastly, how respondents perceive the crises and the government's role in dealing with crises have significantly correlated with the perception of UBI in Taiwan.

Apart from the findings above, the research also discovered potential concerns if the UBI were to be implemented in Taiwan.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

A policy of "free money for everyone" seems to be a bizarre and utopian concept that the public would be skeptical about because it is intuitive that there is no such thing as free lunch. This idea is known as Universal Basic Income (UBI), an amount of money paid regularly by the government to every citizen with no conditions in a given country, province, or city. The spirit and tradition of UBI did not come out of nowhere. It can be traced all the way back to 500 years ago. A similar notion has been discussing since the 1510s when Thomas More depicted a perfect state of paradise without poverty and private ownership in his remarkable work *Utopia*.¹ In this philosophical story, Raphael Nonsenso, a Portuguese traveler, criticizes the method of punishing thieves to death is neither just nor effective to eliminate people from stealing food if it is the only means for them to survive. As an incentive, capital punishment does not deter the starving people from stealing food for remaining their safety and lives. Instead of executing such a severe deterrent, Thomas More illustrated a preliminary notion of guaranteed minimum income, which provides everyone the necessary means of livelihood.

¹ P. Van Parijs and Y. Vanderborght, *Basic Income: A Radical Proposal for a Free Society and a Sane Economy* (Harvard University Press, 2017).

In the 18th century, after Thomas More suggested the preliminary thought of public assistance, Thomas Paine, by then was an activist for the American Revolution, argued in his work, *Agrarian Justice*, that "in its natural uncultivated state was, and ever would have continued to be, the common property of the human race."² He believed that the right to natural resources and land is originated from every individual's birthright, and therefore, private land ownership was deprived of non-owners of their natural inheritance. He proposed a "grand rent" that every person would receive a one-time payment of 15 pounds when they turned 21; People who are older than 50 or disabled people would be given 10 pounds annually for their rest of life.³

In recent years this counterintuitive idea has gone viral worldwide. Up until 2020, more than 20 UBI-like pilot experiments have been tested worldwide.⁴ Yet, only a handful of them meet all characteristics of an ideal UBI defined by Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN)⁵

Defining UBI as "a periodic cash payment unconditionally delivered to all on an individual basis, without means-test or work requirement.", BIEN gives five features that most of the proponents have described in similar perspectives. First, regarding the social

² Thomas Paine, *Thomas Paine. Major Works: Common Sense/the American Crisis/the Rights of Man/the Age of Reason/Agrarian Justice* (Lulu. com, 2017).

³ Lei Delsen, "Unconditional Basic Income and Welfare State Reform in Representative Democracies," in *Empirical Research on an Unconditional Basic Income in Europe. Contributions to Economics* (Springer, Cham, 2019).

⁴ Ugo Gentilini et al., *Exploring Universal Basic Income: A Guide to Navigating Concepts, Evidence, and Practices* (The World Bank, 2019).

⁵ Basic Income Earth Network, "About Basic Income," accessed May 10, 2020. <https://basicincome.org/basic-income/>.

security net, universality means everyone is covered. That is, the coverage of UBI should include every individual who is the legal resident in any given territory regardless of race, gender, and religion. Yet, the notion of coverage is ambiguous. Taking health insurance and social assistance as two distinct programs of security net as examples to explain. Residents covered by health insurance is guaranteed to provide necessary help and assistance when needed, while for social assistance, coverage is usually considered as transferring cash or voucher.⁶ For UBI, everyone covered is both benefited from receiving the transfer and guaranteed by the government. Furthermore, universality solves the mistakes in targeting. With no qualification criteria, UBI could avoid inclusion and exclusion errors that have been criticized for the needed-based design program.⁷ As UBI is designed for all citizens, no one would be ignored, and no free-rider would benefit more than the others. Also, universality could eliminate societal stigmas influencing recipients. A study from Europe shows that shame is understood as a key factor behind the flawed social assistance, causing the existing system inefficient.⁸ Additionally, the transaction costs would be lowered by adjusting targeted people to everyone. Testing and applying costs would not be necessary.

Second, a UBI should be paid on an individual basis instead of household status.

⁶ Margaret Grosh Ugo Gentilini, and Michal Rutkowski, "Understanding Coverage: What Does Universal Social Protection Really Mean?," 2020, no. May 15 (2019), <https://oecd-development-matters.org/2019/01/28/understanding-coverage-what-does-universal-social-protection-really-mean/>.

⁷ Martin Ravallion, "Guaranteed Employment or Guaranteed Income?," *World Development* 115 (2019), <https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/Guaranteed-employment-or-guaranteed-income.pdf>.

⁸ Eurofound, "Access to Social Benefits: Reducing Non-Take-Up," (2015), https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef1536en.pdf.

Sending a UBI individually has two advantages that may be the answer to several puzzles within the existing system. The family condition, household status, and marriage would not stop every adult from receiving UBI. Therefore, no household and individual would be discriminated against. Further, some social protection programs are not regarded with the family size because it is both difficult and costly to track household member. By utilizing the identification system, the process of tracking could be simplified.⁹

Third, Guy Standing suggested that income condition, spending condition, and behavioral condition are three aspects of unconditionality, which is also one of the UBI features generally agreed by the proponents.¹⁰ Income condition means that there is no need for the recipients to provide any document proving his financial state. They have full control over the UBI spending. That is, recipients can completely decide where, when, and what the UBI might be spent on. The UBI should be paid with no strings attached associated with taking jobs, such as requiring them to apply for jobs or job training, in order to qualify for any requirement. Restricting recipients to behave in certain ways is considered contradicting the aspect of the behavioral condition.

Fourth, being paid to people monthly or annually is commonly suggested for the UBI interval though it could be more frequent or less. Periodicity provides economic and financial

⁹ Ugo Gentilini, "Ntering the City Emerging Evidence and Practices with Safety Nets in Urban Areas," *Social Protection and Labor Discussion Paper 1504* (2015), accessed 2020, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/656081467980515244/pdf/98253-NWP-P148675-Box391506B-PUBLIC-1504.pdf>.

¹⁰ G. Standing, *Basic Income: And How We Can Make It Happen* (Penguin Books Limited, 2017).

security, which is a curial part of people's living as they correspond to stable and foreseeable income flow. It allows the recipients to manage their financial statement in advance.

Fifth, a UBI should be paid in a medium of change with high liquidity that could be accepted at a national or international level. Cash transfer allows people who receive UBI to spend on what they wish and need. Economists argue that cash transfer could maximize the utility of satisfaction.¹¹ Compared to the voucher, food stamp, and in-kind benefits, such as food and service, cash transfer is a more effective and simple way to help the targeted people because it gives back the autonomy of what they need.

The concept of UBI cuts across international borders. A European-wide survey conducted by European Social Survey (ESS) shows that there are only a few people among 32,000 European individuals strongly against UBI.¹² In the United States, UBI supporters cover the political spectrum both on the left to the right. Proponents who are in favor of it comprise the conservatives and liberals all over the world. For example, Freedom Dividend, a similar policy of giving every American adult over the age of 18 \$1,000 a month, was the centerpiece of Andrew Yang's platform while he was running the 2020 presidential election.¹³

There are three difficulties among the arguments against UBI have been challenging by

¹¹ Uwe E. Reinhardt, "Provide Cash, or Benefits in Kind?," The New York Times accessed May 16, 2020. <https://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/01/21/provide-cash-or-benefits-in-kind/>.

¹² Steve Coulter, "The Politics of Universal Basic Income (Ubi)," New European Trade Unions Forum, accessed May 16, 2020. https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/netuf/2018/03/07/the-politics-of-universal-basic-income-ubi/#_ftn1.

¹³ "The Freedom Dividend," Yang2020, accessed May 16, 2020. <https://www.yang2020.com/policies/the-freedom-dividend/>.

opponents. Firstly, financial feasibility is the most contentious part of the critiques. Although UBI appears to be an instrument for lowering inequality on paper, financing the budget would be challenging in practice. Secondly, getting money for nothing would encourage laziness and would enlarge unemployment rates. It would end up with negative impacts on the labor market. Finally, UBI still creates winners and losers nevertheless it is universal and seemingly beneficial for all. What it would take to deliver UBI in democratic countries, it considerably depends on the constituency to produce demands in order to pass and implement policy.

Motivation

As an emerging political concept, UBI is deemed to be an alternative instrument of the mainstream for alleviating social and economic disparity by many experts in comprehensive fields. But, it's still new in Taiwan. Assessment is the first step of legislation. Without comprehending the preference of constituency and the voter's thoughts, a more efficient and effective bill could not be drafted, and a viable version of any policy could never become law.

Research Purpose

The purpose of the study is to investigate the public perception toward the feasibility of UBI-related policy, and how unexpected crisis changes it in Taiwan. Furthermore, the study focuses on exploring the gap between the policymakers' perspective and public perception

toward UBI.

Research Questions

1. What is the correlation between the political affiliation and the public's attitude toward UBI in Taiwan?
2. How does different socioeconomic status affect the level of support for UBI-related policy in Taiwan?
3. What is the correlation between costs of implementing a UBI policy and the Taiwanese support for it?
4. How are crises affecting the public perception toward UBI?

Contribution

As an emerging political concept, UBI is deemed to be an alternative instrument for alleviating social and economic disparity by many experts in comprehensive fields. Yet, without comprehending the constituency and the voter's preference, a more viable bill could hardly be drafted, and a bill could never become law.

Limits

It may be difficult to provide a result analyzed from enough population. Therefore, it can only give a broad picture, and may not display all the viewpoint from every individual.

Delimits

The questionnaire is designed as an online bilingual version of English and Chinese, and the major respondents of it are expected to be Taiwanese who have access and ability to answer the questionnaire. This study will only analyze the valid data collected from the respondents.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Taiwanese Attitude Toward Government

During the 1960s to 1990s, Taiwan has been described as an economic miracle regarding economic growth and successful democratization in Asia. Both economic and social success led Taiwan to be one of the industrialized countries in Asia along with Hong Kong, Singapore, and South Korea, together known as the Four Asian Tigers. After gaining great economic achievement, Taiwan has been focused by many political scientists and academics for its political shifts.¹⁴ After the outdated Taiwanese authoritarianist government gave more room for citizens to participate in voting and political affairs, it has allowed more citizens to voice their demands by the democratic process.¹⁵ With more stable political and economic circumstances, active civil society and energetic media have been able to engage in comprehensive issues, such as economic growth and job opportunity, energy and renewable power policy, the environment, social welfare, and several other similar topics.

In democratic countries, both public opinion and the government are mutually crucial to each other. Harwood L. Childs concluded V. O. Key's classic work and described "if democracy is to work successfully there must be a clear understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of the mass public on the one hand, and the political leaders and activists

¹⁴ Thomas B Gold, *State and Society in the Taiwan Miracle* (ME Sharpe, 1986).

¹⁵ S. Tsang, *The Vitality of Taiwan: Politics, Economics, Society and Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

on the other."¹⁶ The public opinion matters as one of the most important roles for them is to keep tabs on the politicians and civil servants and hold the government accountable.

One way to measure the public's view in specific is through the public opinion poll. To understand how the Taiwan public sees the government in general, it is significant to know how the voters make decisions in terms of voting and what factors drive them toward one direction from the other. Three main factors that could influence voters' decisions are party loyalty, issues involved, and characteristics of the candidates. In Taiwan, the voting decision is also being influenced by national identity.¹⁷

Other than the characteristics of the candidate, the voting decision in Taiwan is associated with the other three factors because of the China-Taiwan relationship. Since the Taiwan government lifted the ban between China and Taiwan for Taiwanese with relatives in China to travel in 1987, the economic exchange and activities between two sides have skyrocketed. China has been one of the most significant trading partners. In 2018 the value of China-Taiwan trade was worth US\$150.5 billion.¹⁸ Ever since then, Taiwan has tied economic cooperation with China. The cross-strait trade has been the core of Taiwan speedy economic expansion. With the acceleration of Taiwan democratization and export-oriented foreign trade policy in the past decades, many constraints concerning civil exchanges with

¹⁶ Harwood L. Childs and V. O. Key, *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (1962), accessed 2020/06/19/, www.jstor.org/stable/2747361.

¹⁷ C.H. Achen and T.Y. Wang, *The Taiwan Voter* (University of Michigan Press, 2017).

¹⁸ "Cross-Strait Relations," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China (Taiwan), accessed June 20, 2020. https://www.taiwan.gov.tw/content_6.php.

China have been loosed. During the 1960s to 1990s, the total value of trade expanded almost five times until it remained moderate since the 1990s.¹⁹ China is also one of the most important investment partners, having closed investment and business connections. Between 1991 and the end of February 2019, approved investment in China reached 43,401 cases equaling US\$183.4 billion.²⁰

According to a survey of 1,562 Taiwan respondents conducted by Pew Research Center, those who are more in support of the incumbent Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) are more leaning to a diplomatic relationship with the White House than with Beijing. In contrast, followers of the Kuomintang (KMT), the opposition party of two big parties in Taiwan that ruled Taiwan for decades before Chen Shui-bian, the first DPP president who won the 2000 presidential election, are more in favor of a closer relationship with mainland China.²¹ Among those DPP supporters, roughly more than eight-in-ten are between the age of 18 to 49 said they would be supportive of the economic policies with the US, while only 30 to 50% of the KMT followers said would support closer economic tight with China are young people.

¹⁹ "General Inquiries About Trade and Investment Environment in Taiwan," Taipei Economic and Cultural Office Canada accessed June 20 2020. <https://web.archive.org/web/20111003053239/http://www.taiwanembassy.org/ca/ct.asp?xItem=92320&CtNo de=181&mp=77&xp1=>.

²⁰ "Economy," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China (Taiwan), accessed June 20 2020. https://www.taiwan.gov.tw/content_7.php.

²¹ Kat Devlin and Christine Huang, "In Taiwan, Views of Mainland China Mostly Negative," Pew Research Center accessed. <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2020/05/12/in-taiwan-views-of-mainland-china-mostly-negative/>.

Cathay Financial, one of the leading financial holding enterprises in Taiwan, carried out a survey of 12,857 people in 2019 demonstrated that 33.5% of the respondents viewed no difference for the economy comparing to the data in past six months, while 24.6% felt that it has grown slightly in contrast with 21.8 of respondents thought it has become slightly worse..²²

Similarly, Taiwan Consumer Confidence Index (CCI) Report produced by The Research Center for Taiwan Economic Development (RCTED), National Central University (NCU) echoes Cathay Financial's survey. CCI for January 2020 was marginally higher than a month earlier from 84.28 to 85.30 points. The number indicates that the public was slightly pessimistic about the economy and consumer price level even though it had grown. The public confidence index comprises six indicators including price level, prediction of the household status in six months, confidence for the domestic economy, job opportunity, confidence for the stock market, and purchase intention for durable goods.²³ The range of CCI points is between 0 to 200. Using 100 as the benchmark, the number of 0 to 99 means pessimism, and 101 to 200 shows optimism. However, because of the effects of Covid-19 starting at the beginning of 2020, CCI for May dropped 20.43 points from 4 months earlier to 64.87, the lowest number since the financial crisis in 2009 when it fell at 62.47.²⁴

²² "Guo Min Jing Jisin Sinsin Wungao," Cathay Financial Holding Co., accessed June 20, 2020. https://www.cathayholdings.com/holdings/information-centre/intro/gdp_news/gdp-news.

²³ The Research Center for Taiwan Economic Development (RCTED), *Taiwan Consumer Confidence Index (Cci) Report for January (2020)*, http://140.115.78.29/cci/cci_1090130.pdf.

²⁴ The Research Center for Taiwan Economic Development (RCTED), *Taiwan Consumer Confidence Index (Cci)*

The people's perception of the economy does not always reflect the real economic condition. Pew Research Center found that 87% of Dutch see their economic condition good despite real GDP per-capita increased just 2.2% over five years. Greece and South Africa both had similarly high levels of unemployment rate in 2016. Yet 45% of South Africans viewed the economy well, compared with just 2% of Greeks.²⁵

As mentioned, factors that shape public perception and decision for voting are associated with two distinct parties with different political ideologies and their policies on various issues in Taiwan. In other words, government policy could be indirectly influenced by the voters' preferences of ideologies. Howard Leichter concluded 4 main factors that could shape government policymaking.²⁶ First, situational factors are unpredictable or periodic events happening international or domestic. Second, structural factors related to relatively permanent political and economic features of states. Third, cultural factors include the political culture and the societal culture of states. Finally, the environmental factors are the occasions outside the state but would affect the decision of the government for policymaking.

Citizen's policy evaluation of issues influences voting behavior. Nevertheless, large portions of the electorate do not have a belief system that inherent to specific political

Report for May (2020), http://140.115.78.29/cci/cci_1090527.pdf.

²⁵ Drew Desilver, "People's Views of Their National Economies Don't Always Square with Data," Pew Research Center, accessed June 25, 2020. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/06/27/peoples-views-of-their-national-economies-dont-always-square-with-data/>.

²⁶ H.M. Leichter, *A Comparative Approach to Policy Analysis: Health Care Policy in Four Nations* (Cambridge University Press, 1979).

positions. Except for a handful of elites who have clear political preferences and consistent ideological knowledge, the mass public, neither conservatives nor liberal, do not reason ideologically concerning voting.²⁷

In Taiwan, the social welfare system and security net refer to six categories: social assistance and allowance, social insurance, welfare services, health and medical care, employment security, and housing justice and community building.²⁸ The Ministry of Interior manages the budgets for social welfare, whereas the local governments have room for the local policies.

Social welfare spending has been a controversial issue. How the central government budget and where the local government allocates the money could be one of the factors influencing voters' decisions. Yet, budgetary expansion rarely influences constituency in Taipei, Taichung, and Kaohsiung.²⁹ Tsai found that policies of social welfare, transportation, and environmental protection significantly shape voting behavior in three major cities in Taiwan. However, the spending appears to have no impact on supporting the incumbent government. By analyzing the policy orientation in Taiwan, Eric and Tsai found that citizens have reached a consensus of government spending on social security and tourism.³⁰ A large

²⁷ Philip E Converse, "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics (1964)," *Critical review* 18, no. 1-3 (2006).

²⁸ R.O.C. (Taiwan) Executive Yuan, *Guiding Principles for R.O.C. Centenary Social Welfare Policy* (2012).

²⁹ Chia-hung Tsai, "Incumbent Support: Data Analysis Using Bayesian Multilevel Models.," *Taiwan Journal of Applied Economics* 96 (2014), <http://readopac2.ncl.edu.tw/nclJournal/GetPDF?tid=A15005780&jid=09000123&eid=20df055ba2a161d715416c11fed94d69>.

³⁰ Eric Chen-Hua Yu and Chia-Hung Tsai, "Social Justice and Economic Development: Exploring Taiwanese Policy Orientations," *Review of Social Sciences* 5, no. 2 (2011), <http://www3.nccu.edu.tw/~tsaich/47105.pdf>.

portion of people who prefer the budgetary expansion on economic development is well-educated. Though the budget of economic development has been considering one of the essential issues the government should focus on, social justice and environmental protection are overlapping with it.

The Influence of Employment and Paid Work

One of the main criticisms of UBI that have been debated for decades is whether it would decrease people's incentives in paid work. Yet, due to the limited implementation of complete UBI pilots, the empirical evidence of the implications and data of a UBI for the outcomes is insufficient. Therefore, a possible way to investigate the impacts on employment and the public attitude toward it is to review the literature of previous pilot experiments.

A point of qualification needs to be mentioned in respect of the previous experiments. A large portion of previous experiments and tests labeled as "basic income" do not meet some of the characteristics defined above. In addition to the eligibility for family status, a series of experiments examined as a negative income tax (NIT) in the US and Canada during the 1960s to 1980s had income eligibility thresholds.³¹ The design of the threshold based on the idea of NIT, a tax scheme that government grants people a different amount of money based on their income level, initiated by Milton Friedman.³² The recipients of the basic income

³¹ Derek Hum and Wayne Simpson, "Economic Response to a Guaranteed Annual Income: Experience from Canada and the United States," *Journal of Labor Economics* 11, no. 1, Part 2 (1993).

³² M. Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom: Fortieth Anniversary Edition* (University of Chicago Press, 2009).

experiment tested from 2017 to 2018 in Finland were picked all unemployed before the experiment.³³ Similarly, the Ontario pilot in 2018 requires earning income eligibility to be eligible for taking part in the experiment.³⁴

The classical traditional economic theory assumes that additional unearned income would disincentivize the labor market as it would weaken the incentives of labor supply. An income-test condition with minimum time requirement for labor welfare, however, could have both positive and negative incentives. Atkinson argued that means test might stimulate the supply of the labor market by generating a positive incentive for workers to increase the work hours or discourage them to participate more in paid work in order to order to maintain their working minimum hours below the requirement.³⁵

The results of the Manitoba Basic Annual Income Experiment (Mincome) in Canada found a modest reduction in the number of hours worked. Coupled with the ambiguity of the experiment design, 1% reduction for men, 3% for wives, and 5% for unmarried women are not useful statistically.³⁶

³³ Olli Kangas et al., "The Basic Income Experiment 2017–2018 in Finland: Preliminary Results," accessed. http://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/161361/Report_The%20Basic%20Income%20Experiment%2020172018%20in%20Finland.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

³⁴ Charlie Young, "Realising Basic Income Experiments in the UK—a Typology and Toolkit of Basic Income Design and Delivery.," RSA Action and Research Centre, accessed June 20, 2020. <https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/pdfs/reports/realising-basic-income.pdf>.

³⁵ A.B. Atkinson, *Incomes and the Welfare State: Essays on Britain and Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 1995).

³⁶ Rebecca Linke, "Negative Income Tax, Explained," accessed June 23, 2020. <https://mitsloan.mit.edu/ideas-made-to-matter/negative-income-tax-explained>.

The Public Attitude on Financial Feasibility

Financing a UBI or relevant policies could be the most challenging part of all debate topics concerning delivering any guarantee income program. Before any UBI program can be introduced, it should be assessed for its both short-term financing possibility and the long-term impact on debt sustainability. The government, institutions, and financial and economic experts would also estimate the consistency of the new level of the budget balance. However, a scenario of executing it without considering the public perceptions in any democratic country would be problematic and irrational without a doubt.

The philosophical aim of UBI is to provide an equal benefit and right to all. Plus, in some countries, the proponents see it as a type of social protection and welfare program in essence. If UBI-related policies aim to provide all citizens with a decent living standard, the analysis of the effect should take account of different political ideologies, socioeconomic status, and education levels because the equal benefit might provoke conflicts.

The Americans' attitudes on UBI has been split. Ipsos Reid has demonstrated the public opinions about UBI by surveying 9,500 interviewers between age 18 to 64 among 12 countries.³⁷ In the US, nearly one-third of Americans agree that the government should pay all residents an amount of free and unconditional basic income (BI), and the same percentage of respondents oppose it.

³⁷ Mike Colledge and Chris Martyn, "Public Perspectives: Universal Basic Income," Ipsos, accessed June 25, 2020. <https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/knowledge/society/public-perspectives-universal-basic-income-2017-06>.

Gallup found similar results by a survey about the attitude on the potential threats for job displacement with regard to artificial intelligence (AI).³⁸ With a random sample of 3,297 U.S. adults, the result shows that overall, 48% of Americans are supportive of a UBI as a way to help Americans whose jobs would be impacted because of AI; 52% do not support it. It could explain the reason Andrew Yang, one of the democratic candidates for the 2020 presidential election, gained relatively high popularity. Andrew Yang believes that the technological and automation wave has been an inevitable force that already affects many industries including manufacturing, truck, finance, healthcare, and the other private and public sectors.³⁹ Yang argues that Freedom Dividend, the UBI renamed, would be a solution to redefine the values of humanity. But for attitudes in paying more taxes, Gallup's result shows 54% of them said "NO" to higher taxes.

The political ideology in the US plays a critical role in the public attitude toward financing UBI. Half of the Democrats support paying higher taxes to fund UBI, while more than 70% of respondents do not agree on the question "Would you be willing to pay higher taxes to fund a universal basic income program like the one described above?"

Such a polarization circumstance of view toward UBI also happens in the UK. Either reducing the current social welfare programs or increasing the tax rate would change the

³⁸ RJ Reinhart, "Public Split on Basic Income for Workers Replaced by Robots," Gallup, accessed June 25, 2020. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/228194/public-split-basic-income-workers-replaced-robots.aspx>.

³⁹ A. Yang, *The War on Normal People: The Truth About America's Disappearing Jobs and Why Universal Basic Income Is Our Future* (Hachette Books, 2018).

British position negatively. Approximately half of the respondents of the survey carried out by Ipsos MORI would support the UK Government implementing a UBI to cover their basic needs in principle; A quarter would oppose it.⁴⁰

Increased 8% from its first survey in 2016, Dalia Research, a German market research company conducted the second survey of 11,021 Europe showed positive support at 68%. Risen 12%age points from last year, 52% of respondents believe BI could reduce anxiety about financing basic needs.⁴¹ More than four in ten people hold that it could enhance the equality of opportunity, 3 out of 10 people think it fosters financial independence, and more than 28% think it would change attitudes toward for household work and volunteering positively. Comparing with the benefits, the greatest fear among European is the discouragement of jobs. Accounting 52% feel that BI would disincentive people from working.

Academia Sinica conducted a telephone survey of in 2017 and collected data from 1,289 respondents. According to Lin's study based on the data of Academia Sinica, the support rate for UBI in Taiwan is only 40.2%.⁴² Lin also found that respondents with relatively higher education and socioeconomic status tend to oppose the idea of universal income guarantee

⁴⁰ Stuart Smedley, "Poll Conducted for University of Bath – Institute for Policy Research Universal Basic Income Research," Ipsos, accessed June 25, 2020. <https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/half-uk-adults-would-support-universal-basic-income-principle>.

⁴¹ "The Eu's Growing Support for Basic Income," Dalia Research, accessed. <https://basicincome.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/DR-2017-survey.pdf>.

⁴² Lin Thung-Hung, "How Does Taiwanese View Ubi?," *Thoughts* 34 (2017).

probably because of the fear of higher taxes rate. As reported by UBI Taiwan in 2018, it would cost approximately 3.24 trillion of government revenues per year based on the population structure of 2016, accounting for 19% of GDP, to implement a UBI policy of 12,608 NTD for adults and 6,304 NTD for youths.⁴³ Such a huge amount appears impossible to implement as it would undoubtedly be a heavy burden for Taiwanese citizens. The tax burden rate between 2009 to 2018 maintained between 11% to 14% of the GDP. Though the economic effects caused by the 2008 financial crisis had been recovered, the tax burden ratio per capita between 2009 and 2018 was between 14% to 15.6%.⁴⁴

Compared with Finland, Sweden, and Norway, a survey in Japan had a much lower rate of support for providing necessary needs by the government.⁴⁵ Only 29.7% of respondents agree on the idea of covering the minimum living costs, while 34.2 of them disagree on it. Finland, Sweden, and Norway have next to 2 times the support rate.

The Crisis

Howard Leichter's situational factor mentioned above includes violent events, economic cycles, and natural disasters. Though this unpredictable periodic factor would not last too long, as the government would come up with solutions and coping mechanisms, it would

⁴³ UBI Taiwan, "Taiwan Basic Income National Policy Proposal," UBI Taiwan accessed June 20, 2020. <http://ubitaiwan.org/zh/2019/01/30/taiwan-basic-income-national-policy-proposal/>.

⁴⁴ ROC Ministry of Finance, *Government Finance in the Republic of China 2019* (Ministry of Finance, Republic of China (ROC), 2019).

⁴⁵ Y. Vanderborght and T. Yamamori, *Basic Income in Japan: Prospects for a Radical Idea in a Transforming Welfare State* (Palgrave Macmillan US, 2014).

undoubtedly influence the public perception.

For instance, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has rekindled the European citizens' enthusiasm for a liberal government role. In response to Covid-19, Spain has proposed to implement a targeted and means-test minimum income, intending to spend 3 billion for 850,000 households or 2.3 million individuals.⁴⁶ Furthermore, the impact of Covid-19 drove an open letter, signed by 25 members of the European Parliament in April, of proposing a minimum income to stimulate the local economy in European countries.⁴⁷ Just 2 days prior to the open letter, in the UK, more than 100 urge to propose a basic income program regarding the downturn caused by the virus.⁴⁸

To measure the Spanish attitudes toward the proposal of targeted minimum income, the Spanish Basic Income Network (RRB) has published an online survey carried out by Ipsos in 2020.⁴⁹ Among 2,169 respondents of Spanish citizens of ages between 18 to 65, 56% of them agree with a universal monthly payment of 715 euro and 143 per minor; and just 30% disagree. Though the survey question mentioned that "It would be funded through a tax system reform that would entail an economic redistribution of a part of national income from

⁴⁶ Ashifa Kassam, "Spain Rekindles a Radical Idea: A Europe-Wide Minimum Income," The Guardian accessed June 25, 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/03/spain-rekindles-a-radical-idea-a-europe-wide-minimum-income>.

⁴⁷ *Eapn Open Letter to Eu Leaders on Covid-19* (Brussels: EUROPEAN ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK, 2020), <https://www.eapn.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/EAPN-EAPN-Covid19-Minimum-Income-letter-to-Commissioner-Schmit-24-April-final-4366.pdf>.

⁴⁸ Jim Pickard, "More Than 100 Uk Opposition Politicians Call for Universal Basic Income after Lockdown," Financial Times, accessed June 25, 2020. <https://www.ft.com/content/6b00fa50-d811-41cd-975b-6a8382ca6e91>.

⁴⁹ Ipsos, "Survey Basic Income in Spain," Red Renta Básica – redrentabasica.org, accessed June 25, 2020 http://www.redrentabasica.org/rb/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Spanish_UBI_Survey_Eng.pdf.

the richest 20% towards the rest of population.", 67% of those earning below 1.000 euro per month is in favor of it, while 55% of those earning more than 5,000 euro also agree with it. It is worth mentioning that 80% of those are between jobs would not stop seeking a job; Only 5% of full-time workers would stop working, and less than 10% would reduce their working hours. Respondents would focus more on leisure life activities, while those inactive would continue seeking better work opportunities.

Government roles that guide the economy differ from the time, political culture, and incumbent government of the state. In the democratic states, Keynesianism and Neoliberalism are two main theories in leading the economy.⁵⁰ The financial rescue tools used to stimulate the market for the financial crisis are the Keynesian instruments. Injecting capitals into the economic circulation by both fiscal and monetary instruments, 40 major countries recovered gradually from the damage of the crisis.⁵¹

For the social order and justice, the concept of social risk management (SRM), developed by the World Bank, has emerged since the 1990s. Robert Holzmann and Steen Jørgensen see social protection as a type of investment in human capital formation.⁵² They argue that individuals and communities are vulnerable to natural and man-made crises. Focusing on the

⁵⁰ S. Orvis and C.A. Drogus, *Introducing Comparative Politics: Concepts and Cases in Context* (SAGE Publications, 2017).

⁵¹ Sameer Khatiwada, *Stimulus Packages to Counter Global Economic Crisis: A Review* (Geneva: International Labour Organization (ILO), 2009).

⁵² Robert Holzmann and Steen Jørgensen, "Social Risk Management: A New Conceptual Framework for Social Protection, and Beyond," *International Tax and Public Finance* 8, no. 4 (2001).

poor and individuals in developing countries, Holzmann and Jorgensen also believe that the poor are especially more dangerous to risk since they have limited access to appropriate risk management instruments. Moreover, the globalization of trade in goods, services has exacerbated the vulnerability among individuals, communities, and states. Hence, for welfare reasons, the government should play a role in assisting people who lack access to SRM instruments to cope with the crisis.⁵³

The idea of guarantee minimum income (GMI) as social protection has been discussed since the European Economic Social Committee (EESC) in 1989. Before the strategy of Europe 2020 was published, a 10-year strategy proposed by the European Commission on 3 March 2010 aiming to promote employment, social cohesion, and productivity of youth, GMI was considered as one of the solutions to tackle the growing number of "working poor".⁵⁴

Two studies conducted in April and May 2020 demonstrate that people in the UK and US favor a UBI policy for times of the pandemic than normal times.⁵⁵ The result can be explained by the simplicity of the policy. the respondent thought a simple and universal coping policy for the pandemic could be beneficial to both the administration and the citizen.

⁵³ World Bank, "Social Risk Management: The World Bank's Approach to Social Protection in a Globalizing World (English)," World Bank, accessed June 25, 2020. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/494981468762925392/Social-risk-management-The-World-Banks-approach-to-social-protection-in-a-globalizing-world>.

⁵⁴ European Economic and Social Committee and Observatoire social européen (OSE), "Towards a European Minimum Income," European Economic and Social Committee, accessed June 25 2020. <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a1c316be-36ba-4967-8dec-8db9e3fd294e>.

⁵⁵ Daniel Nettle et al., "Why Has the Covid-19 Pandemic Increased Support for Universal Basic Income?," (2020).

Since the pandemic led the situation unpredictable, it is challenging for the government to stimulate the market and provide social protection based on the means-test method.

Although the respondents were favorable of a UBI for times of the pandemic, some they were specific about whose life become more difficult before the pandemic.

The Synthesis

Taiwan has become a democratic country for more than 50 years since the 1960s. The choices Taiwanese voters have made, and the efforts citizens have contributed resulted in a majority of Taiwan policies and political culture today. However, most voters are not rational beings. Only a few political elites have clear ideological thoughts and assistant political preferences. The attitudes of the mess public are easily influenced by situational, structural, cultural, and environmental factors. The changed attitudes then shape the process of policymaking. Usually, the perception of the state's economy is the indicator of a state's real economic situation. But the results of Pew's Research Center show a different result: the public perception does not always reflect the real situation. Therefore, I assume that the public perception of the government regarding the economy can merely be an indicator of the public ideological opinion.

It is always controversial when it comes to budgetary spending. Eric and Tsai found that expanding the budget for economic development is a consensus for most of the voters. By asking if they are satisfied with the existing social welfare, I might explore that if people

think that the government is making efforts on economic development.

If a UBI were to be implemented in Taiwan, the public perceptions on two issues should be explored. First, although the previous experiments proved no significant impact on the participation for employment, the results of those pilot experiments can't provide much information for Taiwan. Second, a UBI policy has been popular recently. Different countries have different support rates for UBI for various reasons. However, most of the supporters are still skeptical about the approach for funding a UBI. Taiwan has the lowest tax burden and government revenue among Asian countries. Coupled with the issues of Taiwan National Healthcare Insurance, it seems impossible to implement a UBI in Taiwan, if the willingness and demand for it in Taiwan is also low.

It is worth noting that the crisis might change the public attitude on UBI. People's expectations for the government roles in economy shifts along with a crisis. The current wave of basic income in Europe and The US has been accelerating after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. To tackle the negative aftermath of the pandemic, many countries have announced cash-based different kinds of the stimulus package in response as cash can simplify the process and give the people autonomy for their needs for the pandemic time. In Taiwan, the government also issued stimulus vouchers aiming to have the economy circulated. However, the perception of such a stimulus voucher has remained contentious while the other countries are embracing a cash-based method.

METHODOLOGY

Research Process

In my study, I will utilize a quantitative method to measure the generalizations of public perception and attitude toward UBI policies in Taiwan. The focus of my research is to explore the differences between those who support UBI and those who don't. By analyzing their socioeconomic status, political affiliation, and their opinion on the costs of implementing UBI, they could be sort into different groups based on their answers to the survey.

Hypotheses

My hypotheses are: (i) "The supporters of DPP will be more supportive of UBI-related policies than the supporters of KMT." (ii) "The higher socioeconomic status the respondent is, the less support the respondent will have for UBI-related policies.", (iii) "If Taiwanese perceive that to implement UBI-related policies in Taiwan would increase the tax burden per capita, than the support of the policies will decrease.", and (iv)"In Taiwan, the public support of UBI for pandemic time will be higher than the normal time."

The hypotheses are developed based on the research questions and the potential effects for Taiwanese citizens with different concerns and fears about the future policy concerning the implementation of a UBI. If a UBI would be put into force in Taiwan, each hypothesis

would impact a wide range of people in different ways, depending on how they perceive their current socioeconomic status, political views, and the perception of the basic need during the pandemic time.

The analysis results could be helpful for the future study of the social welfare system regardless of the survey result. As van Oorschot and Roosma explained that studying public support for different types of welfare programs is crucial, programs of universality could provide valuable data.⁵⁶

The sample of my survey will be collected on several social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Line via a survey questionnaire. After the survey questionnaire is devised on Google Form and Survey Cake, two commonly used free survey tools in Taiwan, the link of the survey questionnaire will be shared with a short and clear description to clarify the research purpose. The description contains the introduction of the survey and the use of the respondent's private information. Because the survey questionnaire is designed anonymously, respondents' private information will not be manipulated except for scholarly purposes.

The questionnaire is designed in both Traditional Chinese and English. Thus, some native English-speakers with Taiwanese resident cards would be able to read and fill in the questionnaire. Since the research targets are the people living or staying in Taiwan recently, including Taiwanese citizens and foreigners staying in Taiwan, it is also necessary to conduct

⁵⁶ Wim Van Oorschot and Femke Roosma, "The Social Legitimacy of Differently Targeted Benefits," (2015).

a bilingual survey. But the foreign respondent will need to state it at nationality question.

The contents of the survey questionnaire are based on 4 concepts: the perception of the party affiliation regarding government roles in Taiwan, the potential social and economic impact caused by the UBI-related policy, the public attitude toward the financial feasibility of UBI-related policies, and the public attitude toward the government's role in dealing with crises.

Firstly, the logic behind the first concept is to measure the current situation of public ideology. Knowing the different percentages of both the conservatives and the liberals, I discover the correlation between the ideology and support of UBI.

Secondly, one of the significant and widely discussed economic social impacts is the disincentives of the employment rate. To measure the respondent's perceptions and awareness of it, they will be asking a question to scale their degree of agreement.

Thirdly, public opinion about how much the amount of possible basic income should be, and the amount of money that can cover basic needs to survive in Taiwan.

The fourth concept is to measure how Taiwan people perceive the stimulus check and how it differs from the cash-based method when the economic downturn.

To measure these concepts above, they will be asked to scale the statement " it would be better if the government implement a UBI instead of stimulus coupon. " after reading the questions.

The survey will then describe the term UBI in the very beginning of the question page as: “an amount of money paid to every citizen above the age of 18 every month unconditionally to cover basic necessities in Taiwan. There will not be any means-testing for family and individuals regarding any situation. The payment would be the same amount for everyone. The recipient would have the right to freely use it”.

The description of the survey will be utilized as a complementary question of some of the questions. For example, the party affiliation of different groups and their ideology could help the formation of the legitimacy for the UBI policy in Taiwan. The respondents will be asked which party in Taiwan would most likely to implement such a UBI policy after they finish the question of party affiliation.

The questions of the questionnaire are divided into two parts. First, simple yes-no and multiple-choice questions are designed for the variables of basic information including age, education level, monthly income level, family status, the ways of access to current issues, political ideology, and political participation. The second part is designed in the form of the Likert Scale with a 7-point scale, "completely agree, Agree, somewhat agree, neutral, somewhat disagree, disagree, completely disagree", in order to allow the respondent to accurately express the degree of the statement.

I will use the results of the survey to answer my 4 research questions by analyzing it in SPSS via correlation matrix and multiple regression. As the data expected to collect is

numerous, and most of the survey questions are designed based on the Likert Scale, the multiple regression allows me to test more than one independent variable (IV) and can also create an equation that explains the relationship between them. after running the data in SPSS, if a variable shows statistically significant, the significant level lower than 0.05, then the IV has an influence on the dependent variable.⁵⁷ I will interpret the result of multiple regression in SPSS based on both my hypotheses and the significance level of IVs.

For reliability, Cronbach's Alpha will be used to increase the internal consistency when examining the data in SPSS.⁵⁸ To have good content validity, the questionnaire is carefully designed with questions based on the conceptualization process. And, the questions are only related to the 4 concepts mentioned above to measure and examine to test my hypotheses.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data Introduction

The data was collected from July 27th, 2020 to September 1st, 2020. 205 respondents answered the survey questionnaire. Since the research target is the Taiwanese public, including foreigners living in Taiwan and Taiwanese citizens, the survey was conducted in both English and Chinese separately. However, because only 28 people answered the English

⁵⁷ Daniel Stockemer, *Quantitative Methods for the Social Sciences: A Practical Introduction with Examples in Spss and Stata* (Springer, 2018).

⁵⁸ "Cronbach's Alpha (A) Using Spss Statistics," Laerd Statistics, accessed June 30, 2020. <https://statistics.laerd.com/spss-tutorials/cronbachs-alpha-using-spss-statistics.php>.

version, I only focus on the analysis of the Chinese version. Data collected from 25 respondents could be utilized for future researches.

Basic Information

The survey questionnaire involved three parts. The first part of the questionnaire was to understand the basic information such as age, gender, education level, self-perceived socioeconomic status, employment status, and political affiliation related to the research questions. The second part contained agree-disagree questions divided into four groups of questions: the government and policy, the tax system in Taiwan, the perceptions of UBI, and the government's role in the crisis. Each group the second part was designed with different questions and was designed to be the indicator related to research questions accordingly. The third part included three multiple-choice questions and three relevant short answer questions concerning respondents' opinions about their potential concerns on the implementation of UBI in Taiwan.

The majority of the respondents are females who are around the age of 18 to 44; One-third of the respondents are males who are also at the same age. Apart from young respondents, around 19% of them are between the age of 45 to 64. Education levels and self-perception of the income level are significant to analyze the relations between socioeconomic status and the level of support for UBI policy.

For education levels, among all respondents, the majority of them have graduated from

high school or have higher education degrees such as master's degrees and doctorate.

Undergraduate students and post-graduate students together account for more than 70% of the total respondents with over 55% of the respondents have bachelor's degrees, and around 15% of them have master's degrees.

Compared to the education level, the collected data of the socioeconomic status is evenly distributed into 4 categories – low-income level, medium-low level, medium, and medium-high level. Only 1% of the respondents considered themselves having high socioeconomic status, while 36% of the respondents viewed themselves belonging to medium socioeconomic status, and 46% of all respondents saw their income are below the average levels in Taiwan.

The result of the survey questions "*I perceive myself belonging to _____ socioeconomic class.*" and "*Personal Income Level (Monthly)*" provides possible explanations for the meaning of the self-perception on their socioeconomic status. Following 30% of all respondents earning 20,000 NT\$ per month, 23% of all respondents earn between 20,000 to 29,999 per month, and 19% of all respondents earn between 30,000 to 39,999 every month. 35.4% of them perceived themselves belonging to a medium level of socioeconomic status with 24.8% belonging to low-income status. Only 1% perceived themselves as high-income status.

To better understand the employment status, I categorized 10 employment situations into

three main groups – full or part-time jobs, students, and others. Among all respondents, 55% of all are fully employed, working at least 40 hours a week, while only 6% are employed part-time; 24% are students with 11% of them employed part-time up to 39 hours. For the others, 5% are self-employed, 2% are homemakers, and less than 1% are unable to work.

For political affiliation, I listed 7 political parties in Taiwan, including the ruling party of 2020–Taiwan Progressive Party (TPP), and the opposition party–Kuomintang (KMT). 37% of the respondents viewed themselves with no party affiliation. The ruling party, TPP, gained 26% support followed by the New Power party, an emerging party formed in early 2015, with 12% supports, and then KMT with only 10% support.

Factor Analysis

In order to explore my research questions, the 4 groups of designed questions listed on my questionnaire corresponding to the research questions provided some clues. The 4 factors and relevant questions are listed below in Table 1. To analyze the 4 research questions: *What is the correlation between the political affiliation and the public's attitude toward UBI in Taiwan?* , *How does different socioeconomic status affect the level of support for UBI-related policy in Taiwan?* , *How does the costs of implementing a UBI policy affect Taiwanese support for it?* , and *How are crises affecting the public perception toward UBI?*. Each one of the four factors comprise different numbers of questions listed in the research questionnaire.

There are 5 indicators in Table 1. Indicator 4 is the variable of all four questions, and

each of the rest 4 indicators represent each research question. Indicator 1 was asking their political preference based on their view of each party's policies in handling issues in general. By asking respondents' perception of their income status, indicator 2 was aiming to measure the socioeconomic status without complex calculations and formula. The purpose of Indicator 3 was to ask two questions concerning general tax levels and taxes imposed on the big companies in order to try to predict the costs of implementing UBI in Taiwan. By asking questions related to similarity, Ideology, and support, indicator 4 would be able to measure respondents' attitude toward UBI. Questions of indicator 5 asked 2 questions about opinions toward the government's role and 3 questions about opinions toward the government's stimulus package in dealing with the crisis.

Table 1 The factors relating to public perspective of UBI

Indicators	Questions	Level of agreement: 1: Completely disagree 2: Somewhat disagree 3: Neutral / Just right 4: Somewhat agree 5: Completely Agree
1. Political affiliation	1-1. Which party handles the economic issues mostly in favor of your preference (Multiple choices that more than one can be chosen.)	No party specifically: 102 DPP: 66 New Power: 36 KMT:26 Others:26 Green party:21 Social Democratic Party:14 Taiwan People's Party:7
2. Socioeconomic status	2-1. I perceive myself belonging to _____ socioeconomic class.	Average: 74 (35.4%) Low: 52 (24.8%) Medium-low: 49 (23.4%) Medium-high: 31 (14.8%) High: 2 (0.9%)
3. Tax system in Taiwan	3-1. Personal income tax in Taiwan is too high.	3: 99 (48.2%) 2: 46 (22.4%) 4: 24 (11.7%) 1: 22 (10.7%) 5: 14 (6.8%)
	3-2. Corporate taxes and tax levels for high income earners in Taiwan are fair.	3: 76 (36.8%) 1: 45 (21.8%) 2: 43 (20.8%) 4: 25 (12.1%) 5: 17 (8.2%)
4. Perceptions of UBI	4-1. I am familiar with the concept of UBI	3: 67 (32.5%) 4: 46 (22.3%) 2: 33 (16%) 1: 32 (15.5%) 5: 28 (13.5%)
	4-2. The government should provide a basic income (without conditions) to all Taiwanese	1: 71 (34.4%) 3: 41 (19.9%)

	citizens.	2: 38 (18.4%) 5: 28 (13.5%) 4: 28 (13.5%)
	4-3. I am willing to pay higher taxes to fund a UBI	3: 64 (31%) 4: 40 (20.8%) 1: 39 (18.9%) 5: 32 (15.5%) 2: 28 (13.5%)
	4-4. An unconditional and universal benefit for all should be a right of citizenship	1: 62 (30%) 3: 41 (19.9%) 2: 35 (16.9%) 5: 34 (16.5%) 4: 34 (16.5%)
5. Government's role in the crisis	5-1. People in Taiwan are all in the same boat regarding economy, society, and politics.	5: 136 (66%) 4: 41 (19.9%) 3: 20 (9.7%) 2: 6 (2.9%) 1: 3 (1.4%)
	5-2. The 3,000 NTD stimulus voucher policy adequately met my financial needs during the Covid-19 crisis.	1: 65 (31.7%) 3: 51 (24.8%) 2: 43 (20.9%) 5: 23 (11.2%) 4: 23 (11.2%)
	5-3. Stimulus package should be in the form of cash transfer instead of vouchers and coupon.	1: 55 (26.9%) 3: 51 (25%) 5: 47 (23%) 2: 29 (14.2%) 4: 22 (10.7%)
	5-4. The government has acted responsibly in the Covid-19 pandemic.	4: 59 (28.7%) 5: 53 (25.8%) 3: 53 (25.8%) 1: 25 (12.1%) 2: 15 (7.3%)
	5-5. The government should only pitch in when serious crisis like 2008 financial crisis and covid-19 pandemic.	3: 60 (29.2%) 4: 45 (21.9%) 1: 42 (20.4%) 2: 37 (18%) 5: 21 (10.2%)

Correlation between Political Affiliation and UBI

The variable of general public perception of UBI consisted of four agree-disagree survey questions listed in the survey questionnaire. After categorizing the result of the political affiliation into three categories – the pan-blue parties, the pan-green parties, and the third parties – I computed the result of the questions 2-1 to 2-4 listed in Table 1 into one variable and analyzed both variables by utilizing one-way ANOVA. There is a logic behind the three-party categories. Taiwan has a two-party political system, consisting of two major competing parties and the other smaller parties. Even though the smaller parties have been gaining more public attention and have been symbolic of Taiwan's democracy recently, they are either aligned with DPP or independent in the sense of the political ideology.⁵⁹

There are few parties in support of KMT ideologically in Taiwan, but they are not listed on the questionnaire as they are rarely discussed by Taiwanese people nor media recently. Hence here in this research, KMT alone represents the pan-blue party. The pan-green coalition led by DPP is a number of smaller parties such as The Taiwan Statebuilding Party (TSP), The Green Party, The Social Democratic Party, (SDP), and The New Power Party (NPP). Designed in the form of a multiple-choice question, the question for political affiliation allows respondents to choose more than one party.

⁵⁹ Jane Rickardon, "Not Just a Two-Party System," last modified March 25, 2020, accessed November 5, 2020. <https://topics.amcham.com.tw/2020/03/not-just-a-two-party-system/>.

According to the result, some of them chose both DPP and KMT, and some of them have no opinion nor care about Taiwanese politics. I sorted them into third parties together with the Taiwan People's Party, an emerging independent party in Taiwan proposed by the Mayor of Taipei Ko Wen-je in 2019.

The result of the data analysis showed that the political affiliation and the public perception of UBI have reached significance with a P-value of 0.001 which is less than the .05 alpha level, which means the political affiliation and the perceptions of UBI in Taiwan of 205 respondents have a positive correlation. However, the result did not show a clear relation between variable pairs in terms of significance.⁶⁰ By looking at the Post Hoc test in Table 2, I found that the three groups, The Pan-blue party group, the pan-green parties group, and the third parties group all reached significance. The pan-blue party group has significance with the pan-green party and the third parties. There's no specific statistical significance for the preference between the pan-green parties group and the third parties group. The third parties group and the pan-green party group indicated the exact same result regarding significance. The pan-blue party, therefore, had a statistically different preference compared to the other two groups, meaning the supporters of KMT seem to support UBI less.

⁶⁰ Ruben Geert van den Berg and Statistics A-Z, "What Does "Statistical Significance" Mean?," SPSS TUTORIALS, accessed November 4, 2020. <https://www.spss-tutorials.com/statistical-significance/>.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for the correlation between the political affiliation and the general public perception of UBI.

	N	Mean	SD
The pan-blue party	17	1.93	.971
The pan-green parties	73	2.90	1.101
The third parties	115	2.90	.996
Total number	205	2.82	1.063

Table 3. Multiple comparisons

	Which party handles the economic issues mostly in favor of your preference	Which party handles the economic issues mostly in favor of your preference	Mean deference	Std. error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	The pan-blue party	The pan-green party	-.974(*)	.278	.002
		The third parties	-.976(*)	.268	.001
	The pan-green parties	The pan-blue party	.974(*)	.278	.002
		The third parties	-.001	.155	1.000
	The third parties	The pan-blue party	.976(*)	.268	.001
		The pan-green party	.001	.155	1.000

* the mean difference at the 0.05 level.

Correlation between socioeconomic status and UBI

Originally, there were 5 options for self-perception of socioeconomic status on the research questionnaire. I grouped the 5 self-perceived income levels into 3 levels – high, medium, and low-income levels to better analyze them by SPSS.

In Table 4, one respondent didn't choose any option for this question. Therefore, in Table 4 there are only 204 respondents (N=204). The result showed in Table 5 that it did not reach significance with a P-value of 0.515 which is higher than the .05 alpha level.

Table 5 showed that none of a group has statistic significant difference result between

the other groups. The result might indicate that how the respondents perceive their socioeconomic status does affect their perception of UBI.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for the correlation between the socioeconomic status and the general public perception of UBI.

	N	Mean	SD
Low-income level	98	2.93	.994
Medium-income level	33	2.65	1.226
High-income level	73	2.75	1.079
Total number	204	2.82	1.063

Table 5. Multiple comparisons 2

	I perceive myself belonging to _____ socioeconomic class.	I perceive myself belonging to _____ socioeconomic class.	Mean deference	Std. error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	Low-income level	High-income level	.282	.214	.387
		Medium-income level	.187	.165	.493
	High-income level	Low-income level	-.282	.214	.387
		Medium-income level	-.095	.223	.905
	Medium-income level	Low-income level	-.187	.165	.493
		High-income level	.095	.223	.905

Correlation between the cost and UBI

Table 6 was the result of linear regression conducted through SPSS. The independent variable consisted of two questions of 1-1 and 1-2 of Table 1, and the dependent variable is the general public perception of UBI. Table 6 showed that the correlation between the costs of implementing UBI and the general public perception of UBI is not significant as the P-value is 0.616 which is more than 0.05 of the alpha level. Therefore, there is no positive nor

negative correlation between the perceptions of UBI and the tax levels in Taiwan. The respondents' views on Taiwanese tax levels and taxes imposed on big companies are not the factors influencing people's thoughts on UBI.

Table 6. Coefficients(a)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	2.663	.312		8.542	.000
Costs	.052	.104	.035	.502	.616

Correlation between the Crisis and UBI

The logic behind the variable of the costs was to predict whether or not people would change their perception of UBI policies if they face crises. Table 7 indicated that the crises variable reached significance. The P-value is smaller than 0.05 of the alpha level, which means the public awareness and fear toward crises have positive correlation with the general perception of UBI policies in Taiwan. 5 questions of indicator 5 play roles in affection people's opinion about UBI.

Table 7. Coefficients(b)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	2.210	.300		7.373	.000
Crises	.212	.100	.148	2.126	.035

CONCLUSION

In this section, I will discuss the implications and findings of the research survey, including the three parts of the questionnaire questions.

Discussion

There are more than half of the respondents having no specific political affiliations, while more than 80% of them usually vote in the national and local elections, which indicates that there is an unknown gap representing voters who exercises their rights with no political opinions. The result partially corresponds to the argument that I discussed in the Literature Review section: people don't usually reason ideologically regarding political election except for a handful of well-educated elites. But, approximately 70% of them have had higher education degrees. It implies that even though people are active in political voting activities, some of them have no party preference specifically.

I was also interested in public attitudes toward the government's role in handling economic policy. Therefore, I also designed a list of questions concerning the government and its policies. In general, respondents have positive views on the government's role and its relevant policies. Nevertheless, their perspectives on tax levels in Taiwan are neutral. 48% of them have no opinion about it, and 22% of them think the tax level in Taiwan is somewhat

high. Apart from the fact that a large portion of the respondents is undergraduate and postgraduate students who don't find the need to deal with tax, it signifies that their views on the government's role and the willingness to contribute to the government revenue are conflicting.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The hypothesis (i) "*The supporters of DPP will be more supportive of UBI-related policies than the supporters of KMT.*" is accepted because the p-value is 0.001, which is less than the alpha level of 0.05. Among the respondents, the number of KMT's supporters is 26, while DPP has 66 supporters. Coupled with the pan-green coalition, there are more than half of the respondents with higher education degrees are in support of DPP and its related policies. According to the research result, people who support the pan blue party seem have less supports for UBI. However, the result is inadequate to demonstrate the causation in detail between the political affiliation and the perception of UBI.

The hypothesis (ii) "*The higher socioeconomic status the respondent has, the less support of UBI-related policies the respondent will have* " is rejected as the statistical significance is higher than the alpha level of 0.05. Respondents' education levels do not significantly influence their general opinions toward UBI policies. There are 2 possible explanations for the result. Firstly, one-third of the respondents hold neutral opinions on the questions I am familiar with the concept of UBI. The UBI is not a popular topic nor legal

policy in Taiwan. The associated journals and academic papers published in Taiwan or written in traditional Chinese are very limited. People who are interested in UBI but with insufficient English abilities can only access news and social media with somewhat biased information. Secondly, the result of the question an unconditional and universal benefit for all should be a right of citizenship demonstrates that 30% of the respondents strongly disagree with the statement and 19.9% have neutral opinions about it. This reflects many concerns including Taiwan's tax revenue, security issues, employments, and the others based on the answers of the third part of the questionnaire.

The hypothesis(iii) "*If Taiwanese perceive that to implement UBI-related policies in Taiwan would increase the tax burden per capita, then the support of the policies will decrease.*" is unexpectedly rejected. It seems that the tax burden is not a major factor influencing respondents' perception of UBI. The data of the two questions listed on questionnaire "*Personal income tax in Taiwan is too high*". and "*Corporate taxes and tax levels for high-income earners in Taiwan are fair*". show a different result. 48% of them felt neutral about the tax level, and 22% somewhat disagree with the statement.

The hypothesis (iv)"*In Taiwan, the public support of UBI in pandemic time will be higher than the normal time.*" is accepted, meaning they have a positive correlation. Something is worthy to discuss is the conflicts between the social cohesion of Taiwan in facing crises and the government's policies in dealing with crises. In responding to

the question “*People in Taiwan are all in the same boat regarding the economy, society, and politics.*”, the majority of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. In contrast, one-in-third of the respondents disagreed with the statement The 3,000 NTD stimulus voucher policy adequately met my financial needs during the Covid-19 crisis. , and one-in-fourth of the respondents view it as neutral.

The Third Part of the Questionnaire

To explore respondents' concerns on UBI and the amount of money for daily basic needs in Taiwan, I also designed 3 multiple-choice questions and 3 relevant short-answer questions. More than one-third of the respondents believed that 14,000 NTD or more is a proper amount to cover the necessary daily needs for survival, and the rest of them felt less than 14,000 NTD was enough.

The range of the amount of money they demand to improve their current economic situations varied from 0 NTD to 1,000,000. The mode 35 respondents for the question Receiving NT\$_____ a month in basic income would affect my economic situation favorably. is 10,000 NTD; 28 people thought 20,000 would be helpful for them, 25 said 5,000NTD, 21 said 15,000NTD, and 17 said 30,000. 3 people filled out 1,000,000 NTD, which number is an outlier.

Regarding the problem of UBI implementation in Taiwan, the top 4 concerns can be concluded. First, the major concern is the government's revenue. The majority of the

respondents are concerned that the tax system and the revenue in Taiwan are not sufficient to support a new expense on the UBI policy.

Respondents' second concern is giving every citizen an amount of money would impact the labor market and employment rate. However, what is interesting is that in answering the question With an extra amount of money covering minimum necessities, I will _____ the majority of them chose to start learning a new skill. Having a new skill will sharpen their strength for current and future careers.

The third major concern is the freeriding problem. Many respondents consider that not everyone needs the government's financial aid nor UBI.

Finally, societal security could be more unstable if everyone received an amount of free and unconditional money monthly. Some respondents thought that the crime rate would increase if the incentives for work decreased. The respondents' concerns echoed the discussion written in the literature review section. Apart from the tax level and system differs from the countries with UBI experiments and trials, the concerns about UBI are similar.

Research Conclusion

Overall, most of the respondents were satisfied with the social welfare system, current government role, and policies.

With that being said, UBI is not the main trend in Taiwan due to a variety of reasons. One major reason is the limitation of the government's ability and revenue to provide UBI to

every citizen. Education level and socioeconomic status are not the main factors influencing Taiwanese attitudes toward UBI in Taiwan. The different political affiliations are playing a meaningful role in shaping the opinions of Taiwanese toward Taiwanese policies, including UBI and counter-measurements for crises.

If the Taiwanese government wanted to propose any UBI-related policy, the first step would be to raise people's attention to ongoing UBI experiments around the world, the tax system reform, and to cooperate with NGOs like UBI Taiwan.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire and Data

台灣民眾對於全民基本收入的看法

SurveyCake

填答者您好：

我是文藻外語大學國際事務系三年級的袁偉杰，目前正在撰寫我的畢業論文，在此誠心邀請您填寫這份問卷。此問卷主要是針對我的論文研究題目而設計。主要研究方向是關於台灣人對於全民基本收入的普遍想法與認知。為了更深入了解台灣人對這項新興政策的想法，問卷問題涵蓋了大眾對政黨的想法、對台灣的賦稅程度與福利政策的認知、對基本收入的認識，以及政府在處理危機時的角色。透過此調查，我希望能夠了解社會大眾對於全民基本收入以及其他新興政策在台灣執行的可行性，並誠心希望回收的資料將能對於推動國家新興政策、改善社會安全網，以及增進台灣的經濟繁榮能有實質上的幫助。

全民基本收入是一項由政府定期定額發放給所有合法市民現金的新興政策。理論上，全民基本收入沒有任何領取資格，市民不需任何工作證明與財產條件限制亦不論收入或家庭的狀態，即可每月或每一段固定時間從政府領取一筆現金。值得一提的是，台灣目前並沒有進行與全民基本收入有關的任何實驗。雖然包括非洲、歐洲地區等許多國家都在自己國內積極測試實施其相關政策與其隨後可能會造成的影響，但是目前台灣還沒有相關政策在立法機構被正式提出來討論。

此問卷預計將花費您 5 分鐘至 10 分鐘的時間。所有題目均無標準答案與對錯之分，並且沒有人會對您的選擇做討論，請您放心填寫。本調查結果僅供學術研究參考，絕不對外單獨公開或另作其他之用途。本問卷結果及收集資料將會分享給文藻外語大學國際事務系的教授以及系所學生當作學術參考資料。

如有任何疑問及建議請不吝指教。

指導教授：焦源鳴 博士

研究學生：袁偉杰

電子信箱：if.ican0000@gmail.com

基本資料

性別：

生理男 生理女

年齡：

18歲以下 18至24 25至44 45至64 65歲及以上

教育程度：

國中畢業 高中畢業 大學畢業 碩士畢業 博士畢業

收入水準（自我評估）：

低收入 略低於平均值 平均值 略高於平均值 高收入

每月收入水準：（新台幣）：

20,000 以下 20,000~29,999 30,000~39,999 40,000~49,999 50,000~59,999

60,000~69,999 70,000~79,999 80,000~89,999 90,000~100,000 1000,000 以上

近期職業狀況：

全職工作（每週工作40小時或以上） 非全職工作（每週工作低於39小時）

待業且求職中 待業但是並無求職打算 學生且半工半讀中 學生但無工作

退休 家庭主婦（夫） 自由業 / 自僱主 無法工作

較常支持哪一個政黨，與其針對敏感議題提出的政見與政策？：

國民黨 民進黨 親民黨 時代力量 綠黨 社會民主黨 台灣民眾黨 無

黨派偏好 其他

是否常參與各項全國性與地方性投票活動？（例如：公投、總統大選等）：

是 否

請依據下列文字敘述選擇最符合的認同程度。

一顆星星為完全不同意 / 非常低

三顆星星為中間值

五顆星星為完全同意 / 非常高

政府與政策

1-1 總體來說，政府的施政績效有照顧到全體市民的需求。

1-2 總體來說，我對於社會福利制度感到滿意。

1-3.為了維持社會的經濟公平性，政府應該針對相對弱勢市民擴大社會福利政策例如：

1-4 職涯規劃、房屋補助、稅收補助以及原住民補助政策。

1-5 政府將財政稅收分配於社會福利政策的比例非常_____（一顆星為非常低；五

1-6 顆星為非常高）

1-7 無論其社經地位，政府的政策都需要考慮到每一個市民與個體。

1-8 政府對於經濟政策實施的有效性與否負有責任。

1-9 如果政府施政策略精準又即時，經濟蕭條的情況將能夠獲得好轉。

1-10 政府在解決國家經濟困難時扮演著非常重要的角色。

台灣稅收

2-1 台灣的個人綜合所得稅太高。

2-2 台灣的企業稅與針對高所得族群課徵的稅收水準非常合理。

全民基本收入

3-1 我對於全民基本收入這項政策有一定了解。

3-2 政府應該無條件地提供所有市民一筆全民基本收入。

3-3 為了全民基本收入的政策改革，我支持增加稅收水準。

3-4 每個月收到一筆固定的收入應該被視為所有市民的權利。

政府角色

4-1 無論是經濟、社會或是政治問題，都是全體台灣人民必須共同面對的議題。

4-2 三倍卷有效地幫助到我對於新冠病毒（Covid-19）疫情期間的財務需求。

4-3 針對新冠病毒（Covid-19）疫情的經濟振興政策，政府應該採用完全發放現金的方式。

4-4 我對於政府針對新冠病毒（Covid-19）疫情期間所實施的相關政策感到滿意。

4-5 政府只應該在嚴重的危機時期（例如：金融風暴與新冠病毒）發生時才介入國內經濟市場。

以下為多選題與問答題

請問您認為在台灣每個月多少生活費足夠維持基本生活所需的最低開銷（低於這個金額將無法獨立生存）？

4,999 或更低 5,000~6,999 7,000~8,999 9,000~9999 10,000~11,999

12,000~13,999 14,000 或更多

如果政府每個月給你一筆錢，你認為多少金額可以有效幫助你目前的經濟狀況？

請填入您的答案 _____

以下哪一句對於全民基本收入的疑慮和擔憂的敘述您較為認同？（多選題）

基本收入會影響人們工作意願

並不是全部的人都需要基本收入

收到基本收入後部份人們會將其使用於某些違法行為並影響社會秩序，如：吸毒和出入遊藝場所

台灣的財政狀況無法負擔基本收入政策

基本收入將加劇不勞而獲的社會心態

以上皆非

其他（請接下題回答）

接上題，請問您認為還有何種擔憂與疑慮？

請填入您的答案 _____

若您每月收到一筆相等於台灣最低基本生活需求的收入，您會將其用作_____

- 尋找一份新工作
- 開始一項新生意或創業
- 開始學習一項新技能
- 花更多時間陪伴家人
- 增加休閒活動的時間
- 追求更高的教育水準
- 不知道
- 其他（請接下題回答）
- 以上皆非

接上題，請問您還會將其用作於

請填入您的答案