

**An Asian Barometer Survey Conference on**  
**How East Asians View the Rise of China**

**Panel IV: Will China Become a Model for Development in East Asia?**

**[Paper 7]**

**The ‘Authoritarian’ Pull of Authoritarian State Capitalism:  
Public Perceptions of the ‘China Model’ and Asian Contenders**

Bridget Welsh

School of Social Sciences, Singapore Management University

Alex C. H. Chang

Institute of Political Science, Academia Sinica

---

This is only a rough draft. Please do not quote without author’s permission.

Paper prepared for delivery at the conference “How East Asians View the Rise of China”, organized by the Program for East Asia Democratic Studies, Institute for the Advanced Studies of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Taiwan University, and co-sponsored by the Institute of Arts and Humanities, Shanghai Jiao Tong University.



## **The ‘Authoritarian’ Pull of Authoritarian State Capitalism: Public Perceptions of the ‘China Model’ and Asian Contenders<sup>1</sup>**

Bridget Welsh and Alex Chang<sup>2</sup>

(Draft: Please do not cite without the permission of the authors)

In this age where China is staking its’ claim as a world superpower and its influence is extending globally, its model of development, known as the ‘China model’, is being touted as an alternative development trajectory. This model at its core broadly involves a pattern of authoritarian state capitalist-led development. Yet, there is no unanimity over the ‘China model’ as it is heavily debated among scholars and development practitioners. The origins of the debates began with discussions of the ‘Beijing consensus’ in 2004 with attention to economic development and have extended more recently into the non-democratic and institutional political features of China’s political system. There is significant variation on what the ‘China model’ actually is and how it should be perceived both globally and within China. In these discussions, there is a missing element – an analysis of how the East Asian public views the ‘China model.’ We know very little of how ordinary citizens view the ‘China model’ and why. Do ordinary citizens see the ‘China model’ as something to follow? How does this compare with alternative models of development? Are there differences among publics in different East Asian countries? Are there differences among ordinary Chinese in how they perceive their model of development?

This paper examines public perceptions toward the ‘China model’ in East Asia. Using the third wave data of the Asia Barometer Survey (ABS) collected from 2010-2012, we explore how the ‘China model’ is perceived and why. We take three different angles. First we analyze attitudes toward the ‘China model’ in East Asia in all of the counties except China, to show where and why the ‘China model’ has traction in the region. We complement this discussion with an analysis of what factors might explain variation in the attitudes towards the ‘China model’ across the region, using both macro and micro explanations. Second, we look at how the ‘China model’ compares with arguably the most similar authoritarian state capitalist-led prominent model in the region, the ‘Singapore model.’ Like China, Singapore has had a one-party dominant system and harnessed its economic gains through the use of state resources. This comparison allows us to further explore the underlying factors that explain the support for authoritarian state capitalism and illustrate how the model stands up in the region as a whole. Finally, we turn to how the Chinese view their model. We explore the level and variation of support toward the ‘China model’ in China itself, evaluating whether there are similarities among Chinese and other East

---

<sup>1</sup> Data analyzed in this paper was collected by the Asian Barometer Project (2010-2012), which was co-directed by Professors Fu Hu and Yun-han Chu and received funding support from Taiwan’s Ministry of Education, Academia Sinica and National Taiwan University. The Asian Barometer Project Office ([www.asianbarometer.org](http://www.asianbarometer.org)) is solely responsible for the data distribution. The author(s) thanks the ABS for their support and endeavors. Special thanks are also due to Ang Wei Zheng for his assistance with background research for the paper. The views expressed herein are the authors’ own.

<sup>2</sup> Bridget Welsh is Associate Professor of Political Science at Singapore Management University ([bwelsh@smu.edu.sg](mailto:bwelsh@smu.edu.sg)) and Alex Chang is Assistant Research Fellow at Academia Sinica ([chang626@gate.sinica.edu.tw](mailto:chang626@gate.sinica.edu.tw)).

Asians in their views of the 'China model.' These different angles of analysis illustrate that views of the 'China model' in East Asia vary considerably among countries and within countries, including in China. We also find that the pull of the 'China model' as a broad rubric to emulate is limited, even in China itself, but that the strongest supporters of the authoritarian state capitalist path are those that have authoritarian political attitudes.

### **The China Model: No Consensus over the Beijing Consensus**

The 'China Model' emerged out of the discussions of the 'Beijing consensus' which began in 2004 with the publication of Joseph Cooper Ramo's *The Beijing Consensus*.<sup>3</sup> At its core was a recognition of China's growing economic influence and success, coupled with a perceived decline of American power and the US' limited ability to respond to the financial crisis of 2008-2009. Analysis of the 'China model' among scholars has revolved around three different, but interrelated questions. These include the elements in the 'China model' itself, with views extending from strong proponents of a unique 'China model' of "state capitalism with Chinese characteristics" to others dismissing the existence of a model altogether. The second underlying theme has been the evolution and implications of the China model within China, both the short and long-term economic challenges and the political pressures resulting from China's development trajectory. There is intense debate on what are the implications of the current path of China. One feature that has emerged in the discussion of the evolution of the 'China model' has been a resistance to an essentialization of the China experience. The third issue associated with the 'China model' involves its applicability elsewhere. Questions surround whether it can travel to other countries and how it is being applied. This brings together the issue of China's influence globally, and its rising role as a super power. In each of these areas – elements, evolution/implications and applicability – there is limited consensus about the 'China model.' In fact, the one common theme regarding the 'China model' is ongoing debate.

Let's take each of the three themes in turn. The most scholarship has centered on different interpretations of the elements of the 'China model.' There are a variety of views that emphasize China's success to those less sanguine.<sup>4</sup> The discussion of the 'China model' is ideologically charged and mired with different views of China and the United States. The discussion has evolved from discussion of the 'Beijing consensus' – a term coined in response to the 'Washington consensus' – to more explicit use of the 'China model'. When first mooted the focus was on innovation-based development, economic success coupled with equality and a strong self-determined China vis-a-vie the United States.<sup>5</sup> From the onset, the discussion of the 'China model' blended domestic governance with its foreign policy. It is thus not surprising that

---

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Cooper Ramo, *The Beijing Consensus*. (London: The Foreign Policy Centre, May 2004)

<sup>4</sup> For good summaries of contemporary views of the China Model see: Chen Minglu & David S. Goodman (2012). "The China Model: one country, six authors." *Journal of Contemporary China*, 21(73), 169-185; Scott Kennedy. (2010). 'The Myth of the Beijing Consensus' 77. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 19 (65): 461-77 and Matt Ferchen, (2012). "Whose China Model is it anyway? The contentious search for consensus." *Review of International Political Economy*: 1-31.

<sup>5</sup> Ramo, 2004.

the discussion has morphed into a variety of perspectives that often emphasize one dimension to the exclusion of others and cover a wide spectrum of issues. One current has centered on the international dimension, especially China's model in relation to the United States. We see, for example, in Stefan Halper's *The Beijing Consensus* an emphasis on his perceived threat that China poses for the United States and the resulting competition between these countries.<sup>6</sup> Other tacks have centered on China's uniqueness, such as Martin Jacques's *When China Rules the World*.<sup>7</sup> Jacques points to its 'civilization-state,' scale, size and ethnic composition in highlighting China's rise. Other interpretations move beyond the unique 'China characteristics' to dissect the specific policies and conditions in China's political economy. Suisheng Zhao points to pragmatism and pro-growth developmental state as underscoring the model, while simultaneously arguing that political reforms have taken place to allow for adaptability, including changes in decision-making in the party, increased cadre accountability, and legal and party (Chinese Communist Party) reforms.<sup>8</sup> Yao Yang further examines the economic policies – identifying fiscal discipline, export orientation and the centrality of foreign direct investment.<sup>9</sup> While Barry Naughton challenges that there is a model, he also brings attention to the specific economic features in China's economy, namely its market size, labor abundance, transitional nature, internal competition, public ownership and series of incentives within the system that drive performance and reinforce the hierarchy of the CCP.<sup>10</sup> We see yet others focus primarily on the political dimensions, highlighting the authoritarian nature of the Chinese development experience. Early-on scholars such as Palmer and Ratner stressed an emphasis on China's 'illiberal' system, although their view was this was an advantage in their economic performance.<sup>11</sup> This praise of authoritarianism has yielded a sleigh of critics, such as Minxin Pei who view the authoritarian conditions as preconditions for weakness and political transformation.<sup>12</sup>

The complexity of the analysis of the China model is enhanced by debate over its evolution and implications. Where is China going? We see parallel emphasis on the international and domestic economic and political features and intertwined in the discussion of the 'China model.' Globally, the 'China model' has been touted as an emerging example for its response to the 2008 financial crisis. Baocheng Ji, for example, links China's recovery with its state capitalist structure. Within Asia, China's success in response to both the 1997 and 2008 crisis contributes to the robustness

---

<sup>6</sup> Stefan Halper. *The Beijing Consensus: How China's Authoritarian Model Will Dominate the Twenty-First Century*. (New York: Basic Books, 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Martin Jacques. *When China Rules the World: The Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*. (London: Allen Lane, 2009)

<sup>8</sup> Zhao Suisheng (2010). The China Model: can it replace the Western model of modernization? *Journal of Contemporary China*, 19 (65), 419-436

<sup>9</sup> Yao Yang. (2010) 'The China Model and its Future' in Ross Garnaut, J. Golley and L Song (eds.), *China: The Next Twenty Years of Reform and Development*. Canberra: The Australian National University Press, 39-52.

<sup>10</sup> Barry Naughton. (2010) China's Distinctive System: can it be a model for others? *Journal of Contemporary China* 2010;19(65):437-460

<sup>11</sup> N. Barma and E. Ratner. (2006). 'China's Illiberal Challenge' *Democracy: A Journal of Ideas*.. 1(2): 56-68.

<sup>12</sup> Minxin Pei (2012) "Is CCP Rule Fragile or Resilient?" *Journal of Democracy*, 23/1 (January), pp. 27-41.

of the China model in the region as a whole.<sup>13</sup> Implicitly and explicitly, the ‘China model’ is showcased as an alternative to that of the United States. The debate over the economic trajectory persists with greater attention to different dimensions of China’s development path, from innovation to decentralization. Dali Yang chooses to emphasize decentralization and fiscal policy as the main elements of China’s success and points to the class conflicts, social tensions and populist authoritarian response of the government to its evolution.<sup>14</sup> There are debates over the role of the private sector vis-a-vie the state and how to address the emergence of a growing middle class, as Bruce Dickson shows.<sup>15</sup> We also find intense debate over the political institutions. Scholars such as Francis Fukuyama point to the limited adaptability of political institutions,<sup>16</sup> while Ann Florini, Hairong Lai and Yeling Tan illustrate the adaptations.<sup>17</sup> Many scholars point to conflict and human rights challenges.<sup>18</sup> Debates over regime resilience continue as well, with more attention focusing on how China as an authoritarian state is an obstacle for democratic expansion in East Asia and a bastion for corruption.<sup>19</sup> Scholars also increasingly question the fundamental issue of equality, illustrating that China’s development path has been one of increasing inequality. The lesson here is that interpretations of the ‘China model’ are changing, as China itself is changing.

Amidst the focus on the China-US relationship and domestic developments within China, there is also the export of the ‘China model’ to other parts of the developing world. In Asia, Africa and Latin America we find an emphasis on the extraction of natural resources – with the China model equated with involvement in the oil and gas sector and mining.<sup>20</sup> We also see the focus on value-free international assistance and investment, notably in places such as Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Laos. China is seen as buttressing more authoritarian regimes without the same demands for political openness and transparency. The ‘China model’ as a model at home becomes a very different one when applied and experienced abroad. The applicability of the ‘China model’ abroad also touches on whether it can be replicated, with most recognizing the centrality of China’s context for its success. Others see the ‘China model’ as an example, most obviously in Vietnam, where the China experience has explicitly been used as a base for economic policy.

---

<sup>13</sup> Baocheng Ji (2010). ‘China's Economic Recovery and the China Model.’ *Journal of Chinese Economic And Business Studies*, 8(3), 215-226

<sup>14</sup> Dali Yang, (2006). ‘Economic transformation and its political discontents in China: Authoritarianism, unequal growth, and the dilemmas of political development,’ *Annual Review of Political Science*, 9143-164.

<sup>15</sup> Bruce Dickson, (2011). ‘Updating the China Model,’ *Washington Quarterly*, 34(4), 39-58

<sup>16</sup> Francis Fukuyama (2012) “The Patterns of History,” *Journal of Democracy*, 23/1 (January), pp. 14-26.

<sup>17</sup> Ann Florini, Hairong Lai and Yeling Tan. *China Experiments: From Local Innovations to National Reform*. (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2012)

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, Peter Navarro,(2008). ‘A Thousand points of conflict: The dark side of China's economic miracle.’ *Operations Research - Management Science: International Literature Digest Service* 48(4/5): 361.

<sup>19</sup> Larry Diamond, (2012) “The Coming Wave,” *Journal of Democracy*, 23/1 (January), pp. 5-13

<sup>20</sup> For examples, see: Martin Davies (2008). ‘China's Developmental Model Comes to Africa.’ *Review of African Political Economy*, 35(115), 134-137 and M. DeHart, (2012). ‘Remodelling the Global Development Landscape: the China Model and South-South cooperation in Latin America.’ *Third World Quarterly*, 33(7), 1359-1375

In sketching out the different arenas of debate and their variation, the aim is to show that what the ‘China model’ means and how it is interpreted cannot be clearly identified. Disagreements among scholars persist and will continue. In moving from the concept to ordinary citizen perceptions, the ambiguity over the concept is only enhanced. The ‘China model’ as a concept lacks clear construct validity. As such, in assessing how ordinary citizens view the ‘China model’ the focus is on its core elements. The common features of the ‘China model’ we identify are: 1) state capitalism; 2) pro-market pragmatism; 3) illiberalism and 4) authoritarian rule. While there is little consensus, for example, on the issues of equality or the impact of corruption as part of the model, these elements have become part of the China development experience. Thus the ‘China model’ is extended to include 5) inequality and 6) corruption. This minimalist conceptualization, with all the limitations it involves, forms the basis for the analysis that follows. We will return to the challenges of conceptualization of the ‘China model’ below in the overall evaluation of public perceptions.

### **Understanding Authoritarian State Capitalist Development: Framing, Hypotheses and Methodology**

In order to examine public views of the authoritarian state capitalism we first began developing a multivariate model to evaluate individuals’ selection of the China model using logit analysis. The ABS’ focus is on political attitudes, and lacks a common set of questions about economic policy. There are no consistent core questions on views of government-linked companies, for example. We are unable to directly evaluate views of state capitalism and views of the market. Thus, in looking at how and why individuals might select the ‘China model’ and authoritarian other state capitalist led models as the path for their country to follow we draw from a combination of the political views, perceptions of China’s influence and demographic features. Four sets of hypotheses underscored our analysis:

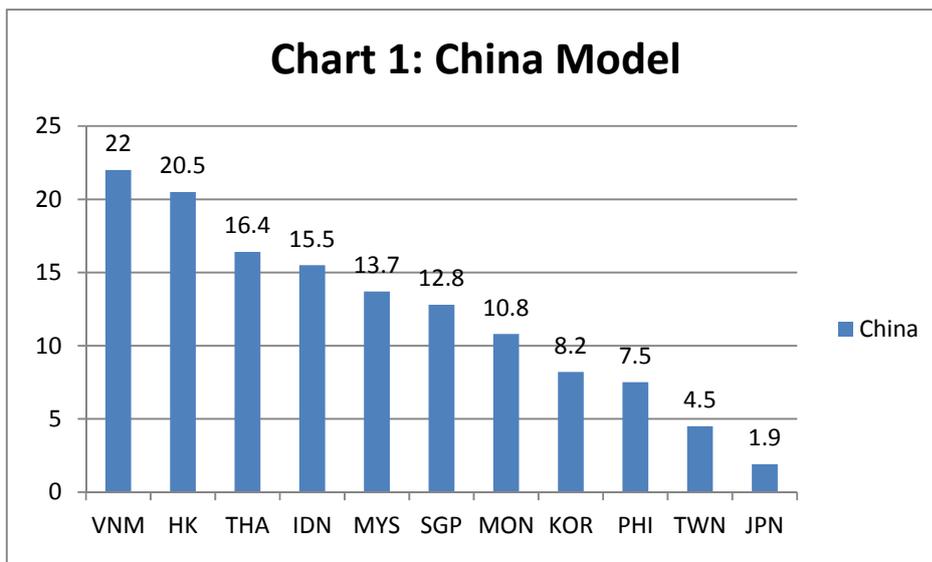
1. Democratic versus Authoritarian Attitudes: We expected to find that those individuals with more authoritarian political views, including more political traditional ‘Asian values’, would be more likely to select the China model (and in the regional comparison the Singapore model).
2. Governance Assessments: We also expected that respondents who accepted inequality and corruption are more likely to select the ‘China model’ for development (and in the regional comparison with the ‘Singapore model,’ less likely to accept corruption).
3. Socio-Economic (SES)/Demographic Factors – We expected generational differences to shape political outlooks of authoritarian state capitalism. Given that China’s development has been more pronounced in the last decade, we expected younger East Asians to be more likely to select the ‘China model’ and older citizens to support the ‘Singapore model’.
4. Perceptions of China – Finally we expected to find that those that perceived China as having strong influence and/or this influence was positive would also select the

‘China model.’ By comparison, we expected countries where Singapore has influence, would select this model instead.

Our statistical logit analysis builds on different questions with the details outlined in Appendix A. We begin by looking at those who selected the ‘China model’ and then move onto compare these respondents with those that chose the ‘Singapore model,’ before turning to the variation among Chinese themselves.

### Perceptions of the China Model: History and Attitudes

We find that among the twelve Asian countries in the ABS (excluding Mainland China), views of the ‘China model’ vary. As shown in Chart 1, in Vietnam and Hong Kong, a fifth of the population, identify China as a model for their development, while in Taiwan and Japan this is less than 5%. The average support of the ‘China model’ across the region is 12.2% of citizens chose China as the example to follow in their development. For China’s power and size, this is a relatively small share.



At a macro level, the variations in the level of selection of China as the model for development point to the historical relationships between individual countries and China. It is interesting to note that the highest identification of the ‘China model’ is Vietnam, which specifically followed the development trajectory of economic reform in the 1980s with the adoption of *doi moi*. It is also the regime that most closely resembles China, a dominant one party system that uses state capitalism to promote development. The other countries that have large shares of citizens identifying China as their model are Hong Kong and Thailand. Both countries have also explicitly linked their development with China from the 1990s, after the political handover of Hong Kong in 1997 and under the leadership of Thaksin Shinawarta (2001-2006) who pushed for closer ties with the China after the perceived failure of the United States to assist Thailand effectively in the wake of the 1997 Asian financial crisis. The conscious choice and efforts of

leaders to link their own country's development with China correlates with more support for the 'China model'.

There are interesting macro observations on the countries that did not choose China as a model as well. Broadly, citizens in the more democratic countries (except Indonesia) did not select the 'China model,' namely Japan, Taiwan, Korea, the Philippines and Mongolia. Almost all the countries in Northeast Asia (with the exception of the territory of Hong Kong) had a lower share of citizens who choose the 'China model.' Given the long-standing suspicion and tensions that exist between Japan and China, and to a lesser extent Taiwan and China, it should not be a surprise that these two countries record the lowest levels of identification of China as a model to follow.

At an individual level of analysis, we find that the hypotheses above all had resonance in the selection of the 'China model,' as shown in detail in Table 1 below. They can be summarized as follows:

- Citizens that were explicitly more authoritarian in outlook (willing to forego elections) were more likely to select the 'China model'.
- Citizens that had more traditional political values, including support for a more paternalistic government, were more likely to select the 'China model'.
- Citizens that were more accepting of corruption were less likely to select the 'China model'.
- Citizens that valued equality were more likely to select alternative models of development than the 'China model'.
- Younger citizens were more likely to select the 'China model'.
- Males were more likely to select the 'China model'.
- Less educated citizens were more likely to select the 'China model'.
- Citizens that perceived China as having more influence and making a positive difference within their own country were more likely to select the 'China model'.

Table 1: 'China Model' Logit Analysis

Select China Model	Coefficient	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Equality	.0192497	.0421237	0.46	0.648	-.0633113	.1018107
Anti-Corruption	-.3706141	.0642468	-5.77	0.000	-.4965356	-.2446927
Paternalism1	-.0897655	.0274086	-3.28	0.001	-.1434854	-.0360457
Paternalism2	-.12523	.0270419	-4.63	0.000	-.1782311	-.0722288
Authoritarianism	-.1679551	.0565742	-2.97	0.003	-.2788385	-.0570717
Political Traditionalism	1.401268	.1275249	10.99	0.000	1.151324	1.651212
Social Traditionalism	.100229	.1002129	1.00	0.317	-.0961847	.2966426
Urban/Rural	.0311835	.0930029	0.34	0.737	-.1510988	.2134659
Education	-.0528971	.0200219	-2.64	0.008	-.0921393	-.0136549
Age	-.0199199	.0028476	-7.00	0.000	-.0255011	-.0143387
Gender	-.2852809	.0825826	-3.45	0.001	-.4471398	-.123422
Income	.0384003	.034281	1.12	0.263	-.0287892	.1055897
China Influence	.3083584	.0616735	5.00	0.000	.1874806	.4292361
China Outlook	.1182434	.014445	8.19	0.000	.0899317	.1465551
Constant	-2.300974	.5520416	-4.17	0.000	-3.382955	-1.218992

Select Other Model	Coefficient	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Equality	.0825778	.027189	3.04	0.002	.0292883	.1358673
Anti-Corruption	-.5717823	.043371	-13.18	0.000	-.656788	-.4867766
Paternalism1	-.0321269	.0179856	-1.79	0.074	-.0673781	.0031242
Paternalism2	-.1119376	.0180164	-6.21	0.000	-.1472491	-.076626

Authoritarianism	-.1401195	.0391197	-3.58	0.000	-.2167928	-.0634462
Political Traditionalism	.7118214	.0824721	8.63	0.000	.5501792	.8734637
Social Traditionalism	-.0436197	.0662102	-0.66	0.510	-.1733893	.0861498
Urban/Rural	-.1471586	.0622657	-2.36	0.018	-.2691973	-.02512
Education	.0048306	.0135538	0.36	0.722	-.0217343	.0313955
Age	-.0226997	.0018224	-12.46	0.000	-.0262716	-.0191278
Gender	-.1937709	.0537185	-3.61	0.000	-.2990573	-.0884845
Income	-.0709721	.0223482	-3.18	0.001	-.1147738	-.0271705
China Influence	.1105535	.0401548	2.75	0.006	.0318516	.1892555
China Outlook	.024539	.0097963	2.50	0.012	.0053386	.0437394
Constant	2.706681	.3608004	7.50	0.000	1.999526	3.413837

-----

The results suggest strong affinity between the core elements in the ‘China model’ and selection of the model. Of particular interest is the affinity between authoritarianism and authoritarian state capitalism. We also note that positive views of China’s influence and high perceived impact of China also contribute to the selection of China as a model. Most of the hypotheses framing the analysis were confirmed, with the explanatory relationship of low education and gender inclination toward the China model unclear. On the latter issue, the male domination of the political elite may be a contributing factor. The ABS results show that views of the ‘China model’ are shaped by macro and micro factors. While history and context do point to overall levels of selection of the ‘China model,’ the individual level of analysis illustrates that political attitudes towards China and development more broadly also influence views of the ‘China model.’

### **The ‘Singapore Model’ Comparison: Persistence of Attitudes, Affinity and Difference**

The persistence of values and history in the selection of authoritarian state capitalist development comes through when one compares the responses of citizens toward arguably the most similar model of development in the region, the ‘Singapore model’. The average selection of the ‘Singapore model’ (excluding Singaporeans) was 12.2%, on par with the selection of the ‘China model’. The state capitalist model of development has limited pull on an individual level.

Combined, however, the China and Singapore models were chosen by a quarter of the citizens in East Asia outside of their own respective countries.

The 'Singapore model' has striking similarities to that of the 'China model'. Foremost is the role of the state in the development pattern. While Singapore is seen as a globalized economy, the government has played a major role in the high level of economic growth in the practice of 1) state capitalism. This is through both a developmental state, leading to Singapore being labeled a 'dragon' and part of the East Asian miracle in the 1990s,<sup>21</sup> and the prominence of government-linked companies, such as Temasek Holdings, as part of the economy. A central feature of Singapore's development has been the role of management, as 2) pro-market pragmatism and adaptation has also been part of Singapore's economic success.<sup>22</sup> The response of Singapore in the SARS-related downturn of 2003 and the recovery after the financial crisis of 2008-2009 are held to be tied to intervention and careful policy management. Singapore is also 3) illiberal under the one-party dominant People's Action Party (PAP), and proud to be so. In the 1990s, the Singaporean PAP government (along with Malaysia and China) became the most vocal advocates of Asian values. This is in part due the central feature of 4) authoritarian rule in Singapore. There are regular elections, and these are increasingly competitive, but most scholars classify Singapore as an example of an electoral authoritarian system in which the position of the dominant party is secure. Where Singapore differs from China is in the areas of inequality and corruption. Singapore, unlike China, has never articulated equality as a goal in its economic development. The pattern is exactly the opposite, as meritocracy has been the rationale for the regime, although in practice as intergenerational elitism has become more pronounced and inequalities widened, inequality has taken on a different form. Singapore is also classified as non-corrupt by most international reviews, although concerns that have been raised about conflict of interests in the appointments in public and publicly linked companies and universities. These are more gray areas of assessment, and usually are not directly tied to business in the private sector, where most of the corruption studies by organizations such as Transparency International are carried out.

There are other areas where the Singapore model stands out from that of China. The most notable are in the specific policies adopted and the historical and geopolitical context. Singapore's small size and skilled planning-oriented public civil service<sup>23</sup> has been seen to contribute to its success, along with its comparative advantage geographically along critical trade routes. The investment in education, limited expenditure on health care and lean social security instruments have been highlighted by the World Bank as features of the Singapore model, under

---

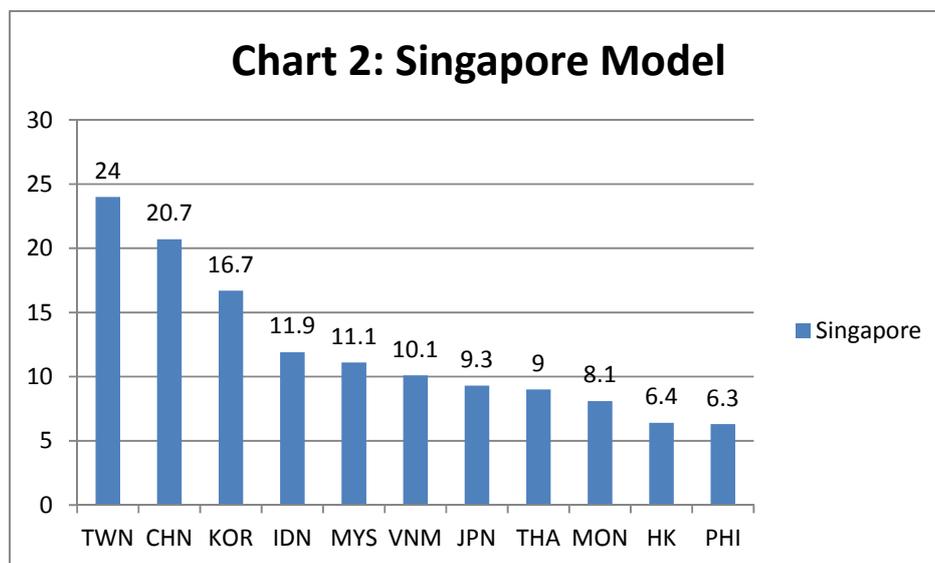
21 Ezra Vogel, *Four Little Dragons: The Spread of Industrialization in East Asia*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991).

22 Wee, CJW-L. (2012). 'The end of disciplinary modernisation? The Asian economic crisis and the ongoing reinvention of Singapore.' *Third World Quarterly*, 22(6), 987-1002

23 Joan C. Henderson, (2012). 'Planning for Success: Singapore, the Model City-State?' *Journal of International Affairs*, 65(2), 69-84

the label of a Confucian model of social policy.<sup>24</sup> Another area where Singapore is used as a model is in its housing policy, as an example of welfare and careful allocation of state resources.<sup>25</sup> All of these areas point to value-added areas of state investment within society. While some of these areas, such as housing, have come under debate due to the rising costs of affordable housing (an issue in the 2011 election campaign) and there are widening inequalities in the society, the Singapore model stands out comparatively for its people-centered investment, its paternalism.

Singapore’s perceived success has served to attract others in East Asia to its development model. Chart 2 shows the different levels of selection of the ‘Singapore model’ across East Asia. Two countries, Taiwan and China, ethnically similar to the Chinese-dominated Singapore, look to Singapore as a model, with 24% and 20.7% of their citizens choosing Singapore as a model. Singapore for many in these two countries serves as an ideal to reach, with its high per capita income \$59,000 per capita, and continued high economic growth performance. For countries like Taiwan and Korea, where 16.7% of citizens selected Singapore, there is recognition that Singapore has successfully moved its economy towards developed status, while their own economies have comparatively lagged. Interestingly, the territory that has the most common features with Singapore, Hong Kong, is among the lowest number of respondents to select the Singapore model at 6.4%. Hong Kongers are more likely to look to China than Singapore.



24 Habibullah Khan. “Social Policy in Singapore: A Confucian Model?”. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 2001. See also Sarosh, K., Christopher L, E., & Alvin, H. (2012). ‘An Assessment of the Singapore Skills Development System: Does it Constitute a Viable Model for Other Developing Countries?.’ World Development, 301461-1476.

25 Sock-Yong Phang. (2007). The Singapore model of housing and the welfare state. In, Housing and the new welfare state : Perspectives from East Asia and Europe. (London: Bepress, 2007), pp. 15-44. See also Chua Beng Huat. Political Legitimacy and Housing: Singapore’s Stakeholder Society. (London: Routledge Press, 1997)

The relationship between China and Singapore has less to do with moving the economy to another level, but can be seen as a product of government focus on the model. There has been an interesting fascination for the Singapore model in China, with Chinese leaders studying how Singapore has managed to develop with a secure position for the dominant party the PAP.<sup>26</sup> As was the case with Vietnam and China, there is a parallel touting of Singapore as a model to follow, at least among some in China's political elite, and this has spilled over into public perceptions.

Singapore also was selected by its Southeast Asian neighbors as a model, from Indonesia (11.1%) to the Philippines (6.4%). There is very little difference between the countries that have had open animosity towards Singapore – Indonesia and Malaysia – and those that have had a closer relationship such as Thailand. Only in the Philippines, which has lagged behind in development in the region as a whole, is there a marked difference in lower levels of selection. The dominant model for the Philippines is the it's' former colonial power, the United States. Unlike the case of China, historical tense bilateral relationships do not appear to contribute to sharp variations in the selection of Singapore as a model. This is in part due to the fact that regional bi-lateral tensions in Southeast Asia have not had the same level of violence and threat. The common macro explanation of these authoritarian state capitalism models is affinity and promotion of the model by government elites.

The similarities between the Singapore and China models extend into the findings on an individual level. There are similar explanations in why citizens chose the Singapore model. The findings detailed in Table 2 and summarized below include:

- Citizens that had more traditional political values, including support for a more paternalistic government, were more likely to select the 'Singapore model'.
- Citizens that were less accepting views toward corruption were more likely to select the 'Singapore model'.
- Citizens that valued equality were more likely to select alternative models of development than the 'Singapore model'.
- Older citizens were more likely to select the 'Singapore model'.
- Males were more likely to select the 'Singapore model'.
- More educated citizens were more likely to select the 'Singapore model'.
- More urbanized citizens were more likely to select the 'Singapore model'.
- Citizens that perceived China as having a positive influence were more likely to select the 'Singapore model'.
- In contrast to the 'China model' there was no relationship between citizens were explicitly more authoritarian in outlook (willing to forego elections) and the

---

26 John Wong. (1998). 'China's fascination with the development of Singapore.' *Asia-Pacific Review*, 5(3), 51-63 and Florini, Hairong and Tan (2012), pp. 36-38.

selection of the ‘Singapore model’. Paternalism and Asian values, however did persist in shaping the selection of the ‘Singapore model’ however.

Table 2: ‘Singapore Model’ Logit Analysis

<b>Singapore Model Interval]</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>z</b>	<b>P&gt; z </b>	<b>[95% Conf.</b>	
Equality	.0029716	.0403362	0.07	0.941	-.0760859	.0820292
China Influence	.2567642	.0605257	4.24	0.000	.138136	.3753923
Anti-Corruption	-.4205786	.0671464	-6.26	0.000	.552183	-.2889742
Paternalism1	-.0514887	.0263974	-1.95	0.051	-.1032265	.0002492
Paternalism2	-.1011159	.0261652	-3.86	0.000	-.1523987	-.049833
Authoritarianism	-.0027408	.0565509	-0.05	0.961	-.1135784	.1080969
Political Traditionalism	.4347815	.1208854	3.60	0.000	.1978504	.6717126
Social Traditionalism	-.0020029	.0969547	-0.02	0.984	-.1920307	.1880248
Urban/Rural	-.4054845	.0941185	-4.31	0.000	-.5899533	-.2210156
Education	.0517352	.0205444	2.52	0.012	.011469	.0920015
Age	-.019673	.0027033	-7.28	0.000	-.0249715	-.0143746
Gender	-.2570861	.0790523	-3.25	0.001	-.4120258	-.1021464
Income	-.028632	.0323534	-0.88	0.376	-.0920434	.0347794
China Outlook	.0100672	.0141722	0.71	0.477	-.0177099	.0378443
Constant	.3664211	.5291129	0.69	0.489	-.6706212	1.403463
<b>Select Other Model</b>	<b>Coif.</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>z</b>	<b>P&gt; z </b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>	
Equality	.0643044	.0287241	2.24	0.025	.0080062	.1206027
China Influence	.126196	.0419679	3.01	0.003	.0439405	.2084515
Anti-Corruption	-.4922964	.0486381	-10.12	0.000	-.5876254	-.3969674
Paternalism1	-.062917	.0188425	-3.34	0.001	-.0998476	-.0259864

Paternalism2	-.1057444	.018783	-5.63	0.000	-.1425584	-.0689304
Authoritarianism	-.1978887	.0408943	-4.84	0.000	-.2780401	-.1177373
Political Traditionalism	.9930734	.0872609	11.38	0.000	.8220451	1.164102
<b>Select Other Model (cont)</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>z</b>	<b>P&gt; z </b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>	
Social Traditionalism	.0600464	.0694779	0.86	0.387	-.0761278	.1962207
Urban/Rural	-.1631637	.065172	-2.50	0.012	-.2908985	-.0354288
Education	-.0118476	.0142751	-0.83	0.407	-.0398262	.016131
Age	-.0224028	.0019235	-11.65	0.000	-.0261728	-.0186328
Gender	-.1583942	.0567248	-2.79	0.005	-.2695729	-.0472156
Income	-.0759553	.023437	-3.24	0.001	-.1218909	-.0300197
China Outlook	.049131	.0101248	4.85	0.000	.0292867	.0689754
Constant	1.74044	.377643	4.61	0.000	1.000274	2.480607

The findings highlight common threads between citizens who select the 'Singapore model; with that of China – paternalism, acceptance of inequality and a male tilt in the selection of these models. Singapore, like China, is known for the predominance of men in the political elite. Yet, there are noteworthy differences. Older East Asians were more likely to select Singapore, which was the opposite of the pattern with China. Those that rejected corruption opted for the Singapore model, while those that accepted corruption chose the 'China model.' The urban character of Singapore attracted urbanites, and importantly authoritarian values were not a key determinant in choosing the 'Singapore model.' On many levels state capitalism has common features, attracting those that want a more paternalistic government, but there is recognition of difference among the models. China attracts those with more authoritarian views, for example, while Singapore has more appeal to higher educated citizens usually in the more urban areas. East Asians make distinctions among the models, recognizing key differences in the experiences of China and Singapore, despite their similar features of the models.

### **Choosing Home: Chinese and the 'China Model'**

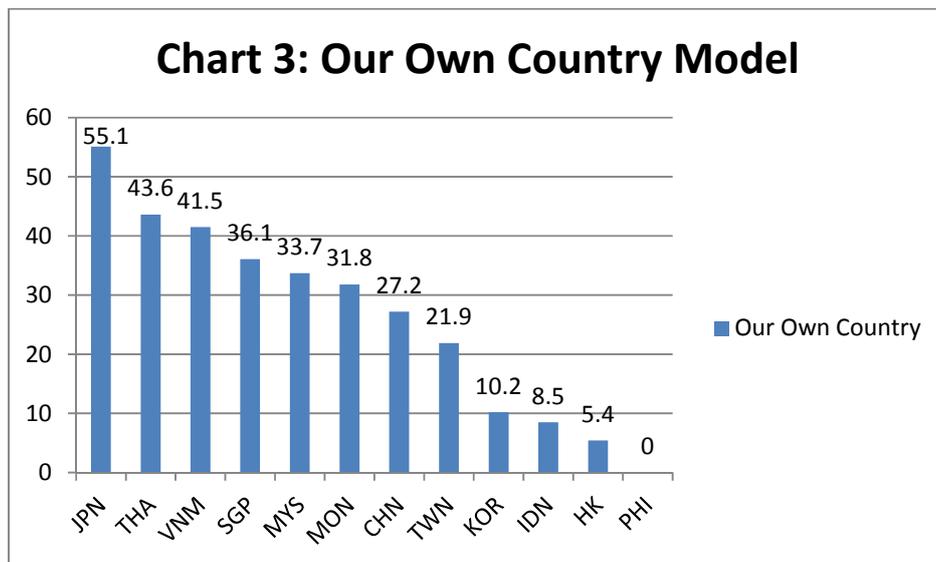
We turn now to the third angle of our analysis, how the Chinese view the 'China model' and why. Scholars highlight that within China there is considerable debate on what should be the 'China model,' an issue that has been heightened over the Bo Xilai affair and the political transition.<sup>27</sup>

27 David Kelly. (2011) 'Chinese Political Transition: Split in the Princeling Camp?' East Asia Forum. March 21. Ferchen, 2012. <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2011/03/21/chinese-political-transition-split-in-the-princeling-camp/>

Matt Ferchen, for example, argues that there are two groups – the New Left articulating a distinct ‘China model’ from that of the Washington consensus and China’s Liberals who are more critical of the current development trajectory, going as far to oppose the idea of a ‘China model’ altogether.<sup>28</sup> Elites are debating the steps ahead for China and rethinking the country’s development trajectory.

From the perspective of ordinary citizens, this ongoing debate within China illustrates the challenges in assessing the ‘China model’. Many do not understand what the ‘China model’ is, and, for many, the ‘China model’ means different things. There is the continued challenge of construct validity. The ABS results show that only a third (996) of the respondents choose not to answer the model question in China altogether, considerably lower than in other countries.

This noted, the results on the selection of East Asians selecting their own country are interesting. Chart 3 illustrates the variation among East Asians in the selection of their own model. Of all the model options, the choice of their own country had the most support, averaging 26.3%. We can see considerable variation with an overwhelming majority of Japanese choosing their own country as a model at 55% and surprisingly no one in the Philippines chose their own country. In China, a 27.2% of respondents chose their own model, close to the average of all the countries in East Asia. The Chinese did not stand out among other countries in selecting their own path.



Who were the Chinese that opted for their model? The ABS 2010-12 results confirmed the persistent importance of authoritarian views in the selection of the ‘China model’, including the significance of political traditionalism. They are summarized below and detailed in Table 3 below:

---

28 Ferchen, (2012), pp. 15-20.

- Chinese citizens that were explicitly more authoritarian in outlook (willing to forego elections for strong leader) were more likely to select the 'China model'.
- Chinese citizens that had more traditional political values, were more likely to select the 'China model'. Unlike the selection of the China and Singapore model in other parts of the East Asia, views of paternalism did not shape the perceptions of Chinese citizens.
- Chinese citizens that perceived their government as less corrupt were more likely to select the 'China model'.
- Older Chinese citizens were more likely to select the 'China model'.
- Females were more likely to select the 'China model'.
- Less educated Chinese citizens were more likely to select the 'China model'.
- Rural Chinese citizens were more likely to select the 'China model'.

Table 3: How Chinese View Their Own Model Logistical Regression

China Model Selection	Coefficient	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Paternalism1	-.0906458	.1076734	-0.84	0.400	-.3016818	.1203903
Paternalism 2	.1604664	.1142582	1.40	0.160	-.0634755	.3844083
Authoritarianism (129)	-.3956321	.176667	-2.24	0.025	-.741893	-.0493712
Equality	.0524992	.0961713	0.55	0.585	-.135993	.2409914
Anti-Corruption	.4733242	.1803342	2.62	0.009	.1198756	.8267728
Economic Perceptions	.1826193	.2189113	0.83	0.404	-.2464389	.6116776
Social Traditionalism	-.3247699	.4054946	-0.80	0.423	-1.119525	.4699849
Political Traditionalism	2.272679	.4394071	5.17	0.000	1.411457	3.133901
Political Interest	-.182084	.1734125	-1.05	0.294	-.5219664	.1577983
Gender	.440639	.2157502	2.04	0.041	.0177764	.8635016
Age	.0280381	.0080499	3.48	0.000	.0122605	.0438157
Education	-.1942603	.0646526	-3.00	0.003	-.3209771	-.0675435
income	-.0996906	.0824585	-1.21	0.227	-.2613062	.061925
Urban/Rural	.5730548	.2360497	2.43	0.015	.1104059	1.035704

These findings suggest that the ‘China model’ within China has support among a different group of people than outside of China. While the theme of authoritarian/political traditional values continues to resonate in support for the model of state capitalism, the background of those supporting their own model in China differs. Female and older citizens within China differ from the male and younger citizens outside of China. Both are less educated citizens, yet those inside supporting the China model view their system as clean, while those outside see the system as corrupt. Those who select the China model within China are more rural. The ‘China model’ within China has a more traditional base of support than in East Asia as a whole.

### Reflections and Implications:

From outside and within China to the comparison with Singapore, authoritarian state capitalism attracts those who have more authoritarian political outlooks and have more politically traditional attitudes. In East Asia as a whole, outside of China, paternalistic views of government

are also tied to an authoritarian state capitalism model. East Asian citizens that are more willing to turn over decisions and governance to strong leaders and experts to take care of society are more inclined to support an authoritarian state capitalism model. These findings broadly suggest that there is an affinity between the key elements of the 'China model' and elements of 'Asian values'. It is notable, however, that social traditional views however do not factor in when assessing authoritarian state capitalism.

East Asians make important distinctions in their selections of authoritarian state capitalism, differentiating for example on how they see the important governance issue of corruption and equality. Those that are more accepting of corruption opted for China, less so for Singapore. In the selection of both models, East Asians chose other alternatives for equality, explicitly not connecting the China or the Singapore model with equality. The ABS findings show that views of different regional models are shaped by how they are seen to be implemented and governed.

East Asians' views of authoritarian state capitalism are shaped not just by political attitudes. The varied levels of selection of the 'China and Singapore models' among the different countries highlight that history, government promotion of the alternative model and demographic factors shape perceptions. Place matters. Urban citizens showed more affinity to Singapore, for example. Very few Japanese opted for the 'China model.' The Vietnamese were most likely to choose the 'China model,' while the Taiwanese were the most likely to opt for the 'Singapore model'. Those citizens who viewed China as positively influential were more likely to opt for China as a model. East Asian perceptions of Asian models are shaped by the contexts in which they live and the historical environment in which they have been socialized.

The findings also point to changing perceptions. The generational differences in the selection of different models suggest evolving attitudes. The selection of the 'Singapore model' by East Asians outside of Singapore was tied to older citizens, to an era when the 'Singapore model' was a leader in the region. In contrast, younger citizens in East Asia outside of China were more likely to select the 'China model', at a period when China is seen to be rising. This was not the case for younger citizens inside China. Younger Chinese are not as supportive of their own model. The generational differences highlight that views of models change over time and different age cohorts and experiences shape perceptions.

Throughout the discussion, the analysis has pointed to the problem of construct validity. The idea of a 'model' means different things to different people. We used a minimalist view of the model in the analysis, but given the differences and debates about the models themselves, it is important to go further to assess the selection of the model and understand how they are understood. The findings should thus be interpreted with recognition of the differences in the public of what the term 'model' means. The analysis has brought public perceptions into the analysis of models, but further research and study is necessary to fully understand how and why East Asian citizens view different development trajectories as they do.

## References:

- Chen, Minglu, & Goodman, David S. (2012). 'The China Model: one country, six authors.' *Journal of Contemporary China*, 21(73), 169-185.
- Chua Beng Huat. *Political Legitimacy and Housing: Singapore's Stakeholder Society*. London: Routledge Press, 1997.
- Davies, M. (2008). 'China's Developmental Model Comes to Africa.' *Review of African Political Economy*, 35(115), 134-137.
- DeHart, M. (2012). 'Remodelling the Global Development Landscape: the China Model and South-South cooperation in Latin America.' *Third World Quarterly*, 33(7), 1359-1375.
- Diamond, Larry. (2012) "The Coming Wave," *Journal of Democracy*, 23/1 (January), pp. 5-13.
- Dickson, Bruce. (2011). 'Updating the China Model.' *Washington Quarterly*, 34(4), 39-58.
- Ferchen, Matt. (2012). 'Whose China Model is it anyway? The contentious search for consensus.' *Review of International Political Economy*: 1-31.
- Florini, Ann. Hairong Lai and Yeling an. *China Experiments: From Local Innovations to National Reform*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2012.
- Fukuyama, Francis. (2012) "The Patterns of History," *Journal of Democracy*, 23/1 (January), pp. 14-26.
- Habibullah Khan. 'Social Policy in Singapore: A Confucian Model?.' The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 2001.
- Halper, Stefan. *The Beijing Consensus: How China's Authoritarian Model Will Dominate the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Basic Books, 2010.
- Henderson, Joan C. (2012). 'Planning for Success: Singapore, the Model City-State?' *Journal of International Affairs*, 65(2), 69-84.
- Ji, Baocheng (2010). 'China's Economic Recovery and the China Model.' *Journal of Chinese Economic And Business Studies*, 8(3), 215-226
- Jacques, Martin. *When China Rules the World: The Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*. London: Allen Lane, 2009.
- Minzin Pei (2012) "Is CCP Rule Fragile or Resilient?" *Journal of Democracy*, 23/1 (January), pp. 27-41.

- Kennedy, Scott. (2010). 'The Myth of the Beijing Consensus' 77. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 19 (65): 461-7.
- Naughton Barry. (2010) 'China's Distinctive System: can it be a model for others?' *Journal of Contemporary China* 2010;19(65):437-460.
- Navarro, P. (2008). 'A Thousand points of conflict: The dark side of China's economic miracle.' *Operations Research - Management Science: International Literature Digest Service* 48(4/5): 361.
- Phang, Sock-Yong. (2007). The Singapore model of housing and the welfare state. In , *Housing and the new welfare state : Perspectives from East Asia and Europe*. (London: Bepress, 2007), pp. 15-44.
- Ramo, Joseph Cooper. *The Beijing Consensus*. London: The Foreign Policy Centre, May 2004.
- Sarosh, K., Christopher L, E., & Alvin, H. (2012). 'An Assessment of the Singapore Skills Development System: Does it Constitute a Viable Model for Other Developing Countries?.' *World Development*, 301461-1476.
- Vogel, Ezra. *Four Little Dragons: The Spread of Industrialization in East Asia*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991).
- Wee, CJW. (2012). 'The end of disciplinary modernisation? The Asian economic crisis and the ongoing reinvention of Singapore.' *Third World Quarterly*, 22(6), 987-1002.
- Wong, J. (1998). 'China's fascination with the development of Singapore.' *Asia-Pacific Review*, 5(3), 51-63.
- Yang, Dali. (2006). 'Economic transformation and its political discontents in China: Authoritarianism, unequal growth, and the dilemmas of political development.' *Annual Review of Political Science*, 9143-164.
- Yao Yang. (2010) 'The China Model and its Future' in Ross Garnaut, J. Golley and L Song (eds.), *China: The Next Twenty Years of Reform and Development*. Canberra: The Australian National University Press, 39-52.
- Zhao, Suisheng (2010). 'The China Model: can it replace the Western model of modernization?.' *Journal of Contemporary China*, 19 (65), 419-436.

## Appendix A: Technical Notes and the Logit Model Analysis

Equality If you had to choose between reducing economic inequality and protecting political freedom, which would you say is more important?

Anti-Corruption How widespread do you think corruption and bribe-taking are in your local/municipal government?; How widespread do you think corruption and bribe-taking are in the national government [in capital city]?; In your opinion, is the government working to crack down on corruption and root out bribery?

Paternalism1 Statement 1. The media should have the right to publish news and ideas without government control. Statement 2. The government should have the right to prevent the media from publishing things that might be politically destabilizing.

Paternalism2 Statement 1. People should look after themselves and be primarily responsible for their own success in life. Statement 2. The government should bear the main responsibility for taking care of the wellbeing of the people.

Authoritarianism We should get rid of elections and parliaments and have experts make decisions on behalf of the people.

Political Traditionalism Government leaders are like the head of a family; we should all follow their decisions. People with little or no education should have as much say in politics as highly-educated people. The government should decide whether certain ideas should be allowed to be discussed in society. If we have political leaders who are morally upright, we can let them decide everything.

Social Traditionalism In a group, we should sacrifice our individual interest for the sake of the group's collective interest. For the sake of national interest, individual interest could be sacrificed. When dealing with others, developing a long-term relationship is more important than securing one's immediate interest. When dealing with others, one should not only focus on immediate interest but also plan for future. In a group, we should avoid open quarrel to preserve the harmony of the group. Even if there is some disagreement with others, one should avoid the conflict.

Urban/Rural Levels of urbanization

Education Levels of Education

Age Age Levels

Gender Male/Female

Income Income Levels

China Influence How much influence does China have on our country?

China Outlook General speaking, the influence China has on our country is?

### *Alternative Questions for Chinese View the 'China Model'*

Authoritarianism We should get rid of parliament and elections and have a strong leader decide things.

Economic Perceptions How would you rate the overall economic condition of our country today?

Political Interest How interested would you say you are in politics?