

Digital Citizenship Plus Seminar Series #3

University Students' Participation in Hong Kong's Anti-Extradition Bill Social Movement: Efficacy, Dissatisfaction and Participation in Online and Offline Protest Activities

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Content

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Socio-Political Context

- “One Country Two Systems” as an increasingly contested model of governance
- Political dissatisfaction, politicization, and localized identification common among youth in Hong Kong (Lam, 2018)
- Decline of opportunities for political and civic engagement since 2014
- Despite widespread opposition to the *Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill* (ELAB), the Hong Kong SAR government continued with hearings

Socio-Political Context II

- **Three key elements of the Anti-ELAB movement**

(Lee et al., 2019):

- *A coherent set of demands focusing on repressive politics and police tactics*
 - *A high level of solidarity among the protesters*
 - *Reliance on digital technology*
- **Diversification of movement tactics and locations**
 - *Work in different neighborhoods and connect with public*
 - *Solidarity among different groups of protesters*



Credits to: Ah To (阿塗)

Theoretical Framework

- Shared grievances and collective efficacy as predictor for participation in social movements (van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013; van Zomeren et al., 2008)
- Increased grievances are associated with higher acceptance for use of violence (Dyrstad & Hillesund, 2020)
- Modes of youth civic engagement positively impacted through digitalization, offering access to disengaged (Norris, 2001)
- Positive correlation between expression on social media and offline political participation (Skoric et al., 2016)
- Creative use of online communication (e.g., air drop, streaming, video creation) empower young people (Vromen et al., 2015)

Research Questions

- 1) What kinds of protest activities did Hong Kong university students pursue in support of the movement?
- 2) Are protest activities better distinguishable by mode or by nature of participation?
- 3) How are students' collective and political self-efficacy, as well as their satisfaction with the political and socio-economic situation in Hong Kong associated with participation in the social movement?

Data and Methods

- **Cross-section of 408 second-year students of local origin**
 - 58% female
 - 19 years old (average)
 - 357 also participated in 2019
- **Measures:**
 - Socio-demographic variables
 - Efficacy (collective and political)
 - Satisfaction with political and social/economic situation in HK
 - Participation to support the social movement (actual and intended)

Efficacy and Dissatisfaction

	2019	2020
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
Political self-efficacy ($\alpha = .75$) (e.g., I feel confident that I could influence people in my online community)	2.53 (0.72)	2.80 (0.88)
Collective efficacy ($\alpha = .80$) (e.g., the people in Hong Kong can exert influence on political decisions in Hong Kong) ¹	3.38 (0.64)	3.08 (0.90)
Political satisfaction ($\alpha = .75$) (e.g., political development, possibilities to influence political decisions)		1.87 (0.75)
Socio-economic satisfaction ($\alpha = .72$) (e.g., living condition, employment opportunities)		3.03 (0.68)

Responses ranged from 1 (low) to 5 (high). *N* ranges from 384 to 392 (2020); it is 346 for the panel sample (2019).

¹Different items used in 2019 and 2020.

What kinds of protest activities did Hong Kong students pursue in support of the social movement?

Intended Participation 2019 (Prior to Movement)

Offline	Online
52% Sign a paper petition	57% Sign a petition online
40% Donate money	56% Send or forward messages
45% Collaboratively solve a local problem	45% Post comments online
24% Collective protest action	43% Mention others on social media
19% Contact an official	39% Write on social media or blog
15% Contact the media	39% Contribute to a hashtag campaign
12% Work for a political group or candidate	33% Start or join a group on social media

N ranges from 343 to 346 (only students in panel sample).

Supported the Social Movement (Since June 2019)

Offline	Online
73% Discussed political opinion offline	69% Signed online petitions
69% Bought or boycotted a service or product	63% Sent or forwarded messages
57% Attended mass demonstrations or assemblies	61% Discussed political opinions online
40% Participated in university-based protest	52% Posted or replied comments online
31% Donated money or resource	18% Translated or wrote passages to spread online
12% Created materials (e.g., artwork, video)	
10% Drafted or translated articles for foreign news	4% Other online activities
4% Other offline activities	

Cross-sectional sample (see Reichert, 2021).

Other Forms of Participation

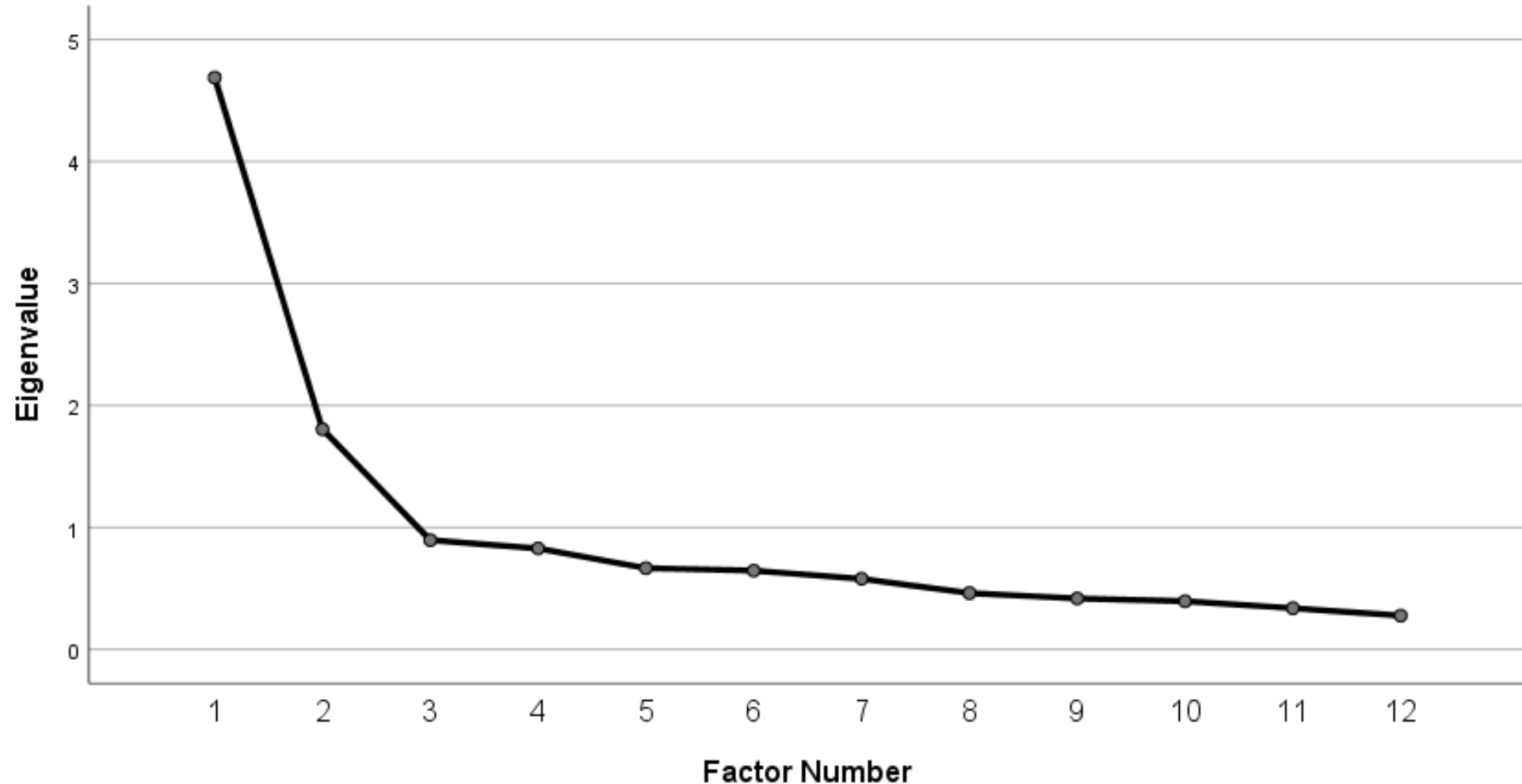
- 6% reported support for government and/or police
- 26% reported participation in unauthorized activities
- 72% intended to vote in upcoming District Council elections (2019)
- 85% reported having voted in 2019 District Council elections (2020)
- **Future participation (2020)**
 - 91% planned to vote in the 2020 Legislative Council elections (*postponed*)
 - 79% intended to support social movement in the future
 - 30% willing to participate in protest involving a confrontation with the police

How can these online and offline activities be differentiated?

Can a clear distinction between online and offline activities be made?

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Scree Plot



Exploratory Factor Analysis

- No clear delineation between offline and online activities
- Factor 1 (5 activities): **Creating materials, texts or groups**
 - 25% of all local students ($\alpha = .70$)
 - E.g., translating news offline, translating articles online, serving as a civilian reporter, organizing an online group
- Factor 2 (7 activities): **Demonstrations and passive protest behaviors**
 - 83% of all local students ($\alpha = .87$; $M = 3.83$, $SD = 2.53$)
 - E.g., boycotting services, signing online petitions, forwarding messages online, attending mass demonstrations, donating resources

What are the associations of efficacy and satisfaction with participation in the social movement?

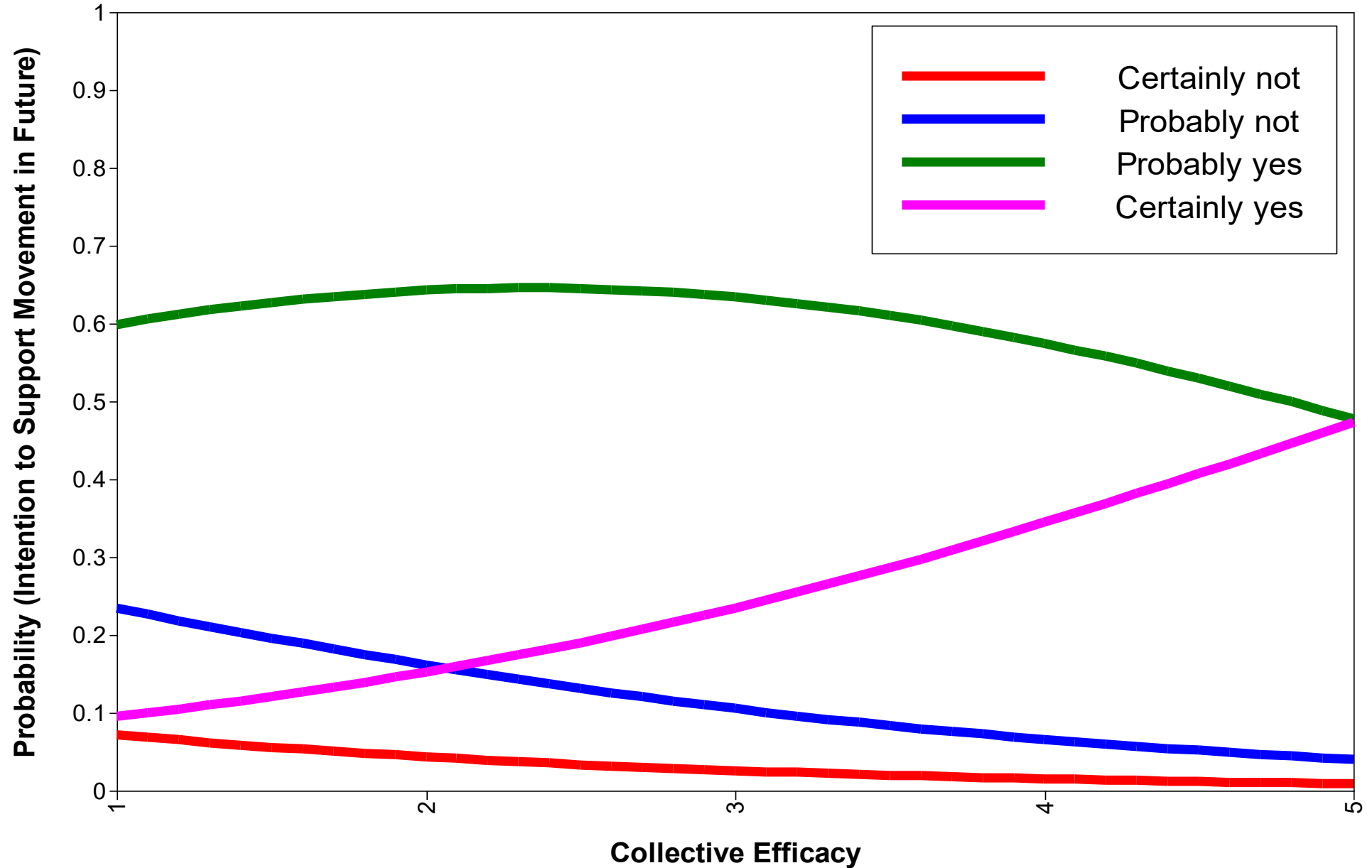
Associations with Efficacy and Satisfaction (Bivariate Correlations)

	Creative	Protest	Unauthorized
Political self-efficacy (2019)	.18**	.18**	.04
Collective efficacy (2019)	-.08	.05	.04
Political self-efficacy (2020)	.33***	.58***	.27***
Collective efficacy (2020)	.05	.21***	-.01
Political satisfaction (2020)	-.27***	-.48***	-.28***
Socio-economic satisfaction (2020)	-.18**	-.25***	-.14**

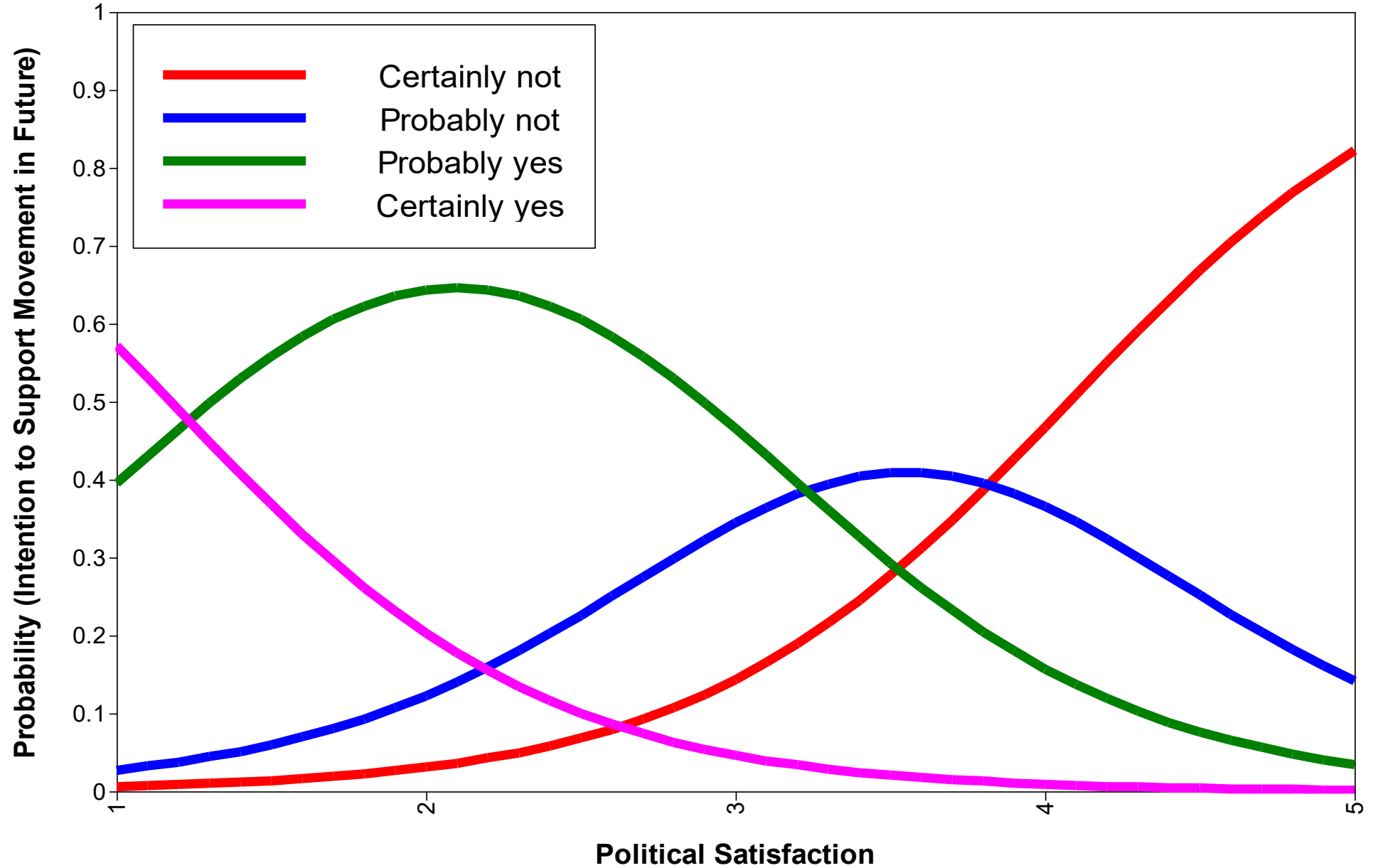
Intention to Support Movement in Future

	Model 1	Model 2
Gender (female)	ns	ns
Age (in years)	+	+
Political self-efficacy	+++	ns
Collective efficacy	++	+++
Political satisfaction	---	---
Socio-economic satisfaction	ns	ns
Creative participation		++
Protest participation		+++
Unauthorized participation		ns

Conditional Estimated Probabilities



Conditional Estimated Probabilities



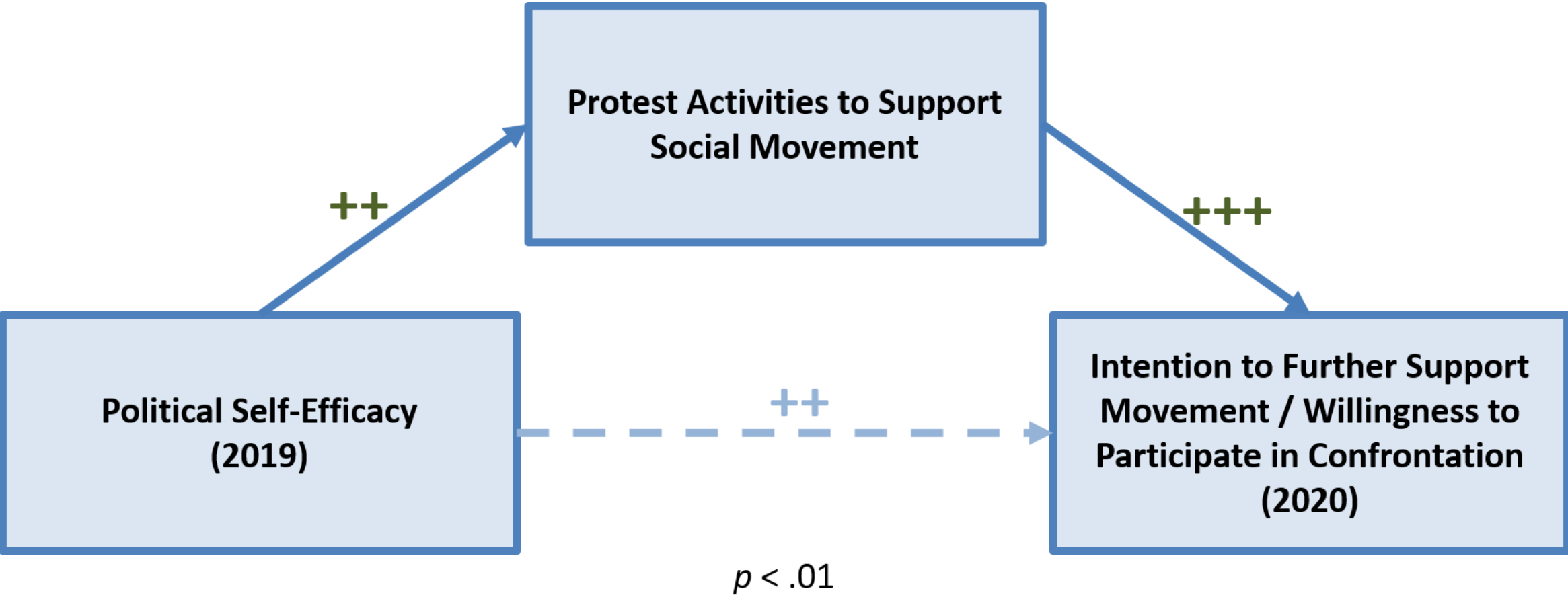
Willingness to Protest Involving Confrontation with Police

	Model 1	Model 2
Gender (female)	ns	ns
Age (in years)	ns	ns
Political self-efficacy	+++	ns
Collective efficacy	++	++
Political satisfaction	---	ns
Socio-economic satisfaction	ns	ns
Creative participation		ns
Protest participation		+++
Unauthorized participation		++

Interactions

- *None* of the interactions of efficacy with satisfaction significant
- **Collective efficacy** only significantly associated with both forms of intended participation if no creative participation in the movement
- Negative association between **political satisfaction** and intention to (further) support the movement in the future weakens with more participation in protest activities
- **Political satisfaction** only negatively associated with willingness to participate in confrontational protests among students who had already participated in unauthorized activities

Mediation?



Discussion

- Students were very active to support the Anti-ELAB social movement—online and offline
- No clear delineation by mode of participation—students' participation is best differentiated by nature of the activities:
 - Creating materials, texts etc.
 - Collective demonstrations and other protest behaviors
- Need for differential measures of online participation (beyond posting content on social media)

Discussion II

- Political dissatisfaction associated with actual and intended action—dissatisfaction with social and economic situation in Hong Kong not significantly associated when accounting for other variables
- Efficacy vs. satisfaction:
 - Panel analyses (actual participation): Political self-efficacy and political dissatisfaction
 - Cross-sectional data (intentions): Collective efficacy vs. self-efficacy
- Tentative hypothesis: Dissatisfaction plays a role in “getting started” with protests, but once a very active protester this becomes a “habit”

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