An interpretive case study of Chinese New Zealanders’ political participation in Aotearoa New Zealand

Yu Du

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Abstract

This dissertation explored how first-generation Chinese New Zealanders participated in politics. Chinese New Zealanders account for five per cent of New Zealand's population, with 73% born overseas. As a group, they are becoming ever-more politically significant. Understanding their political participation helps to better understand New Zealand politics and in particular, better understand the challenges posed to first-generation ethnic minorities. Adopting an interpretivist approach, I analysed interviews conducted with 38 first-generation Chinese immigrants from mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Interviewees participated in a broad range of political activities. Key topics included how interviewees' institutional political participation dynamically responded to the practice of descriptive representation in formal representative systems. I also explored how activities in Chinese-focused civic associations shaped political participation. Additionally, I investigated how online political participation encouraged Chinese New Zealanders to engage in politics as a form of everyday experience. In sum, I argue that the interviewees were not politically apathetic. They incorporated politics into their daily lives. They participated in politics not only to affect public decision-making but provide welfare demands and protect democratic values and widely shared social norms. My dissertation aimed to enrich the knowledge of Chinese New Zealanders' political participation. It also aimed to deepen the differences between civic and political participation in an important immigrant community. Interviewees' political participation illustrated the twofold goals of politics – as both a means to an end, and an end in itself.

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Table of Contents

Abstract i

Acknowledgements ii

Table of Contents iii

Chapter One Introduction 1

1.1 Introduction 1

1.2 Problem statement, research questions and objectives 2

1.3 Significance of the research 5

1.4 A profile of Chinese New Zealanders 6

1.5 Literature review of Chinese immigrants' political participation 9

1.6 Mapping the dissertation 16

Chapter Two Research Methods 19

2.1 Introduction 19

2.2 The initial phase: Designing and getting going 19

2.3 The middle phase: conducting fieldwork 21

2.4 The final phase: coding, interpreting and writing 27

2.5 Reflexivity 36

2.6 Limitations 39

Chapter Three Conceptual Framework – Identifying Political Participation 41

3.1 Introduction 41

3.2 The historical evolution of defining political participation 42

3.3 Bounding the concept: Choosing Jan van Deth's definition to identify political participation 51

3.4 Developing a conceptual framework to identify political participation 56

3.5 Summary 60

Chapter Four Political Representation and Participation: Chinese New Zealanders' Engagement in Formal Representative Institutions ... 61
4.1 Introduction ... 61
4.2 Hanna Pitkin's theory of political representation ... 62
4.3 Participating in electoral activities ... 64
4.4 Interacting with Chinese MPs after elections ... 72
4.5 Interacting with public servants beyond electoral cycles ... 80
4.6 Summary ... 87
Chapter Five Constitutive Speech and Political Participation: Chinese New Zealanders Enacting A Political Sphere Online ... 90
5.1 Introduction ... 90
5.2 Defining counterspeech as constitutive speech ... 92
5.3 Enacting a political space via constitutive speech ... 93
5.4 Placing constitutive speech-making behaviour into the repertoire of political participation ... 102
5.5 Summary ... 112
Chapter Six Politicisation and Participation: Chinese New Zealanders Doing Politics in Chinese Associations ... 114
6.1 Introduction ... 114
6.2 Explaining the concept of politicising activities ... 115
6.3 Politicising individual concerns as civic or governmental affairs ... 117
6.4 Politicising Chinese associations' activities through financial support ... 130
6.5 Placing politicising activities into the repertoire of political participation ... 138
6.6 Summary ... 144
Chapter Seven Conclusion ... 147
7.1 Introduction ... 147
7.2 Integrating politics into daily lives ... 147
7.3 Differentiating political participation from social activities ... 152

7.4 Implications for future studies......155
7.5 Suggestions for future studies......160
References......163
Appendix A Interview outline......180
Appendix B Approval of UAHPEC......184
Appendix C Information of interviewees......187

Chapter One Introduction

1.1 Introduction

For a settler society where migrants account for a significant proportion, encouraging immigrants with citizenship to participate in politics is vital for the country's political legitimacy. The latest 2018 Census showed that around 27.4% of New Zealanders were overseas-born (StatsNZ, 2019), up from 25.2% in the 2013 Census (StatsNZ, 2014). Scholars identify overseas-born residents as 'first-generation' immigrants (IOM, 2019).[1] Chinese New Zealanders accounted for five percent of New Zealand's population, and about 73% of them were born overseas (StatsNZ, 2019). These numbers suggest that first-generation Chinese New Zealanders are an unignorable group in New Zealand. Therefore, this research explored first-generation Chinese New Zealanders' political participation.

Knowledge of first-generation Chinese New Zealanders' political participation is limited in two aspects. First, not many studies have specifically explored this group's political participation. Scholars have conducted qualitative and quantitative studies exploring and explaining Asian New Zealanders' political participation (Barker & McMillan, 2017; Buck, 2009; McKinnon & Haewke, 2015; McMillan, 2020). Their studies update knowledge of how Asian New Zealanders participated in politics. However, the studies on Asian New Zealanders' political participation offer limited references for Chinese New Zealanders' political participation in particular. Asian New Zealanders are diverse in origin, including New Zealanders from China, India, South Korea, Japan and many other Asian countries. Political systems and cultures in nations of origin vary and affect first-generation immigrants' political participation in receiving countries (Landolt & Goldring, 2009). For example, immigrants from authoritarian countries often had lower levels of political participation than immigrants from democratic regimes (McAllister & Bilodeau, 2005). Immigrants from repressive regimes also abstained more from protests than immigrants from non-repressive regimes (Bilodeau, 2008). Since Chinese New Zealanders' political participation may differ from other Asian New Zealanders' political participation, due to the various political systems and cultures in different countries, the existing studies on Asian New Zealanders' political participation are of limited

[1] The first-generation immigrant in the present research refers to a foreign-born citizen or resident who immigrated to New Zealand after the age of 18 years.

usefulness. Studies are needed specifically exploring Chinese New Zealanders' political participation.

Second, a few studies have analysed Chinese New Zealanders' political participation, all done decades ago (Ip, 2002; Park, 2006; Sedgwick, 1982). However, people's political behaviour changes over time (Copeland, 2014; Copeland & Feezell, 2017; Pang, Qin, & Ji, 2021). Chinese New Zealanders' political participation today may differ from their predecessors decades ago. Therefore, it is necessary to update the knowledge of how more recent Chinese New Zealanders participate in politics in New Zealand, and this research fills the gap.

This chapter proceeds as follows. Section 1.2 explains how I explored Chinese New Zealanders' political participation and raised the research questions. It also presents the objectives I wanted to achieve through this research. Section 1.3 presents the significance of the present research. Chinese New Zealanders are a diverse group. Therefore, I introduce a profile of these immigrants in Section 1.4. Section 1.5 reviews the existing studies on Chinese immigrants' political participation. It provides references for my research and helps me place my findings within the existing literature. Section 1.6 presents the dissertation's structure and content.

1.2 Problem statement, research questions and objectives

Studies on Chinese immigrants' political participation worldwide have often concluded that they are not active political participants, even when they are well-educated and affluent (Freedman, 2002; Hsu & Kassam, 2022; Lem, 2010; Suryadinata, 1993). These conclusions stem primarily from investigating Chinese immigrants' electoral activities and common non-institutional political activities, such as peaceful demonstrations and boycotts. However, I believe that political participation is a broader concept, including diverse activities both in and outside of government institutions. Therefore, the stereotype that Chinese immigrants were politically apathetic might not be accurate. I used a broader definition to explore first-generation Chinese New Zealanders' political participation thoroughly in the present research.

Scholars have not agreed on defining political participation (Conge, 1988; Hooghe, Hosch-Dayican, & Van Deth, 2014; Teorell & Torcal, 2007). I present their debates in detail in Chapter Three. Nonetheless, they have agreed that political participation includes political activities both in and outside of government institutions. They use the term 'institutional political participation' to describe all political activities occurring within government institutions or involving government officials, such as voting, contacting politicians, and attending party rallies (Kaase, 1999). 'Non-institutional political participation' includes activities happening in society and generating tangible or potential impacts on social and political issues (Marien, Hooghe, & Quintelier, 2010). Activities such as demonstrating, boycotting and uploading online audio/video materials related to politics belong to this category. Among diverse forms of non-institutional political participation, people's political participation in civic associations and their online political participation has been well-studied (Austin, Middleton, & Yon, 2012; Cabrera, Matias, & Montoya, 2017; Gil de Zúñiga, Molyneux, & Zheng, 2014; Gil de Zúñiga, Puig-i-Abril, & Rojas, 2009; Herrick & Mendez, 2019; Li & Zhang, 2017; Neyazi, 2018; Somma, 2010).

Following the idea of dividing political participation into institutional and non-institutional activities, I explored how first-generation Chinese New Zealanders participated in politics from these two aspects. However, people's institutional and non-institutional political participation is also complex, including diverse activities. To solve the problem, I focused on Chinese New Zealanders' activities in institution-based representative mechanisms to reveal their institutional political participation. For their non-institutional political participation, I concentrated on their political activities in Chinese associations and online to reveal some forms of political participation that have rarely been discussed in the existing studies.

Based on the above discussion, I raised the core research question: How do first-generation Chinese New Zealanders participate in politics? To answer this question, I developed the following sub-questions:

1. How do first-generation Chinese New Zealanders participate in activities within government institutions?
2. How do first-generation Chinese New Zealanders participate in politics on the internet?

3. How do first-generation Chinese New Zealanders participate in politics in Chinese associations?

My concentration on these three aspects to explore Chinese New Zealanders' political participation results from my literature review of the existing studies on Chinese immigrants' political participation. As will be discussed later in this chapter, a few studies have analysed Chinese New Zealanders' political participation (Barker & McMillan, 2017; Ip, 2002; Park, 2006). To obtain more information about how Chinese immigrants may participate in politics in receiving countries, I reviewed the global literature on Chinese immigrants' political participation. These studies showed that Chinese immigrants engaged in various political activities, and their political participation could be divided into three categories: institutional participation, online participation, and associational participation (Couchman & Bagnall, 2015; Freedman, 2002; Lien, 2004; Wong, Ramakrishnan, Lee, Junn, & Wong, 2011). Furthermore, I decided to focus on these three aspects because they were the top three most frequently mentioned forms of political participation.

The research aimed to explore the experiences of first-generation Chinese New Zealanders participating in diverse activities to articulate their demands, address their concerns, and advance their interests. I also hoped to enlarge the understanding of political participation and politics by describing Chinese New Zealanders' diverse forms of political participation.

To achieve the research objectives, I needed a clear definition of political participation to help differentiate the interviewees' political activities from their social activities. After reviewing many scholars' definitions of political participation (Conge, 1988; Ekman & Amnå, 2012; Hooghe, 2014; Verba, Schlozman, Brady, & Nie, 1993), I chose van Deth's (2014) definition of political participation as the guiding theory to identify interviewees' political participation. However, I noticed his definition had shortcomings in offering undisputable support for my identification of interviewees' political participation. Therefore, I also used Arendt's (1958) conception of politics to address those shortcomings. The Arendtian framework offered solid support in defending my arguments. Chapter Three explains my choice of these two theories.

1.3 Significance of the research

Exploring first-generation Chinese New Zealanders' political participation is significant in four aspects. First, studying their political participation helps understand Chinese immigrants' political and social integration in New Zealand. First-generation immigrants with high political participation rates have often been better integrated into local societies than their counterparts with lower political participation rates (McAllister, Kanji, & Bilodeau, 2010; Pikkov, 2011; Sheppard, Taflaga, & Jiang, 2020). Immigrants could promote their interests by participating in politics. Those who did not participate faced risks of not having their demands and concerns heard by policymakers and legislators and, consequently, their welfare risked being ignored, harmed or sacrificed (Pilati & Morales, 2016; Sandovici & Listhaug, 2010; Wong, Lien, & Conway, 2005). Additionally, immigrants might participate in politics to resist the unequal and unfair treatment they encountered in their receiving countries (Cinalli & Giugni, 2011; Terriquez, 2017). Therefore, looking at first-generation Chinese New Zealanders' political participation can reveal how they express their demands, advance their interests, and defend their legitimate rights when encountering inequality in New Zealand.

The present research can also clarify how New Zealand handles diversity. New Zealand is well-known for its welcoming and tolerant attitudes. It devotes itself to establishing accountable social and political institutions in order to recognise and integrate the interests and demands of people from different ethnic, cultural, religious and ideological groups (Girling, Liu, & Ward, 2010; O'Brien, Sanders, & Tennant, 2009). First-generation immigrants have often been found to have different interests and demands from those of native-born citizens because of social, physical and cultural differences (Kan, Connor, & Beddoe, 2020; Ward, 2010). Therefore, studying first-generation Chinese New Zealanders' political participation can reveal how the New Zealand government and society respond to overseas-born citizens' and permanent residents' demands and protect their legitimate rights. Different ethnic groups often have conflicting interests (Pilati & Morales, 2016). Chinese New Zealanders' interests might conflict with those of other ethnic groups. Therefore, the present research can also clarify how the New Zealand government mediates the diverse interests and demands of different ethnic groups.

Third, the present research can expand our knowledge of worldwide Chinese immigrants' political participation. According to the *World Migration Report 2022*, there were about 281 million international migrants worldwide in 2019, and China (59.5 million emigrants) ranked the second as a source of emigration after India (83.2 million emigrants) (IOM, 2022).[2] Chinese immigrants account for a large proportion of the total population of many immigrant countries (Song & Liang, 2019). The present research's findings offer valuable references for policymakers and scholars to understand first-generation Chinese immigrants' political participation in other receiving countries.

Last, the present research can deepen the understanding of the concepts of political participation and politics. Scholars have observed that the forms of political participation have diversified over time (Gundelach, 2020; Ruess, Hoffmann, Boulianne, & Heger, 2021). Exploring how first-generation Chinese New Zealanders participate in politics may show novel forms of political participation. Scholars keep updating the definitions of political participation to embrace novel forms of political activities (Conge, 1988; Ekman & Amnå, 2012; van Deth, 2014). The present research can also examine whether those definitions of political participation accurately reflect Chinese New Zealanders' diverse forms of political participation in reality. Additionally, the expanded definitions of political participation broadened the understanding of the meaning of politics.

1.4 A profile of Chinese New Zealanders

First-generation Chinese New Zealanders are diverse in terms of their age, socioeconomic status and length of residence in New Zealand. The 2018 Census showed that among all overseas-born Chinese New Zealanders, 25% were aged 15-29, 58% were aged 30-64, and 12% were aged 65 and over. They worked in multiple occupations. The top five occupations were professionals (28%), managers (18%), sales workers (12%), technicians and trade workers (12%), and clerical and administrative workers (11%). Among first-generation Chinese New Zealanders, 25% had lived in New Zealand for 1-4 years, 17% for 5-9 years, 31% for 10-19 years, and 22% for 20 years or more. The number of female first-generation Chinese New Zealanders (131,553) was slightly higher than their male counterparts (116,220) (StatsNZ,

[2] The 2022 Report refers specifically to the People's Republic of China.

2020). The general information about first-generation Chinese New Zealanders helped me recruit potential participants purposefully in the later phase, which I explain in detail in Chapter Two.

Chinese New Zealanders have a long history in New Zealand. The first large wave of Chinese immigrants can be traced back to the 1800s. Most came from several small towns in Canton province in mainland China and worked as gold miners (Ip, 2015).[3] New Zealand at that time was hostile to Chinese immigrants. The New Zealand head tax (commonly known as poll tax, an entry tax) was the most notorious policy in a long list of anti-Chinese discriminatory policies. Although the poll tax was waived in 1934, Chinese immigrants could not apply for New Zealand citizenship until 1952 (Ip, 2015).

In the early days of their arrival, people established Chinese associations based on their original hometowns. Those associations provided for the fundamental needs of their members, such as organising activities to celebrate Chinese festivals, arranging temporary residences for new arrivals, and helping people send remittances back home. Besides providing support for the living, Chinese associations organised funeral rituals for dead people and sometimes sent their ashes back home (Sedgwick, 1982). The practice of organising Chinese associations based on members' hometowns has been preserved until the present. For instance, people from Henan, Shaanxi, Canton, Shanghai, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and many other provinces and cities have established affiliated associations in New Zealand.

In the early 1900s, many Chinese immigrants left the goldfields and worked in laundries, market gardening, and fruit and vegetable shops (Capie, 2012). Trade-oriented Chinese associations emerged along with people's occupational changes. At that time, non-Chinese businesspeople accused Chinese businesspeople of destroying fair commercial competition. They organised anti-Chinese movements that undermined Chinese businesspeople's legitimate rights. The trade-oriented Chinese associations united their resources to fight against anti-Chinese movements and help Chinese people run their businesses (Sedgwick, 1982). That

[3] In this dissertation, 'mainland China' refers to the People's Republic of China.

tradition has also been well preserved. The Chao Shan General Association of New Zealand (CSGANZ) and its affiliated chambers of commerce are current associations of this type.

The second large wave of Chinese immigrants can be traced back to the 1980s and 1990s. Two reasons led to this phenomenon. First, the New Zealand government adopted welcoming policies for immigrants at that time. The Immigration Act 1987 aimed to attract skilled immigrants with talents to New Zealand and contribute their capacities to New Zealand's development (Bedford, Ho, & Lidgard, 2000). It also welcomed business immigrants. The government hoped those immigrant entrepreneurs would bring wealth and opportunities to boost New Zealand's economy (Ip, 1995). Those pull factors attracted many Chinese immigrants from Taiwan and Hong Kong in the 1980s and 1990s (Bedford & Ho, 2008). Second, the domestic upheavals in mainland China and Hong Kong at that time also pushed people to immigrate on a large scale to other Western democracies, including New Zealand. The most shocking incident in mainland China that generated domestic instability was the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests. Hong Kong was handed over from the British government to the People's Republic of China in 1997. Those incidents made people in these two places feel insecure and uncertain about their future. Therefore, they started to immigrate to Western democracies to seek more peaceful and predictable societies to live in. The government in mainland China also adopted more flexible emigration policies since implementing the 1978 reform and opening up policies. Since then, people in mainland China have had more opportunities to emigrate to another country. Chinese people from three places in particular (mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong) immigrated to New Zealand to seek a peaceful and stable society to work and live in. Those push factors also encouraged Chinese people to immigrate to New Zealand.

With the influx of Chinese immigrants, their occupations have become more diverse than their predecessors. Nowadays, many Chinese immigrants work as lawyers, research fellows, business managers, doctors, and other professions to which their predecessors had no access. They also choose to live in the neighbourhoods where Chinese residents are concentrated, surrounded by Chinese supermarkets and restaurants. For example, the Northcote community in the North Shore, Auckland, is a concentrated residential area for Chinese New Zealanders.

People have established neighbourhood-based Chinese associations, such as the Chinese Association of Northcote Auckland and the Chinese Association of Sunnynook Auckland.

Meanwhile, data on Chinese New Zealanders' access to the internet is also crucial for the present research to address the second sub-question about their online political participation. The latest statistics showed that around 85% of Asian New Zealanders had access to the internet in 2019 (DigitalNZ, 2020). However, no official statistic reveals Chinese New Zealanders' access to the internet.

1.5 Literature review of Chinese immigrants' political participation

Reviewing previous studies on Chinese New Zealanders' political participation describes the significant aspects of their political activities. Before doing that, it is also necessary to portray a global picture of Chinese immigrants' political participation to place Chinese New Zealanders' political participation in a broader picture. This section lists representative studies on Chinese immigrants' political participation in general and Chinese New Zealanders' participation in particular.

An overview of Chinese immigrants' political participation

As mentioned earlier, the *World Migration Report 2022* ranked China as having the second highest rate of emigration in 2019. Chinese immigrants account for a significant proportion in many countries. Understanding their political participation helps not only to know Chinese immigrants' political integration in those host countries but also to deepen the knowledge of how various host countries cope with minority immigrants' political demands. Many studies have explored Chinese immigrants' political participation in Australia, North America, Europe, and many Asian countries (Couchman & Bagnall, 2015; Fong & Ooka, 2006; Freedman, 2002; Guo, 2013; Lien, 2004; Lien, Collet, Wong, & Ramakrishnan, 2001; Sheppard et al., 2020; Wong et al., 2011).

According to the 2020 United States Census, around 4.3 million people self-reported as having Chinese ethnicity (including Taiwanese) (Monte & Shin, 2022). Chinese Americans have

become a significant community in the United States. Scholars have empirically explored their political participation for decades (Lien et al., 2001; Wong et al., 2011; Xie & Jaeger, 2008). For example, Pei-te Lien (2006) explored how political socialisation and transnational ties affected Chinese Americans from mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan to participate in politics. She found that among the three cohorts, Chinese Americans born and raised in mainland China had the lowest participation levels across all political activities (Lien, 2006, p. 69). People from the three cohorts maintained transnational ties with their homelands; however, the influences of transnational ties on their political participation varied. Transnational ties had little impact on system-support activities such as registering to vote but affected people's regime-influence activities of making campaign donations (Lien, 2006, p. 74). In another study, Lien (2010) found that pre-migration socialisation experiences, transnational ties and participatory experiences with U.S. institutions affected Chinese Americans' political participation patterns. Those socialised in mainland China had the lowest participation rates compared with their counterparts socialised in Hong Kong or Taiwan (Lien, 2010, p. 474). However, she found a positive relationship between people's length of residence in the U.S. and their participation rates (Lien, 2010, p. 475). Her findings suggested that the impact of pre-migration socialisation on Chinese immigrants' political participation might be mediated by their political socialisation experience in host countries.

Chinese Canadians also have diverse forms of political participation. The 2021 Canadian Census showed that around 1.71 million people self-identified as Chinese Canadians, accounting for 4.63% of the Canadian population (StatisticsCanada, 2022). Fong and Ooka (2006, pp. 370-371) found that Chinese Canadians in Toronto participated in various political activities organised by Chinese associations. Furthermore, more than half of their survey respondents claimed that their political engagement occurred beyond ethnic associations. They sometimes participated in activities organised by religious or other civic associations to pursue their political interests. In this sense, Chinese associations were one of many resources for Chinese Canadians in Toronto to address political concerns. Chinese Canadians in Vancouver also had diverse political lives in Chinese associations (Guo, 2013, pp. 110-112). Their volunteering activities helped new-arrived Chinese immigrants quickly settle in and adapt to local societies. They created a stronger Chinese community to which Chinese immigrants attached a deep sense of belonging. Communication with other ethnic communities also got

boosted under volunteers' efforts. Their associational engagement contributed significantly to Chinese Canadians' political and social integration in Vancouver.

Malaysia and Indonesia are two popular destinations for Chinese emigrants to Southeast Asia (Xiang, 2016). Freedman (2002) observed that chambers of commerce led by Chinese business leaders significantly impacted the nature and scope of Chinese immigrants' political participation in these two countries. Chinese business leaders organised various associational activities to strengthen politicians' interactions with the Chinese communities. Additionally, Chinese associations independently organised activities to meet the Chinese communities' demands for social benefits and welfare services outside the governments' policy agendas. Thus, Freedman commented that Chinese associations positively affected these two countries' democratic development.

Studies on Chinese immigrants' political participation in different host countries have demonstrated that Chinese immigrants engage in various political activities within and outside government institutions to articulate political demands and solve political grievances. However, the patterns of their political participation vary across countries. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct empirical research on Chinese New Zealanders' political participation. Additionally, the global literature shows that Chinese immigrants from different homelands had different political behaviour in the same host country. Noticing the nuances, I differentiated Chinese New Zealanders based on their homelands to explore their political participation. In the next chapter, I explain my division of Chinese New Zealanders in detail.

An overview of Chinese New Zealanders' political participation

An overall picture of Chinese immigrants' political participation in different countries helps to understand how Chinese New Zealanders might participate in politics. However, as I said above, Chinese immigrants in other countries may have varied patterns of political participation. Therefore, it is also vital to know how Chinese New Zealanders participate in politics in New Zealand. The following section reviews representative studies on Chinese New Zealanders' political participation.

Voting might be the first thing people think of when talking about political participation. Unfortunately, no official statistic disclosed Chinese New Zealanders' turnout at general elections. There are three major data sources on the turnouts of ethnic groups in New Zealand - Electoral Commission reports, the New Zealand General Social Survey (NZGSS), and the New Zealand Election Study (NZES). Researchers publish reports based on the data provided by these three databases three-yearly, after every general election. However, the three databases all released statistics on ethnic groups' turnout based on broad ethnic categories, such as 'Asian', 'European' and 'Māori' ethnicities.

The Electoral Commission has the most detailed and reliable statistics on voter turnouts, because its sample pool covers every voter who cast their votes for the election. However, it remains unclear why the Commission did not offer detailed statistics on each ethnic group's turnout, such as Chinese New Zealanders, Indian New Zealanders and British New Zealanders before 2017. Additionally, in the most recent 2017 and 2020 General Elections, the Electoral Commission changed its criteria to analyse the levels of voter turnout. It abandoned the old criteria based on broad ethnicities and adopted the current criteria based on the binary distinction between Māori and non-Māori descent (Electoral Commission, 2018, 2021a). Therefore, there were no detailed statistics on Asian New Zealanders' turnouts compared with other ethnic groups in the 2017 and 2020 General Elections.[4]

The NZGSS and the NZES have not provided statistics on each ethnic group's turnout either. Small sample sizes and low response rates might be the primary reasons. First, the NZGSS and the NZES have relatively small sample pools compared with the Electoral Commission. Second, McMillan (2020, p. 99) found that the response rates were relatively low when the NZGSS and the NZES sent out their surveys all over New Zealand after each election. Those two factors

[4] The Electoral Commission published reports showed that, in the 2008 General Election, Asian New Zealanders had the lowest turnout (67%), compared with Māori (75%), Pacific (79%), and European (82%) New Zealanders. In the 2011 General Election, Asian New Zealanders again had the lowest turnout (64%), compared with Māori (73%), Pacific (81%), and European (81%) New Zealanders. Asian New Zealanders remained the lowest turnout (61%) in the 2014 General Election, compared with Māori (69%), Pacific (80%), and European (81%) New Zealanders. The statistics indicated that Asian New Zealanders' turnouts declined from 2008 to 2014. However, the Commission did not explain the phenomenon in its reports. Barker and McMillan (2017) claimed that lacking access to political information in immigrants' own languages and length of residence were the primary barriers to Asian New Zealanders' voting. More statistics about the previous general elections and turnouts can be found here https://www.stats.govt.nz/tools/nz-dot-stat/.

made it challenging for the NZGSS and NZES to disaggregate voter turnout levels reliably by ethnicity.

In the absence of official statistics, indications of Chinese New Zealanders' turnout are available in Park's (2006) research. She explored how Chinese and Korean New Zealanders participate in politics.[5] Her survey of 1,000 Chinese New Zealanders from all over New Zealand found that Hong Kong New Zealanders had the highest turnout (89.1%). Taiwanese New Zealanders ranked second (84.4%), and Mainlander Chinese New Zealanders had the lowest turnout (80.1%). She explained that Hong Kong New Zealanders had better English language skills and were more familiar with the British political system than the other two cohorts (Park, 2006, p. 49). Those advantages made them more active in voting. She also found that socioeconomic status and Asian cultural values had no apparent impact on Chinese New Zealanders' electoral participation (Park, 2006, p. 50).

Park (2006, pp. 60-62) also found that about 10% of Chinese New Zealanders had other forms of institutional political participation beyond voting. Signing petitions (13.3%) was the most popular institutional political participation among Chinese New Zealanders. Chinese immigrants from different places had different preferred forms of institutional political participation. For example, Hong Kong New Zealanders preferred assisting in a political campaign (5.8%) and writing or phoning government officials (5.4%). Assisting in a political campaign (9.2%) and donating money to a political party (2.6%) were the two most popular forms of Taiwanese New Zealanders' institutional political participation. Mainlander Chinese New Zealanders preferred signing petitions (10.0%) and writing or phoning government officials (4.6%).

The study also explored Chinese New Zealanders' non-institutional political participation. Park (2006, pp. 62-65) found that people from mainland China had higher rates of using Chinese associations to solve community-shared problems (17.1%) than those from Hong Kong (2.8%)

[5] Her study did not restrict Chinese and Korean New Zealanders to first-generation immigrants.

and Taiwan (8.6%). However, her research did not offer detailed information on how people used Chinese associations to address collective concerns.

Ip (2002) also investigated the role of Chinese associations in Chinese New Zealanders' political participation. Her research focused on Taiwanese New Zealanders and analysed how they used Chinese associations to strengthen their interactions with politicians. She found that Taiwanese associations often invited MPs from districts with sizeable Chinese residents to attend Taiwanese cultural events. Meanwhile, Taiwanese associations mobilised their members to vote during general and local elections by organising public lectures to explain how to enrol and vote.

Ip's and Park's studies are the main two studies available so far exploring Chinese New Zealanders' political lives in Chinese associations since 2000. Sedgwick's (1982) study is also helpful, but done four decades ago. His research demonstrated that Chinese associations played a critical role in Chinese New Zealanders' political participation since their arrival in New Zealand. Sidgwick found that Chinese merchants and shopkeepers used trade-oriented Chinese associations to create petitions questioning the murder of a Chinese gold miner in 1867 and the judge's discriminatory decision on a Chinese offender in 1872. During the Japanese invasion of China from 1937 to 1945, Chinese associations worked with the Chinese Consulate to lobby the New Zealand government to grant residence to refugee families from China. After World War Two, Chinese associations were committed to promoting Chinese New Zealanders' social and political integration. For example, the Seyip Association in Wellington built a hall in 1966 where its members could learn Chinese and English. People could also learn about New Zealand's political system there. The Wellington City Council also provided funds for its construction. The cooperation between the Seyip Associations wellington and the Wellington City Council shows that Chinese associations have a long history of cooperating with the government to provide public services for the community.

However, my research went beyond the existing studies mentioned above. Instead of re-examining whether nowadays Chinese New Zealanders still participate in those political activities introduced by Park, Ip, and Sedgwick, I aimed to analyse novel activities that those

studies did not mention or mentioned briefly. I focused on their associational activities that might not be considered political participation at first glance. My analysis demonstrates that those activities are political participation, and people engage in them to achieve multiple political goals.

Although there is little information on Chinese New Zealanders' online political participation (Zheng, 2022), studies on Chinese people's online political activities in China might offer references. Zhang and Lin (2014) found that people in mainland China used social media platforms, such as WeChat and Weibo,[6] to report their political concerns, further raising extensive discussions in society. They also found that some Mainlander Chinese directly lobbied their acquaintances, who were government officials, via WeChat to advance their interests. Mainlander Chinese also used online public opinions to force local governments to respond to unfair policies (Xu, Ye, & Zhang, 2018). Therefore, Wang and Shi (2018) praised Weibo as an online space for political participation that fostered Chinese people's political interest, developed their sense of belonging, and enhanced their civic virtues. Other studies also demonstrated that Hong Kongers and Taiwanese used various social media platforms to supervise governments' performance, express their needs, solve their problems, and advance their interests (Chang, 2017; Chen, Bai, & Wang, 2019; Hsieh & Li, 2014; Xia & Shen, 2018; Zhu, Chan, & Chou, 2020).

Studies have demonstrated that some first-generation immigrants keep practising their political participation habits developed in their homelands after arriving in receiving countries (Bilodeau, 2014; Black, 1982; McAllister et al., 2010). Therefore, I assume that people from the target groups (first-generation Chinese immigrants) may also engage in online political activities.

First-generation Chinese New Zealanders come from various places, such as mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore. When exploring their political participation, I considered

[6] WeChat and Weibo are the two most popular social media platforms among Chinese people. They are similar to Twitter and Facebook. People can post comments and pictures on them. Users can also form groups to communicate with one another simultaneously. They are not banned in mainland China. People can freely access these two applications worldwide.

the differences in the political systems and cultures of those places (Chu & Chang, 2001; Lee & Chan, 2008; Shi, 2001). People develop different political habits in different political systems and cultures. Scholars summarise such a phenomenon as the impact of political socialisation on political participation (McAllister et al., 2010). When they immigrate to another country, those habits may or may not change (Lien, 2010; White, Nevitte, Blais, Gidengil, & Fournier, 2008). Therefore, when analysing interviewees' political participation, I was vigilant about the influences of political socialisation on their political participation.

1.6 Mapping the dissertation

The dissertation consists of seven chapters. Chapter Two introduces the research methods. I first explain why I designed the research as an interpretive case study. The findings of the research primarily resulted from interviews. Therefore, I describe how I recruited participants and conducted interviews. The research's success depended on interpreting data and writing a research dissertation. Although I present data collection and analysis separately in the dissertation, I did them simultaneously during the fieldwork. I also present several challenges I faced while organising the findings into a dissertation. Additionally, I discuss my role as a Chinese student and an interpreter in the research and conduct a brief evaluation of my research methods in this chapter. The chapter concludes with the limitations of the present research.

Chapter Three offers a conceptual framework for the research. As mentioned earlier, the present research aimed to explore how first-generation Chinese New Zealanders participated in politics. Therefore, I needed a definition to help me differentiate people's political participation from their engagement in social activities. Chapter Three offers theoretical guidance in this aspect. It presents a chronological review of how scholars have developed different definitions to accommodate the emerging forms of political activities. Among numerous definitions of political participation, I chose van Deth's (2014) definition to help me differentiate interviewees' political participation from their social activities in the fieldwork. I explain the advantages of van Deth's definition in identifying political participation. However, I noticed his definition has shortcomings when differentiating interviewees' political participation from social activities. Therefore, I used Arendt's conception of politics to address those shortcomings and offer theoretical support for my identification of interviewees' political participation. The combined use of van Deth's definition of political participation and Arendt's

conception of politics is a reflective equilibrium approach to identifying political participation. Chapter Three explains this approach in detail.

Chapters Four, Five, and Six analyse interviewees' political participation from three aspects. Chapter Four focuses on the interviewees' institutional political participation. Chapter Five and Chapter Six concentrate on their non-institutional political participation. These three chapters depict how interviewees articulated demands, addressed concerns, and advanced interests in and outside of government institutions. These three chapters respond to the three sub-research questions listed earlier.

Chapter Four analyses interviewees' institutional political participation, focusing on their electoral activities and interaction with Chinese MPs and public servants. Van Deth (2014) would identify those activities as political participation, because they happened in government institutions. Many interviewees complained that they could not solve their problems and grievances by interacting with Chinese MPs and public servants. Interviewees understood their identities differently when interacting with public servants to articulate demands. Some believed they represented the rest of Chinese New Zealanders, while others insisted they only represented themselves. The findings enriched the knowledge of first-generation Chinese New Zealanders' institutional political participation. They also deepened the understanding of ethnic minorities' participation in representative politics.

Chapter Five reveals interviewees' online political participation by analysing their actions of making counterspeech to fight against online messages contesting democratic principles and widely shared social norms. I described their counterspeech as constitutive speech because interviewees disclosed the distinctive aspects of their political identities and protected consensus among conflicts by giving counterspeech. Van Deth's definition helped me identify their constitutive speech-making behaviour as political participation, because many interviewees acted under political motivations. However, some interviewees did not have politics-oriented purposes while giving counterspeech. In that situation, van Deth's definition did not recognise people's actions of giving counterspeech as political participation. Therefore, van Deth's definition generated two different outcomes when evaluating the same activity. It

is a shortcoming of his definition. Arendt's conception of politics solved this problem and offered theoretical support for my argument that constitutive speech-making behaviour is political participation.

Chapter Six discusses the interviewees' political lives in Chinese associations. I found that interviewees participated in various political activities in Chinese associations. However, I focused on their participation in two types of politicising activities because they have rarely been analysed in the existing literature. The chapter shows how interviewees used Chinese associations to politicise personal concerns as public affairs. Interviewees considered politicising personal concerns a promising strategy to address problems widely shared within the Chinese community. I described it as a bottom-up politicising activity. The chapter also depicts how Chinese associations asked the government for funding and how the government offered financial support to Chinese associations to solve people's politicised concerns. I described it as a state-funded form of politicising activity. Van Deth's definition helped me identify these two forms of politicising activities as political participation. However, his definition generated conceptual overlap between political participation and civic engagement, because both concepts emphasised the purpose of solving collective concerns. It is another shortcoming of van Deth's definition. I again used Arendt's conception of politics to solve the problem and defend my argument that politicising activities are political participation.

Chapter Seven presents the conclusions of the dissertation. It first shows how interviewees integrated politics into their daily lives based on their diverse forms of political participation. I then remind readers how I interpreted different activities as political participation. I also present the research's theoretical and empirical implications. Empirically, the present research broadened the knowledge of Chinese New Zealanders' political participation. It also updated the understanding of ethnic minorities' participation in representative politics. Theoretically, it improved how to define and identify political participation. I also suggest future research directions at the end.

Chapter Two Research Methods

2.1 Introduction

Choosing appropriate research methods is a prerequisite for successful research. The choice reflects the researchers' understanding of the nature of studied objects (ontology) and the ways of acquiring such knowledge (epistemology). Answers to how first-generation Chinese New Zealanders participate in politics and how they understand their participatory experiences are context-specific and vary individually. Researchers often generate different conclusions in different contexts. Therefore, following post-foundational epistemology, I adopted an interpretive case study approach to unveiling people's multiple experienced realities. Interpretive methods have not been not widely used as statistics-driven quantitative methods in studying political behaviour (Parsons, 2010). However, I found some studies conducted by political interpretivists to refer to when encountering challenges and difficulties in fieldwork (Barker & McMillan, 2017; Buck, 2009; Freedman, 2002).

This chapter explains my research design and its application. Section 2.2 explains some methodological considerations behind my design of the research as an interpretive case study. Section 2.3 offers an overall picture of how I recruited participants, conducted interviews, and overcame challenges in the field. I describe how I generated my coding protocols and constructed numerous themes into a theoretical interpretation of interviewees' political participation in Section 2.4. Section 2.5 explains my role as an interpreter in analysing collected data. I also briefly evaluate my research methods. Section 2.6 talks about the limitations of this research.

2.2 The initial phase: Designing and getting going

I encountered several methodological challenges when choosing an appropriate approach to answering the research questions. The first challenge was determining the guiding epistemological framework of the research. I believe we inhabit a world of our making (Onuf, 2012). Realities are socially constructed. They are local and specific. That means how researchers and participants understand the meaning of political participation varies across time, space and target groups. Their identities, life experiences and external environment affect their understanding. Therefore, researchers may adopt different categories of political activities to

evaluate people's political participation. Due to their unique backgrounds, participants also have different understandings of what activities comprise political participation. With these beliefs in mind, I followed a constructivist-oriented ontological position to design the research. The constructivist-oriented ontological position implied an interpretivist framework to conduct the fieldwork.

Another challenge was determining whether to design the research as a qualitative or a quantitative case study. Most studies on political participation have used survey-based statistics to assess people's political participation rates and patterns (Lien, 2004; Park, 2006). Other studies have adopted quantitative or mixed-method methods to explore how different variables affect people's political participation (Henderson, 2013; Sandovici & Listhaug, 2010; Wong et al., 2005). Those quantitative and mixed-method studies rely on large databases to generate analytical results. If sample pools are selected with representativeness, researchers often claim their findings could be generalised among the targeted groups (Seawright & Gerring, 2008).

However, the interpretivist framework reminded me not to assume that each participant would interpret the same research question in the same way. I believe people understand 'the political' and 'politics' differently, which further affects their sharing of different political participation experiences. Additionally, participants' diverse understandings of political participation may make them respond differently to the same survey question. However, it would be hard for researchers to determine the nuances of participants' different understanding of the same survey question when solely relying on survey questions (Creswell, 2016). Therefore, I adopted an in-depth interview-based qualitative method to conduct the research.

Researchers using a semi-structured interview-based approach to collecting data for their studies have often found that participants give unexpected responses during the interviews. That aspect is an advantage that survey-based quantitative research rarely has. Researchers sometimes ignore some aspects of studied phenomena when initially drafting their research plans (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). Semi-structured interviews empower participants to interpret the studied phenomena broadly, which offers enough space and flexibility for novel topics to arise in the responses (Queirós, Faria, & Almeida, 2017). Although those unexpected novel

topics are outside the initial interview protocols, they indicate new perspectives in participants' understandings of the studied phenomena. Therefore, semi-structured interviews are intended to compensate for researchers' limited capacity to consider all related aspects of the studied phenomena when drafting research questions. Noticing such an advantage, I decided to adopt a semi-structured interview-based approach to collect data.

Furthermore, interviews that strictly follow rigid questioning may make participants feel constrained and uncomfortable (Johnson, 2002). Novel concepts and themes may be unlikely to emerge from this type of interview (Beitin, 2012). Therefore, I chose semi-structured interviews to develop participants' potential and reveal their political participation.

However, I noted that purely relying on interviewees' narratives to understand first-generation Chinese New Zealanders' political participation was risky. First, interviewees may misunderstand the questions and give irrelevant answers. Second, interviewees might intentionally give inaccurate information to mislead researchers (Maxwell, 1992). Therefore, I also collected primary data from direct observation, casual talks with people I met in various political activities during the fieldwork, news reports, and government documents. I also consulted existing literature on Chinese New Zealanders' political participation. I compared and contrasted those studies' findings with my findings to increase the validity of my research outcomes.

2.3 The middle phase: conducting fieldwork

I conducted the fieldwork to collect primary data from June 2020 to February 2021 in Auckland, New Zealand.[7] During this period, I encountered several challenges regarding approaching interviewees, developing interview questions, building rapport with them, encouraging them

[7] I decided to recruit participants in Auckland for two reasons. First, the 2018 Census showed that most Chinese New Zealanders (69%) worked and lived in Auckland (StatsNZ, 2020). The fieldwork was conducted during the pandemic of COVID-19. The government announced travel restrictions several times during 2020 - 2021. I lived in Auckland during this period. Due to these two reasons, all interviews were conducted in Auckland in person. At first, I planned to conduct online and phone interviews, which would allow me to interview participants outside Auckland. However, after three online interviews, I found participants were more willing to share their participatory experiences in person rather than online. It was probably because interviewees would have a deeper sense of trust in me when communicating with me in person.

to recall their political-related activities broadly, and determining the sample size. This section explains how I resolved these challenges.

As mentioned in the Introduction chapter, the present research aimed to explore how first-generation Chinese New Zealanders participated in politics. The 2018 Census showed that mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong were the top three sources of first-generation Chinese immigrants intake (StatsNZ, 2020). Due to time limitations and logistical considerations, I narrowed the target group to first-generation Chinese New Zealanders from mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Recruiting interview participants

I used multiple ways to approach the three cohorts. I first recruited participants through Chinese associations, such as the New Zealand China Friendship Society, New Zealand Chinese Association Auckland, and the Chinese Association of North Shore Auckland. The internet offers a convenient and cost-efficient approach to contacting potential participants with diverse backgrounds (Marland & Esselment, 2019). Therefore, I posted recruitment advertisements on online social media. I also asked the interviewees, my Chinese colleagues and my Chinese friends to invite their acquaintances who met the participant selection criteria to join the project. Scholars term this strategy snowball sampling and use it widely in sociological studies to reach hard-to-find populations (Yin, 2003). Meanwhile, I attended multiple online and offline activities, such as Chinese association-organised activities, neighbourhood-organised activities,[8] political talks, street demonstrations, and national celebrations, to observe how people behaved and sometimes had casual talks with them. Approaching participants through diverse channels helped me gather richer information about first-generation Chinese New Zealanders' political participation. Furthermore, I adopted a snowball strategy to intentionally recruit politically active participants because they could offer me rich information about their participation in politics.

[8] In most cases, I was invited by my interviewees to join their neighbourhood-organised activities and met other Chinese New Zealanders in those activities. Some later became my interviewees, and others were willing to have casual talks with me.

Members of Chinese associations expressed great interest and firm support for my research. They constituted the majority of the respondents in the early interviewing stage. However, most were retired people in their 70s and 80s who immigrated to New Zealand to unite with their children. Noticing the lack of young and middle-aged respondents in my sample pool, I intentionally recruited more people in their 30s and 40s in the subsequent interviews via social media platforms and the snowballing strategy.

I recruited participants based on four criteria: 1) first-generation immigrants who identified themselves as Chinese ethnicity; 2) immigrants currently living in New Zealand; 3) citizens or permanent residents of New Zealand for over one year; 4) immigrants aged 18 and older. The term 'first-generation immigrants' in the present research encompassed individuals who were born and brought up in mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong and migrated to New Zealand as adults (aged 18 and older).[9]

Conducting interviews

Developing relevant interview questions is crucial for researchers to obtain valid material for data analysis (Creswell, 2016). I developed an interview protocol containing a set of flexible questions based on the existing literature on Chinese immigrants' political participation in New Zealand and other countries. I conducted four pilot interviews in August 2020 to test those questions. The pilot interviews provided feedback on whether those questions were understandable and meaningful. I also learned possible themes that might emerge from these interviews. I deleted questions that interviewees found hard to understand or answer. Based on the interviewees' feedback, I adjusted my interview questions.

[9] I made my decision on participant parameters based on a combination of analysis of the existing literature and New Zealand policies. People are eligible to enrol and vote if 1) they are 18-year-old or older; 2) New Zealand citizens or permanent citizens; and 3) they have lived in New Zealand continuously for 12 months or more at some time in their lives. Although many empirical studies have reported that language is a major barrier for first-generation immigrants to participate in politics in receiving countries, some studies have demonstrated that people are able to overcome this difficulty in various ways (Bueker, 2005; McAllister & Makkai, 1992). Therefore, the initial criterion of 'people who feel comfortable reading and communicating in English' was removed when I conducted the fieldwork.

I organised the final version of the interview questions in four broad thematic lines: 1) institutional political participation; 2) non-institutional political participation; 3) daily actions relevant to political and social topics; and 4) the roles of politics and political participation in their lives.[10] Although some interviewees felt confused about particular questions or gave irrelevant answers occasionally, most could reflect on their political participation through those questions actively.

Talking with people through semi-structured in-depth interviews occupied a central position in the present research. Interviewees were considered not only informational sources but also storytellers. By digging deeper into their stories, I sought their perceptions and understanding of politics and political participation in their everyday lives. Therefore, throughout the interviews, I encouraged them to elaborate on their participatory experiences related to social and political issues, both online and offline. I asked them to explain their use of specific metaphors and unique expressions that might suggest their particular perspectives on the research topics.

Participants' willingness to share detailed life experiences with researchers heavily relies on the rapport between the researchers and the participants (Jamshed, 2014). I built interviewees' trust by following a series of protocols and procedures approved for my research by the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee (reference number 024522).[11] Such mutual trust allowed me to have lengthy discussions with interviewees about their forms of political participation and their understanding of it. Our talks sometimes moved beyond participants' individual experiences, extending to the overall dynamics of the Chinese community.

I spent months developing stable and long-standing trustworthy relationships with some interviewees. Thanks to these long-standing relationships, they further invited me to join their activities after the first interviews were finished. By attending those activities, I could directly observe other Chinese New Zealanders' actions and talk casually with them about their political

[10] I attach the interviewe outline as Appendix A.
[11] I attach the approval of University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee as Appendix B.

participation.[12] Some interviewees also started new yet more in-depth conversations with me about the role and meaning of politics in their everyday lives after I joined their activities several times. All those conversations and observations helped me better understand their political participation and process the collected data.

All interviewees agreed to have their interviews recorded and transcribed. They could choose to have their interviews either in English or Mandarin. However, most interviewees preferred the latter, with one choosing to talk in English. Some interviewees were not fluent English speakers, so talking in Mandarin created a productive and comfortable environment where interviewees could fully express their thoughts and feelings more straightforwardly and profoundly. I later translated these Chinese conversations into English versions. I used both the Mandarin and the English interview transcripts as the original documents for data analysis. Doing so helped to avoid misunderstanding or misinterpretation during the Chinese-to-English translation. Additionally, in the latter chapters analysing and discussing interviewees' political participation, I quote the English version of the interviewees' comments in the main body and present their original Chinese replies in the footnotes. Offering both the Chinese and English versions of the transcripts allows readers to generate their reflections on the interviewees' responses.

However, it was not easy to translate interviewees' quotes to reflect their meanings accurately. Sometimes I was uncertain about contextualising interviewees' specific expressions in English. I asked my friends, another two Chinese doctoral students in the Politics and International Relations Department, for help in those situations. I also asked a professional Chinese-English translator to double-check the translation accuracy of the quotes used in the following chapters.[13]

[12] For ethical considerations, in the dissertation, I did not quote those casual talks with people who did not sign the Interview Participant Information Sheet. The information I got from those informal talks only served as complementary sources, similar to secondary data, for my analysis of interviewees' political participation.
[13] The professional translator signed the Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement, promising not to reveal the content of interviews to anyone else.

Another challenge I faced while interviewing participants was encouraging interviewees to reflect on their political participation profoundly and broadly. During the interviews, I noticed that, in many situations, when I first asked about their politically participatory experiences, most interviewees replied that they were not interested in politics or rarely participated in any political activities. However, with the conversations going on, they gradually realised that their lives were more closely tied to various forms of political participation than they initially thought. The phenomenon is common when researchers conduct in-depth interviews for their studies. Therefore, my task and challenge were to inspire interviewees to consider the concept of political participation broadly and encourage them to speak out about possibly relevant experiences. The relaxed and comfortable interview atmosphere and the mutual trust between us encouraged interviewees to have engaged conversations with me.

Determining the sample size was another challenge. Although scholars have not agreed on the number of participants for qualitative studies, some posit that the ideal number ranges from 30 to 50 (Charmaz, 2008). Practical experience has indicated that nearly 92% of thematic codes appear in the first 12 interviews, and new themes progressively emerge infrequently (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). The phenomenon is described as 'data saturation' (Charmaz, 2008).[14] Following the principle of saturation, I stopped interviewing new participants after completing 38 interviews because, by that time, interviewees' replies showed key themes repeatedly.[15]

In the end, the 38 interviewees were distributed as follows. Their detailed information can be found in Appendix C. I had 17 female interviewees and 21 male interviewees. The mean age among participants was 46, with an age range of 28 to 86. There were four New Zealand citizens and 34 permanent residents. The mean length of residence in New Zealand was 27 years, within a range of 4 to 63 years. The interviewees came from all walks of life and various socioeconomic statuses, including chefs, white-collar workers, entrepreneurs and research

[14] Saturation refers to the point when new information is unlikely to appear in the data in qualitative research (Charmaz, 2008).
[15] All interviews were recorded with the consent of interviewees. They were conducted strictly following the instructions and requirements of University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee with the approval number of Ref. 024522.

fellows. As the data presented in Chapter One suggests, the composition of my sample pool echoes the overall composition of the target community.

The interviews lasted 76 minutes on average, with the shortest being 48 minutes and the longest being 115 minutes. I wrote notes giving further details of the personal and environmental factors of the meeting during the interviews. I particularly concentrated on factors such as mood, tone, unique words and other information relevant to the narrative interpretation. The notes offered complementary information when I analysed the interview transcripts.

Document review

Secondary data collection from conference reports, journal papers and books started before interviews and continued until the end of the data analysis. I used the secondary data for four purposes. First, I extracted political participation theories from the existing literature before conducting the interviews to develop the conceptual framework and formulate interview questions. Second, unexpected viewpoints and perspectives emerged during semi-structured in-depth interviews. After reviewing the literature, I refined and included new questions in the subsequent interviews. Third, the secondary data helped identify concepts and themes that reflected interviewees' types and understandings of political participation for the data analysis phase. Last, the collected data helped connect my research findings with other political participation studies.

Although I present data collection and analysis in two separate sections in this chapter, the two processes took place simultaneously when I conducted the research. This section explains how I solved the challenges I encountered when collecting primary data during fieldwork. The following section explains how I analysed the collected data and drafted a dissertation to present data analysis outcomes.

2.4 The final phase: coding, interpreting and writing

Although data collection and analysis happened concurrently, I have described them in two sections to help readers better understand the process. Moving back and forth between desk

work and fieldwork was challenging and demanding, but it assisted me in updating interviewees' descriptions of their political participation. Meanwhile, some novel themes outside my initial interview questions emerged when analysing interviewees' narratives as fieldwork progressed. Conducting data collection and analysis simultaneously allowed me to add those unexpected yet important themes to my interview questions. It helped me develop a more accurate and holistic understanding of how interviewees viewed their politically participatory experiences.

Coding interview transcripts

Cortazzi (2001, p. 7) believed that "narratives translate knowing into telling." Therefore, analysing interviewees' stories was an effective strategy for making sense of how people viewed their actions and surrounding worlds. Recurrent and ambiguous words and expressions appeared through the process of transcribing. Those words and expressions were not just simple grammatical or prosodic errors. They indicated how interviewees constructed their identities and positioned themselves in the surrounding world. For example, interviewees' repeated use of 'we' denoted their different relationships with various groups. It was crucial to discern how they used this word to distinguish 'us' and 'others' in different contexts. They sometimes used 'we' to refer to the whole Chinese community. On other occasions, 'we' referred to particular cohorts they belonged to, such as Mainlander, Taiwanese, and Hong Konger, or different age cohorts. The shifted meanings of 'we' warned me not to assume first-generation Chinese New Zealanders as a naturally consolidated group. Their diverse identities often led to different political demands, concerns and interests. People's different forms of political participation also resulted from their diverse identities.

A core data analysis task is to reconstruct interviewees' words into coherent descriptions of their actions and experienced events (Georgakopoulou, 2006). Since knowledge is contextual and subject to agents' thoughts, languages and socialisation experiences, it is challenging to abstract a single unified reality from agents' social settings (Parsons, 2010). Therefore, it was crucial to include in the data analysis process interviewees' socioeconomic status, gender,

educational background, past experiences, career paths, and other individual factors.[16] Such interplay of factors and sources required me to choose an appropriate coding method to disclose the underlying information from interviewees' narratives.

I used thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to process the interview data. This approach is an inductive data-driven method to analyse participants' languages to make sense of their perspectives on the studied phenomenon or topics (Boyatzis, 1998). I adopted the approach for two reasons. First, since the research heavily relied on in-depth semi-structured interviews to collect primary data, I could obtain people's detailed narratives of how they joined various political activities and understood their participatory experiences. Using the thematic approach to analysing the rich information collected could reveal how interviewees participated in politics and understood their political participation. By quoting and analysing their narratives, I empower interviewees to voice their lived experiences in their own words (Parsons, 2010).

Second, during the interviews, I noticed that interviewees sometimes did not immediately identify their activities as political participation. They gradually realised their actions were meaningful political participation when they engaged in deep conversation with me. For example, when asked whether they had political activities in Chinese associations, many interviewees answered that they only participated in entertainment activities. However, when I asked them to share more stories about their associational lives, some began to talk about how Chinese associations helped them ease intergenerational family conflicts. Some did not recognise those activities as political at first. After listening to their stories, I observed political characteristics embedded in those activities and encouraged them to share more details about their participation in those and other similar activities. I also put forward some questions encouraging them to reflect on whether those activities were political or not at a deep level. Some interviewees identified their engagement in those associational activities as political participation at the end of the interviews. However, some insisted that those activities were not political. Nonetheless, I interpret their engagement in those activities as political participation. I explain my rationale in Chapter Six.

[16] To help readers understand interviewees' interpretations of their political participation based on their different individual characteristics, I summarised their detailed information, including their age, gender, socioecobomic status and length of residence in New Zealand, in Appendix C.

The above example shows that a comprehensive and accurate study on political participation often requires researchers' analysis to unveil 'hidden' stories. The interpretive approach allows researchers to interpret interviewees' responses based on their professional knowledge (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). For these two reasons, the thematic approach was suitable for data analysis of the present research.

A challenge for researchers adopting a thematic analysis approach is that not every interviewee is equally knowledgeable about the phenomenon of interest. Therefore, they may give biased or unreliable information, and researchers are responsible for identifying valuable themes from irrelevant messages (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). I used three strategies to increase the credibility of my analysis. First, the findings from existing studies on Chinese immigrants' political participation in New Zealand and other countries were helpful references to consult. Second, thanks to the stable relationships I developed with many participants, I had opportunities to re-discuss some confusing or contradictory findings with them. Their feedback helped me clarify the confusion. Last, I actively discussed my findings with my supervisors and colleagues, who offered helpful suggestions and reflections.

Thematic analysis has two goals. One is to view the phenomenon of interest through interviewees' subjective perspectives (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014), which can be achieved by coding interviewees' words and constantly comparing those codes. The outcomes of this process reflect participants' understanding of the studied phenomenon. The other goal requires researchers to make sense of interviewees' various interpretations that emerge in the first process. It requires the researchers to document their sense-making process. As Charmaz (2008, p. 174) pointed out, "we may think our codes capture the empirical reality, yet it is our view. We choose the words that constitute our codes and thus define what we see as significant." Therefore, thematic analysis contains a two-level interpretation. The first level analyses how interviewees interpret the studied phenomenon. The second level reveals the researchers' interpretations of interviewees' interpretations. It is crucial to notice and find a balanced position in these two processes. At the early stage of data analysis, I indulged in revealing interviewees' interpretations of their participatory experiences and overlooked my

interpretation of the interviewees' understanding. My supervisors helped me overcome the challenge.

I followed three stages to process the collected data to achieve the two goals in thematic analysis. The first stage aimed to become familiar with the data, to develop an overall perception of how interviewees participated in politics and how they understood their political participation. I listened to interview recordings and closely read interview transcripts several times while taking notes and reflecting on their responses. I explored the Chinese and English transcripts line-by-line to construct initial codes that I believed were relevant to my research questions. I developed 424 initial codes at the end of this stage. The field notes I made during the fieldwork were integrated into these initial codes. Using NVivo facilitated this process.[17] I listened frequently to the recordings and read the Chinese transcripts to refresh my familiarity with the interviewees' initial responses. By the end, I had a general overview of the interviewees' political participation.

After developing the initial codes, I moved to the second stage of transforming them into themes. I attempted to abstract the long descriptive codes into a higher level of concise and abstract themes based on existing literature on political participation. The materials I analysed at this stage were the initial codes generated at the first stage. The annotated transcripts and the existing literature on political participation served as supplementary materials. When I felt confused about particular initial codes, I returned to the annotated transcripts and published papers for reference. Moving back and forth among the codes, transcripts, and published works manifests the two-level interpretation discussed earlier.

On the one hand, I immersed myself in the interpreted materials that I concluded based on the existing literature. On the other hand, I stepped back from my interpretation and reviewed the interviewees' original words, comparing my interpretation with their own descriptions and

[17] Although I used NVivo to conduct initial coding and transform codes into themes, I did not rely on its automatic coding setup. Instead, I went through the transcripts line-by-line. The procedure of the first two stages is similar to researchers who conduct data analysis in a traditional pen and paper method. NVivo offered me a convenient platform to move back and forth among different codes and themes and compare them to look for underlying connections.

understandings of their political participation. By the end, I developed 24 major themes that involved various forms of interviewees' political participation and their understandings of political participation.

The final data analysis stage aimed to cluster themes into topics and connect those topics with existing theories of political participation. I connected diverse themes, clustered them into various topics based on their similarities, and categorised those topics into different forms of political participation. During this process, I gave up some themes because they did not fit well with the emerging structure of my dissertation. In the end, I concluded that interviewees participated in diverse political activities to articulate demands, address concerns, and advance interests. I summarised these activities in Table 3.1. Among various political activities, I chose three primary forms of political participation, including nine topics (see Table 3.1) for further analysis. The final goal of this stage was to connect the emerging forms of political participation with the existing theories and develop a comprehensive interpretation of the interviewees' political participation.

The three forms of political participation were interviewees' participation in formal representative institutions, their politicising activities in Chinese associations, and their online political discussions. Table 3.1 shows the relationships between the three forms and the nine topics. In Chapters Four, Five and Six, I explore and explain these three forms of political participation in detail. Besides these three forms, interviewees also participated in other online and offline political activities in and outside government institutions. Although I do not analyse them in a separate chapter, they are embedded throughout the dissertation.

<table>
<tr><td>Institutional participation</td><td>• Joining electoral activities
• Interacting with parliamentarians after elections
• Interacting with government officials (primarily through joining public hearings)
• Petitioning governments</td></tr>
<tr><td>Online political participation</td><td>• Giving counterspeech against comments contesting democratic</td></tr>
</table>

	principles or widely shared social norms • Writing political blogs (or articles on WeChat) • Making commentary videos on social and political affairs (on YouTube and Bilibili) • Donating online for grassroots movements and non-government organisations out of political concerns • Digital organising and mobilising
Associational political participation	• Joining trade unions or other professional unions • Joining advocacy groups for specific affairs (such as stopping pension reform, improving well-being for elderly Chinese, and improving mental and psychology health) • Joining community groups (such as against local board's plan to build a golf course in the neighbourhood) • Join civil associations for political concerns (such as environmental associations, human rights groups, animal rights groups, and religious groups)
Lifestyle political participation	• Lifestyle feminism • Lifestyle environmentalism • Lifestyle animal rights advocates • Lifestyle against labour exploitation • Lifestyle for minimalist philosophy
Transnational political participation (primarily targeting homeland's politics)	• Organising donation to help homeland overcome unexpected difficulties (especially during the COVID-19 periods) • Organising activities to support homeland's politics (such as activities supporting Tsai Ing-wen during the 2016 General Election)
Global political participation	• Joining demonstrates to support climate change • #MeToo Movement • Stop Asian Hate Movement
Other forms of political participation	• Organising and joining protests and demonstrations in streets • Protesting outside High Court

(Table 3.1)

Forms of political participation	Topics
Participation in formal representative institutions	Electoral activities
	Interaction with elected Chinese MPs
	Interaction with public servants beyond electoral cycles
Participation in political activities in Chinese associations	Politicising individual concerns as governmental affairs
	Politicising individual concerns as civic affairs
	Receiving the government's financial support to address politicised concerns
Participation in online political discussions	Giving counterspeech against comments contesting democratic principles
	Giving counterspeech against comments contesting widely shared social norms
Other forms of political participation	Other online and offline political activities

(Table 3.2)

Interviewees had different responses regarding why they participated in these political activities and what outcomes they wanted to achieve through their participation. Each discussion chapter (Chapters Four, Five and Six) analyses the interviewees' different answers and explains why they had such different responses. However, these explanations only served as supplementary materials to help readers better understand the interviewees' political participation. The focus of my discussions is how interviewees articulated political demands and addressed political concerns through various activities. The analysis in each analytical chapter answers the three sub-research questions in the Introduction chapter.

Although I spent the longest time coding interview transcripts and categorising the initial codes into different forms of political participation, these codes, themes and topics were not the key focus of my dissertation. I used them to illustrate my analysis of how interviewees participated

in politics and understood their political participation differently. In other words, if this dissertation is compared to a human body, the interviewees' interpretation of their political participation and my interpretation of the interviewees' interpretations are the blood and muscles. The conceptual framework, which is discussed in the next chapter, is the bones. The themes and topics that emerged during the data analysis stage are clothes and decorations. I constantly used them in the form of interviewees' quotations to make my analysis more vivid.

Writing an interpretive dissertation

When the data analysis was completed, I moved to the next phase of writing an interpretive dissertation for the research. I also encountered challenges translating my findings into a well-structured and coherent dissertation. The biggest challenge was to select the emerging forms of political activities that best illustrated the interviewees' political participation. At the end of the data analysis process, I found five intriguing forms for deep analysis.[18] I decided to choose three of them to construct the main body of the following analysis sections. To illustrate the interviewees' political participation and their understanding of their participatory experiences, I organised the three analytical chapters in a combination of the interviewees' original words and my interpretation to discuss their political participation.

Since the dissertation needed to include a two-level interpretive analysis, balancing participants' stories with my interpretation was another challenge I faced during writing. At first, I wished to offer more original narratives and let the readers engage actively in those materials to develop their own interpretations. Using interviewees' own words have two advantages. First, doing so retains their voices in narrating their individual experiences. It allows readers to observe the studied phenomenon from the interviewees' perspectives. Second, by reading those original narratives, the readers are empowered to access the pertinence of my interpretation. Accordingly, I included abundant interviewees' quotes in the first draft of the dissertation. My interpretation only occupied a limited proportion. My supervisors noted this unbalanced

[18] The five selected forms of political activities were: online political participation, political participation in Chinese associations, institutional political participation, transnational political participation that mainly focused on their involvement in homelands' politics and its impacts on their political participation in New Zealand, and participation in global political activities. I decided to discuss the first three forms only, because the interviewees mentioned them frequently. Although the latter two forms were as crucial as the first three, interviewees mentioned them occasionally. Therefore, there was less solid evidence for me to conduct a deeper analysis. They might be exciting research topics for future studies.

distribution of interviewees' interpretations and my interpretation and helped me overcome the problem.

Another challenge I encountered was connecting interviewees' stories with the existing literature. Two factors increased the difficulty of this task. First, given the contextual and interpretive features of the research, it was challenging to generalise my findings to Chinese immigrants in other countries. Therefore, although scholars have conducted rich studies on the political participation of Chinese Americans, Chinese Australians, Chinese Canadians and Chinese immigrants in European countries, those studies provided limited references for my research. Second, as noted previously, the studies concerning Chinese New Zealanders' political participation were embryonic, and most of them involved quantitative research or concentrated on people's voting behaviour. It increased my difficulty in creating parallels between the interviewees' stories and the existing literature. Nevertheless, I tried my best to align my findings with the existing literature on Chinese immigrants' political participation.

The last challenge was about protecting the interviewees' identities. I assured participants that their personal information would not appear in the dissertation. To address the problem, I used numbers as the interviewee's identity codes. Additionally, I removed the information that might lead to the identification of the interviewees. However, I kept relevant information, such as age, gender, occupation and length of residence, to contextualise the stories while guaranteeing confidentiality.

2.5 Reflexivity

The above sections explain how I designed the research, conducted data collection and analysis, and organised the research findings in an interpretive dissertation. Apart from those challenges mentioned above, interpretive case studies also require researchers to ensure the research's credibility, validity and confirmability (Creswell, 2016). Credibility requires researchers to associate their findings with reality, to demonstrate that their findings accurately reflect the studied phenomena (Yin, 2003). Validity reflects the appropriateness of the research methods used in revealing the essence and characteristics of the phenomena studied (Yin, 2003). Confirmability refers to researchers' confidence that their conclusions are based on participants'

words rather than researchers' potential biases (Creswell, 2016). These three factors are vital when evaluating the quality of research. This section explains some tips I used to guarantee the research's credibility, validity and confirmability.

I built the credibility of the research from three aspects. First, the well-designed interview questions ensured that I comprehensively explored the interviewees' political participation. I consulted four Chinese colleagues while drafting the initial questions to ensure the research questions were easy to understand. I also conducted pilot interviews and adjusted the questions to be understandable and relevant. Second, I developed trust with participants and established stable and long-standing relationships with many. The friendly interaction with the interviewees allowed me to develop an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of their political participation in New Zealand. Associating my findings with the existing literature and offering theoretical explanations was another approach to increasing the result's credibility, as Guba and Lincoln (1998) suggested.

I addressed the validity of the research in two ways. First, I used a triangulation strategy to collect data from multiple sources, such as in-depth semi-structured interviews, direct observation, casual talks, news reports and other secondary data. It increased the validity of the collected data when conducting case studies (Yin, 2003). Second, the research was valid from my logical reasoning when describing the findings and drawing conclusions, rather than its capacity to generalize the research's findings to a broader target group. Interpretive research does not require statistical generalisation. It aims to develop a deeper understanding of the studied phenomenon that could be used later to inform other settings (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014).

Confirmability, being free of researchers' bias, is vital for all research. However, interpretive researchers cannot remain utterly objective since they need to interact with participants. To tackle the concern, I quoted the interviewees' original words to complement the logical chain of my interpretation. It allows the readers to capture the interviewees' own perceptions of their political participation rather than solely relying on my interpretation. Additionally, I used the first person 'I' to help readers distinguish my interpretations from existing objective evidence.

As a Chinese student, my background and socialisation experience affected my interpretation of interviewees' political participation. I invited my supervisors and colleagues to examine my findings. This peer debriefing process helped me broaden my interpretation of the data and overcome my possible biased explanations, as Elbardan and Kholeif (2017) suggested.

My identity as a Chinese student (an insider in the Chinese community) affected my design of research questions and my interpretation of the interviewees' responses. It gave me both advantages and challenges when conducting research. Compared with non-Chinese researchers who study Chinese New Zealanders' political participation, I have prior knowledge of possible political activities in which people participated to articulate their demands and address their concerns. I have this advantage because I also engaged in some of those activities to advance my interests. Additionally, politics and political participation are sensitive topics among Chinese New Zealanders. Many Chinese immigrants felt reluctant to discuss politics-related topics because they feared being suspected as spies or traitors. Compared with non-Chinese researchers, my identity as a Chinese student gave me the advantage of building rapport with potential participants, despite not being easy.

Furthermore, as emphasised earlier, the forms of political participation interviewees mentioned and their interpretations of their participatory experiences were heavily affected by their socialisation backgrounds, especially the unique Chinese culture. Those unfamiliar with Chinese culture and who do not share similar socialisation experiences may find it hard to understand the interviewees' interpretations. They may also ignore the key but not obvious political participation forms embedded in the interviewees' narratives. I have similar socialisation experiences with many interviewees and am familiar with Chinese culture. These advantages helped me identify interviewees' 'hidden' forms of political participation that non-Chinese researchers might ignore.

Despite having these advantages, being a Chinese student also brought challenges when conducting the research. The most prominent one was that I occasionally neglected some interesting forms of political activities that the interviewees participated in. My neglect resulted from the fact that I am familiar with these activities. I assumed they were common forms of

activities that every New Zealander, Chinese and non-Chinese, would engage in. After talking with my supervisors (both non-Chinese) and non-Chinese colleagues, I realised that these activities were unique forms of activities that Chinese people engaged in and added them into my discussions.

2.6 Limitations

This dissertation described and analysed first-generation Chinese New Zealanders' political participation. It aimed to expand the knowledge of Chinese New Zealanders' political participation and broaden the understanding of the concepts of political participation and politics. Despite the significance of the findings, the present research had some limitations. First, all 38 interviewees were Chinese New Zealanders living in Auckland. Although nearly 70% of Chinese New Zealanders lived in Auckland, people also lived in other cities, towns and rural areas in New Zealand (StatsNZ, 2019).[19] I restricted my targeted group to Aucklanders because of the travel restrictions and health considerations during the COVID-19 pandemic. If I could have recruited more participants outside Auckland, I could have conducted a more comprehensive study on the political participation of first-generation Chinese New Zealanders.

Another limitation resulted from my restricting targeted groups to first-generation Chinese immigrants from mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Although these three places were the top three sources of Chinese New Zealanders' intake, accounting for about 70%, Chinese New Zealanders also came from other countries, such as Singapore and Malaysia (StatsNZ, 2019). As I discuss in Chapter Six, political socialisation affects people's political participation, and people in different countries and places often have different political socialisation experiences. Therefore, if I had included participants from other countries in my targeted group, I might have had more diverse findings.

Last, the dissertation only focused on interviewees' manifest forms of political participation. However, it is also crucial to investigate why people do not participate in politics. Sometimes, people intentionally choose not to engage in political processes to express their viewpoints,

[19] The 2018 Census (StatsNZ, 2020) shows that nearly 70% Chinese people lived in Auckland region, followed by Canterbury region (8.7%), Wellington region (8.6%), Waikato region (4.9%), and Otago region (2.2%).

demands and concerns (Downing & Brun, 2021; Hayden, 2010). Hay (2007, p. 6) observed that "many people regard their own decision not to participate in formal politics as a highly political act." Scholars describe such a phenomenon as political abstention.[20] Compared with other manifest political activities I analyse in the dissertation, political abstention is a passive form of political participation. Nonetheless, it forms part of Chinese New Zealanders' political participation. A comprehensive analysis of Chinese New Zealanders' political participation would ideally include discussions of political abstention.

[20] Political abstention differs from political apathy. The latter describes people's lack of interest in participating in any political activities (Davis, Elin, & Reeher, 2018).

Chapter Three Conceptual Framework – Identifying Political Participation

3.1 Introduction

As mentioned in Chapter One, the research aimed to explore first-generation Chinese New Zealanders' political participation. However, scholars disagree on how to define political participation (Conge, 1988; Ekman & Amnå, 2012; Oser & Hooghe, 2018; van Deth, 2014). Consequently, they identify different activities as political participation and reach varying conclusions about people's politically participatory performance. The phenomenon generated problems for my research. If adopting different definitions, I might have varied conclusions about the interviewees' political participation.

Additionally, when scholars adopt varied criteria to identify and assess people's political participation, they assess the quality of the same democracy differently. For example, a narrow definition of political participation focusing on electoral participation often pessimistically concludes that people withdraw from politics and the legitimacy of democracy is under challenge (Putnam, 2000; Verba et al., 1993). In contrast, a broad definition acknowledging civil and personalised activities tends to depict a vibrant democracy where people actively engage in politics to manage public affairs (Porten-Cheé, Kunst, & Emmer, 2020; Wang, Cai, Xin, & Chen, 2019).

Facing these problems, I believed that defining political participation was an unavoidable task to solve for the present research. This chapter aims to find an appropriate and updated definition that helped me study political participation more accurately. The chapter contains another four sections. Section 3.2 presents how scholars have expanded the concept of political participation to include novel forms of political participation that have emerged from empirical studies. In Section 3.3, I explain the advantages of van Deth's definition of bounding the concept of political participation within a manageable scope and its easy operationalisation. Due to these advantages, I chose his definition as the guiding theory to identify interviewees' political participation in the fieldwork. I also review how other scholars have examined and commented on his definition theoretically and empirically. Section 3.4 explains how I developed a conceptual framework to guide me in identifying interviewees' political participation in

fieldwork. Section 3.5 explains how I connected the conceptual framework to other chapters in the dissertation.

3.2 The historical evolution of defining political participation

Theoretically, the border between non-political and political spheres is blurred. Conventionally, people have often associated politics with governments' activities (Leftwich, 2004). However, many countries implemented decentralisation and privatisation in the 1970s. Those implementations were intended to help civil society develop competence in delivering public goods and settling political problems (Hay, 2007; Marsh, 2011). The partial transition of governance responsibility from government institutions to civil society has changed people's understanding of the domain of politics.

Practically, venues for people to articulate demands and address concerns have been increasing, boosted by globalisation and the rapid development of information and communication technology. Globalisation has introduced many new agents into the political realm, such as transnational corporations and international organisations. It weakens the central role that nation-states play in politics. Since the internet entered people's political lives, scholars have debated whether it launched a revolution or an evolution for defining political participation (Gibson & Cantijoch, 2013; Stolle, Hooghe, & Micheletti, 2005).

Due to these theoretical and empirical developments, scholars have engaged in intense debates about defining political participation, passing through five stages so far, from exclusively focusing on election-related activities to broadly covering any activity that generates political consequences. Each stage of evolution was full of intense debates and controversies. When political scientists found novel forms of political participation in their fieldwork, they worked with political theorists to expand the definition, trying to embrace those novel forms into the repertoire of political participation.

Empirically systematic analysis of people's political participation started in the 1940s, as the first stage of defining and studying political participation. Scholars set a narrow conceptual

boundary restricting political participation within the electoral arena. For example, Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet (1948) examined whom people voted for and why they made their decisions in American presidential campaigns. Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee (1954) investigated Americans' voting behaviour. Meanwhile, Campbell, Gurin and Miller (1954) analysed American voters' attitudes in the 1952 election. Studies of political participation in this stage focused on voting behaviour. Since the concept of political participation in this period was essentially synonymous with voting, scholars spent less effort developing a comprehensive definition.

By the early 1960s, scholars noticed that fellow citizens' contact with politicians and government officials in-between elections also affected political decision-making in government institutions. Responding to the discovery, Verba and Almond (1963, pp. 117, 148) described political participation as citizens' voluntary actions that aimed to affect the government, either individually or collectively. In another influential work, *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*, Verba and Nie (1972, pp. 2-3) defined political participation as "citizens' voluntary actions designed to affect the choice of governmental personnel and/or politics." Guided by this definition, they examined a wide range of political participation beyond voting and categorised it into four dimensions. The four dimensions were voting, campaigning, communal and contacting activities. The campaigning dimension encompassed activities of working for political parties or candidates, persuading others to vote, and making campaign contributions (Verba & Nie, 1972, p. 79). Communal activities referred to activities aimed at contributing to the community or public goods. They included all the activities intended to affect broader social issues in the community or society and often took place outside electoral environments (Verba & Nie, 1972, p. 96). The last contacting dimension referred to individual interaction with politicians and public officials to achieve personal or self-interested goals (Verba & Nie, 1972, p. 93). A contribution of Verba and Nie's work was that they raised scholars' attention to political activities outside of government institutions by adding communal activities to the repertoire of political participation.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, debates over the definition of political participation moved to a third stage. In this stage, scholars concentrated on people's engagement in elite-challenging

activities organised under the New Social Movements trend. Barnes and Kaase (1979) conducted pioneer work on political protests and violence in Austria, the United Kingdom, The Netherlands, the United States, and West Germany. They believed that 'dissent, disapproval, rejection and provocation' were all citizens' free expressions of their political grievances and demands. Therefore, these activities belonged to political participation, despite occurring in civil society. Following this line, Kaase and Marsh (1979, p. 42) defined political participation as "all voluntary activities by individual citizens intended to influence either directly or indirectly political choices at various levels of the political system."

Including protests in the repertoire of political participation triggered an intense debate over whether unlawful or violent demonstrations should be considered political participation. Although most scholars preferred to focus purely on legal protests (Conge, 1988; van Deth, 2014; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995), some maintained that civil disobedience and political violence were political participation (Harcourt, 2012). The dispute has not been resolved yet. Nonetheless, scholars have agreed to differentiate peaceful protests and demonstrations, such as joining a march or boycotting certain products, from more radical and violent actions (Parry, Moyser, & Day, 1992; Teorell & Torcal, 2007).

In addition to including protests in the repertoire of political participation, scholars also paid more attention to the communal elements of political activities during this period. Booth and Seligson (1976) noted that governments in Latin American countries often failed to provide public services to their people, either being not competent or unwilling. Therefore, neighbourhoods took the responsibility left by the governments and offered various public goods to people living around. They interpreted people's cooperative actions among neighbours to create and distribute public goods as political participation. To describe this phenomenon, they defined political participation as "activities that influence or attempt to influence the distribution of public goods" (Seligson & Booth, 1976, p. 6).

The idea that political participation aimed to offer public goods inspired other scholars to conduct increasing studies on community-based activities and voluntary activities (Checkoway & Aldana, 2013; Loader, Vromen, & Xenos, 2014; Martinez, Crooks, Kim, & Tanner, 2011).

Including more civil activities into the repertoire of political participation encouraged scholars to reflect on the boundary between the private (non-political) and public (political) spheres. Meanwhile, the expanded definition of political participation caused a fierce dispute over the relationship between civic engagement and political participation (Berger, 2009; Hooghe, 2014; Macedo et al., 2005).

Despite not having reached a consensus on differentiating civic engagement from political participation, most scholars have agreed that political participation is not constrained to activities within government institutions. Nor does it have to target politicians, government officials or government institutions. The boundary between civic and political participation has become blurred. For example, Parry, Moyser and Day (1992) proposed that citizens' interaction with other civic associations was political participation so long as they generated tangible political outcomes. A representative definition of political participation in this school is that "activity directly involves the polity – whether at the local or national level – or any activity intends to or has the consequences of affecting, either directly or indirectly, government actions" (Brady, Verba, & Schlozman, 1995, p. 280). However, this definition appears too broad to offer practical guidance for researchers to identify political participation in their fieldwork.

On the other hand, a few conservative scholars have insisted that political participation should be activities within the government's realm. For example, Hooghe (2014) maintained that politics should always involve relations of power and authority. Since government institutions were the key players in relations of power and authority, political participation was activities that eventually affected decision-making processes in government institutions. Therefore, he opposed incorporating communal and associational activities as political participation.

In the 1990s, under the impact of globalisation, debates on the definition of political participation entered a fourth stage. More scholars have agreed that civil activities used for political purposes are political participation for two reasons. First, globalisation has weakened nation-states' political power at local, national and international levels. Other actors, such as transnational corporations (TNCs), inter-governmental organisations (IGOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), have exerted increasingly significant impacts on politics

at various levels (Fox, 2014; Sloam, 2007). The power shift from nation-states to those various institutions below and above the national level has considerably changed people's political behaviour (Norris, 2011; Van Laer & Van Aelst, 2010). When the government has gradually withdrawn from people's lives and left more space for markets, private corporations and non-governmental organisations to fill the task of delivering public goods and welfare services, its importance as a target of political participation has declined (Marsh, O΄Toole, & Jones, 2006). Consequently, people would engage less frequently in government institutions-based forms of political activities. Instead, they would employ more personalised and individualised forms of political participation, such as joining single-issue advocacy organisations or transnational networks to articulate their political demands (Van Aelst et al., 2017).

Second, some scholars have argued that a trend in people's citizenship norms triggered by great economic success in a post-war globalised era also reshapes people's political behaviour to a large extent. For example, Dalton (2006) noted a dramatic change in citizenship norms that had happened in the United States and other industrial democracies and predicted that such change would occur in more Western democratic countries. People no longer endorsed duty-based citizenship norms that encouraged individuals to participate in elections and other institutional activities as a civic duty. Instead, they adopted an engaged citizenship norm that welcomed independent thoughts, a strong sense of social responsibility, and personalised expressions.[21] Due to changing interpretations of citizenship norms and citizens' duties, people were less focused on participating in conventional political activities within government institutions. Instead, they preferred to articulate political demands and address political grievances in more personalised forms (Dalton, 2008; Norris, 2011).

These phenomena of globalisation and citizenship norm changes have three considerable influences on political participation. First, the goals of political participation have extended beyond making public policy changes. Individuals also engage in politics to initiate social

[21] Other scholars have also noted the change in citizenship norms, yet used different terms to describe this phenomenon, such as 'monitorial citizens' (Schudson, 2000), 'standby citizens' (Amnå & Ekman, 2014), and 'critical citizens' (Norris, 2011). Ronald Inglehart (2008) also expressed similar ideas that people with postmaterialist values preferred to engage in bottom-up non-institutional political activities. Additionally, many scholars have doubted that the change of citizenship norms is a general pattern in every country after achieving great economic prosperity (Schnaudt, van Deth, Zorell, & Theocharis, 2021). Nonetheless, some have demonstrated that engaged citizenship norms indeed exist widely in some Western countries (Copeland, 2014; Hooghe & Oser, 2015).

change or to alter other people's ideologies, values and lifestyles (De Moor, 2017). Second, the feature of political participation is not solely instrumental. More people engage in symbolic- or expressive-characterised activities (Fox, 2014). Third, the forms of political participation that emerged in this stage are more personalised and individualised (Micheletti, 2003; Micheletti, Follesdal, & Stolle, 2008). For example, when individuals realised their expressions of specific moral and ethical standpoints generated tangible political outcomes through their everyday decisions and actions, they would engage in various political consumerism activities, such as boycotting and buycotting (Stolle et al., 2005).

Scholars describe the expanded repertoire of political participation during this stage as the rise of lifestyle politics or everyday politics (De Moor, 2017; Nah et al., 2007). The concept of lifestyle politics is introduced to describe people's actions of politicising everyday life choices. To embrace the idea of lifestyle politics, scholars have expanded the definition of political participation as people's intentional activities that advance social changes (Bennett, 1998; Giddens, 1991). Lifestyle politics-oriented activities can be practised both individually and collectively. Individual activity refers to "an individual's choice to use his or her private life sphere to take responsibility for allocating common values and resources" (Micheletti & Stolle, 2011, p. 128). Collective activity refers to "consciously collective activities aiming at fostering social change through promoting a lifestyle" (Haenfler, Johnson, & Jones, 2012, p. 2). People engage in lifestyle politics for multiple purposes, such as preventing environmental degradation, protecting animal welfare, defending ethical modes of production, addressing household waste disposal, and advocating the use of renewable energy (Balsiger, 2014; Wahlen & Laamanen, 2015).

A distinctive feature differentiating lifestyle politics activities from other political activities is that lifestyle politics expands political considerations to private spheres, covering multiple dimensions of everyday life (De Moor, 2017). Including lifestyle politics activities in the repertoire of political participation intensified the debates over the boundary between private and public spheres. To solve this problem, Stolle and Micheletti (2013) proposed a method to differentiate lifestyle politics from other non-political lifestyle choices. They believed lifestyle politics comprised 'other-regarding' actions that considered society at large, while most other lifestyle choices were 'self-regarding' actions. However, it is hard to exercise this criterion in

practice. Sometimes self-regarding activities might have effects on others and contain political implications. For example, some vegetarians are initially motivated by their individual health considerations and do not regard their activities as political participation. However, others might view their behaviour as political participation because their actions indeed convey political concerns about the environment and animal welfare. The example of vegetarians' diverse motives shows the difficulty in empirically practising Stolle and Micheletti's proposal.

With the rapid development of the internet, debates over the definition of political participation entered a fifth stage. The internet changes the way people connect with one another. Online communication breaks the restrictions of space, time and language. In addition, it allows people to produce digital materials that are easier and faster to access than previously traditional media platforms. Therefore, people are both information consumers and producers. Scholars have noted that the internet not only serves as a mobilising tool to encourage people to participate in politics (Bakker & De Vreese, 2011; Bronstein, 2013; Pennington, Winfrey, Warner, & Kearney, 2015; Theocharis, 2015), but also creates opportunities for individuals to engage in 'internet-specific' activities that would not be available without the internet, such as email bombs and virtual sit-ins (Di Gennaro & Dutton, 2006; Halpern, Valenzuela, & Katz, 2017; Quintelier, 2008; Van Laer & Van Aelst, 2010). These characteristics encourage people to engage in many online expressive activities, such as sharing online news content, liking politicians' posts, commenting on social activists' posts, and making online audio/video materials. Consequently, the definition of political participation has expanded to "activities aiming at raising awareness or exerting any political pressure to solve a social or political problem" to capture novel forms of online political activities (Theocharis, 2015, p. 8).

However, adding many expressive online activities to the repertoire of political participation intensified scholars' disputes over whether political participation could go beyond instrumental actions and include symbolic and expressive activities.[22] Based on their empirical studies, some firmly support admitting online expressive and symbolic actions as political participation,

[22] There are two types of debates among scholars who conduct empirical research on online political participation. The first one is about the definition of these new forms as political participation, and the second one is related to how to associate these online forms with offline forms. This project focused on the first type of debate. As for the second type of debate, scholars have proposed three possible relationships between online and offline political participation, namely differentiation hypothesis, replication hypothesis, and independence hypothesis. Detailed discussions about the second type of debate can be found in Gibson and Cantijoch's (2013) work.

due to their tangible impacts on politics (Gil de Zúñiga, Veenstra, Vraga, & Shah, 2010; Hirzalla & Zoonen, 2011; Vaccari & Valeriani, 2018). For example, Vissers and Stolle (2014) examined the young generations' Facebook activities of sharing opinions and joining online political groups to understand their political participation.

In contrast, Hooghe (2014) was cautious about adding expressive and symbolic activities into the repertoire of political participation. He worried that people might abuse the idea of 'expressive political participation' to recognise every 'politically relevant action' as political participation. He gave an example of a nude beach to defend his position. If many tourists decided to 'create' a nude beach for entertainment, local government officials had to respond to this phenomenon, which was a political decision. However, he thought it was absurd to automatically label tourists' actions as political participation unless they had clear political intentions. He insisted that welcoming expressive and symbolic activities into the repertoire of political participation without restrictions would open a Pandora's Box. It would lead us to a situation where political participation could be everything in daily life.

Similarly, Schlozman, Verba and Brady (2010) were reluctant to admit online expressive actions as political participation. They claimed that adding online expressive activities to the list of political participation would "dilute the meaning of politically engaged citizenship" (Schlozman et al., 2010, pp. 532-533). Van Deth (2014) also worried that if more and more expressive activities were added to the repertoire, the theory of political participation would end up with a theory of everything. Therefore, a few scholars prefer a more restricted and instrumental definition (Teorell & Torcal, 2007).

Although acknowledging expressive political participation can potentially dilute the meaning of political participation, it does enlarge the scope of political participation studies. For example, studies on political participation in the 1990s primarily concentrated on people's manifest forms of political activity (Barnes & Kaase, 1979; Verba et al., 1995). The discovery of the expressive characteristics of political participation has inspired many scholars to conduct rigorous investigations of people's political intentions (Downing & Brun, 2021; Hayden, 2010; Marsh et al., 2006). They have found that sometimes people intentionally choose not to

participate in political processes to express their standpoints. For example, Hay (2007, p. 6) observed that "many people regard their own decision not to participate in formal politics as a highly political act." Scholars describe people's intentional political disengagement as political abstention. It differs from political apathy, which describes people lacking interest in participating in any political activities.

In addition to the abovementioned debates over manifest forms of political participation, some scholars have also noticed the significance of latent forms of political participation. Activities under this category, such as regularly following political news and discussing politics with families and friends, may not be considered directly as political participation, but they are of great significance for analysing and understanding the conditions of political participation (Bakker & De Vreese, 2011; Ekman & Amnå, 2012; Kruikemeier, Van Noort, Vliegenthart, & de Vreese, 2014). Nonetheless, most scholars have rejected including those activities as manifest forms of political participation because they do not generate tangible political outcomes. They prefer categorising them as pre-participatory activities (Fox, 2014; Schlozman et al., 2010; van Deth, 2014).

However, some have adopted more inclusive attitudes, advocating for adding those pre-participatory activities to the list of political participation. For example, Conway (1991) suggested including following political news as political participation. Ekman and Amnå (2012) also admitted intentionally seeking political information as political participation. The suggestion of acknowledging pre-participatory activities as political participation generated another debate over whether people's state of being attentive to or interested in politics could be considered political participation.

Considering these disputes over political participation, I needed to find an appropriate definition to help me differentiate interviewees' political participation from their engagement in social activities. I found van Deth's (2014) definition was competent for this task. The following section explains why I made such a decision.

3.3 Bounding the concept: Choosing Jan van Deth's definition to identify political participation

The above literature review shows how the concept of political participation has been expanded to capture novel forms of activity that people join to articulate political demands and address political problems. Scholars follow two approaches when expanding the definition. The first approach allows the concept to expand freely to embrace as many novel political activities as possible. However, doing so has a risk of diluting conceptual clarity and might turn the theory of political participation into a theory of everything. The second approach is to restrict the concept to a manageable scope by offering a set of features that activities need to contain if identified as political participation. These features help researchers identify a form of participation when they see one (Ekman & Amnå, 2012; Fox, 2014).

Van Deth (2014) followed the second approach to defining political participation. He reformulated the question of 'what is political participation' to 'what are the features that any activity called political participation needs to fulfil'. He proposed a definition of political participation that included seven features to help identify all possible forms of political participation that have emerged so far.

The first feature addressed the dispute of whether being attentive to or interested in politics was political participation (van Deth, 2014, p. 354). He believed that political participation examined people's participatory behaviour. He rejected being attentive to or interested in politics as a form of political participation. According to this feature, he denied watching newscasts and intentionally seeking political information as political participation (van Deth, 2014, p. 354).

The second feature proposed that political participation should be voluntary (van Deth, 2014, p. 354). Van Deth insisted that political participation was activities people engaged in of their free will. However, he realised the practical difficulties of examining people's free will. Many theorists have argued that the condition in which individuals make their decisions genuinely based on their free will does not exist (Harris, 2012). Per this consideration, van Deth claimed that political participation should be free from observable coercion, such as legal obligations,

mandatory tasks, and economic or social extortions. If activities were conducted under force, threats or pressure, they were not political participation.[23]

The third feature tackled the dispute over whether to restrict political participation to activities done by citizens rather than politicians, civil servants, office-bearers, journalists, lobbyists, experts, and other similar agents. Van Deth maintained that political participation should be limited to non-professional, non-paid, amateur activities that citizens undertook (van Deth, 2014, p. 356). For example, when individuals are doing their jobs as civil servants, what they do during their shift is not political participation. Their engagement in political activities should be activities happening in their off-duty time. The first three features were the essential features that all forms of political participation should contain. In other words, all forms of political participation should be citizens' active, voluntary and non-professional activities.

The fourth feature concerned the location of political participation (van Deth, 2014, p. 356). Activities that occurred within government institutions and had the first three features were institutional political participation. Typical activities are voting, contacting politicians, and attending political party rallies. Van Deth thought a definition containing the first four features was a minimalist definition of political participation (van Deth, 2014, p. 356). However, people also join activities outside government institutions to articulate political demands and address political problems. To respond to those activities outside of government institutions, van Deth proposed a further three features to judge whether an activity outside of government institutions constituted political participation.

The fifth feature focused on the targets of political participation. It claimed that if an activity outside of government institutions contained all the first three features and targeted issues

[23] Van Deth's insistence that political participation should be citizens' voluntary actions generated hot debates over how to understand compulsory voting. According to International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), 42 countries have or had compulsory voting policies, despite their interpretations of how to implement such policies differing. The list of these 42 countries can be found here https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout/compulsory-voting. Van Deth admited compulsory voting as political participation because he did not treat it as a forced activity. He first argued that 'compulsory voting' was an inaccurate description. In reality, people often use this term to refer to a situation where citizens were obliged to register rather than vote. Additionally, although some countries required citizens to vote on election days, people remained free to cast blank votes. Therefore, he thought 'compulsory voting' was not an accurate term and rejected it as a forced activity (van Deth, 2014, p. 356).

within the spheres of government institutions, it was political participation (van Deth, 2014, p. 357). When people engage in this type of activity, they often address problems that governments have not recognised as problematic or have not been perceived as issues requiring the government's interventions. Activities such as peaceful demonstrations for climate change or voicing people's dissatisfaction with government policies can be placed in this category. Additionally, van Deth thought elite-challenging activities, such as activities aiming at changing the government structure, also belonged to this type of political participation.

Empirical studies of political participation have shown that many extra-institutional activities do not target government institutions (Haenfler et al., 2012; Hamlin & Jennings, 2011; Porten-Cheé et al., 2020; Stolle & Micheletti, 2013). Therefore, van Deth proposed a sixth feature to identify whether those activities were political participation. This feature responds to the phenomenon that some forms of political participation aim at solving problems and helping others (Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, Jenkins, & Carpini, 2006). However, van Deth believed that the features of 'solving problems' and 'helping others' were too broad for a practically helpful definition of political participation. He argued that the problems addressed during political participation should be collective or community-shared in a broad sense, rather than specific problems relevant only to particular organisations. Therefore, he claimed that activities outside of government institutions but having the first three features did constitute political participation as long as they aimed to solve collective and community-shared problems (van Deth, 2014, p. 358). Based on this feature, people's engagement in residents' self-organised neighbourhood committees to address communal problems is political participation.

It is noteworthy that when the concept of political participation is expanded to include activities aimed at solving collective and community-shared problems, scholars begin to find a conceptual overlap between political participation and civic engagement. For example, Macedo and his colleagues (2005, p. 6) defined civic engagement as "any activity, individual or collective, devoted to influencing the collective life of the polity." Van Deth admitted that Macedo and his colleagues' definition of civic engagement was a broad definition that captured the activities described in his definition of political participation.

Political activities with the fifth and sixth features were categorised as target-based political participation (van Deth, 2014, p. 358). The fifth feature stipulated that if the target locations of activities were government institutions, those actions were political participation. The sixth feature stipulated that if the target problems of activities were collective or community-shared problems, those actions were political participation. It further indicated that political participation did not necessarily target government agencies only, nor did it have to influence public decision-making.

Although the definition of political participation so far has expanded to include many political activities in civil society, it is not broad enough to accurately capture all citizens' activities in democratic governance. Empirical studies have found that people engage in many creative, expressive, personalised and individualised activities in civil society to address political demands and concerns (Gil de Zúñiga, Barnidge, & Diehl, 2018; Halpern et al., 2017; Micheletti et al., 2008; Vissers & Stolle, 2014). Therefore, van Deth proposed a seventh feature to judge whether those activities were political participation. He stated that "any activity with the first three features is political participation if it is used to express participants' political aims and intentions, despite that it happens outside government institutions and does not target political actors or collective problems" (van Deth, 2014, p. 359). He expanded the concept of political participation to include a motivational definition by including the seventh feature. According to this feature, activities such as boycotting, commenting on politicians' posts on social media platforms, and uploading audio/video materials to express political views are political participation.

The seventh feature indicated that intention should be considered when defining political participation. As a result, some symbolic and expressive forms of political activities belonged to political participation when participants' motivations were considered. However, some scholars have doubted the appropriateness of considering people's intentions in identifying political participation. Some have claimed it is wrong to assume that participants always know their intentions when acting. Therefore, they believe intentions are irrelevant when defining political participation (Hooghe, 2014). Some have pointed out that participants often have several intentions when participating in activities. Evaluating which intention plays the most significant role when people act is challenging. Therefore, they call for 'motivational criteria'

to help researchers identify and evaluate intentions accurately (Hosch-Dayican, 2014). Others have even challenged the reliability of relying on people's self-report intentions to determine the nature of people's actions. They believe that "the reasons people give for their behaviour are better understood as justification of a decision that has already been made" (Mutz, 2007, p. 94).

Nonetheless, van Deth insisted that the expression of political intentions was conclusive for defining political participation. He made this argument soundly, "participation would only be participation if the participants explicitly endorse political goals" (van Deth, 2014, p. 359). In his empirical studies of online political participation, Theocharis (2015) also emphasised the significance and indispensability of considering participants' intentions when studying political participation to support van Deth's arguments. Furthermore, van Deth emphasised that expressing intentions without action did not make people's behaviour political participation. He drew this conclusion because he believed all forms of political participation should involve action (van Deth, 2014, p. 354).

Van Deth believed that by expanding the concept of political participation from the minimalist definition to the motivational definition, he fulfilled the task of "covering the whole range of political participation systematically without excluding any form of political participation unknown yet" (van Deth, 2014, p. 349). His definition did not explicitly address whether or not political participation could include an 'illegal' activity because he thought the judgement of whether an action was legal or illegal was contextualised. He agreed with Conge (1988) that such a judgement of legality and illegality varied according to time, space and culture.

Van Deth confidently claimed that his definition was exhaustive and unambiguously captured any form of political participation that had emerged or would emerge in empirical studies of political participation (van Deth, 2014, p. 362). However, scholars have given both positive and negative comments on his definition. Some have praised the usefulness of his definition. They used it to differentiate novel forms of political participation from social and civil activities (Theocharis, 2015). Some have found his definition inappropriate to capture the essence of novel political activities. For example, De Moor (2017) classified six types of lifestyle politics

and pointed out that they could not be located suitably in van Deth's framework.[24] Although van Deth (2014) claimed that either target-based or motivational definitions could capture lifestyle politics, De Moor (2017) found that some activities of lifestyle politics were not strictly targeted or motivational.

Nonetheless, van Deth's definition has advantages over other scholars' definitions in differentiating political activities from social and civil activities. First, his definition is easy to operationalise. The seven features introduced in his definition offer clear guidance for researchers to identify whether an activity is political participation or not. Second, his definition has become a standard for scholars in the field. Many scholars' conceptual maps derive from his definition and modify it to capture specific political participation forms (Hooghe, 2014; Hosch-Dayican, 2014; Theocharis, 2015). Last, his definition expands the repertoire of political participation while sustaining its boundaries to prevent it from being a concept of everything. It includes both institutional and non-institutional political participation that the present research aimed to explore. Based on the abovementioned advantages, I used van Deth's definition to identify interviewees' political participation.

3.4 Developing a conceptual framework to identify political participation

I used van Deth's definition of political participation as the guiding theory to differentiate interviewees' political participation from their engagement in other social activities in the fieldwork. To be more precise, I examined whether the interviewees' mentioned activities contained any of the seven features presented in van Deth's definition. The examination included two steps. First, activities that did not include the first three features were not political participation, since van Deth (2014, p. 356) argued that all forms of political participation should have the first three features. Second, once activities were clarified as the interviewees' active, voluntary and non-professional actions (having the first three features), I examined whether they happened within government institutions, targeted the government, aimed to solve collective problems, or conveyed political intentions. Activities with one or a few of these three features were then accepted as political participation for the purposes of the present research. Following this process, I noted that interviewees participated in various online and

[24] De Moor (2017, p. 182) classified lifestyle politics into six types based on the level of organisation (individual or collective) and the strategic logic (direct or indirect).

offline political activities in and outside of government institutions. I analyse their diverse forms of political participation in detail in Chapters Four, Five, and Six.

Other scholars have critiqued van Deth's definition of political participation. Aware of those critiques, I adopted a critical attitude when using his definition throughout the research. In fact, I found some shortcomings in his definition. For example, when using his definition to examine interviewees' actions of giving counterspeech to refute online discourses contesting democratic principles and widely accepted social norms, I had two opposite conclusions. Some interviewees claimed that their counterspeech-making action had political purposes. Following van Deth's definition, I admitted their actions as political participation. However, some interviewees denied that their actions of making counterspeech conveyed political purposes. Those interviewees insisted on having no political intention when making counterspeech, and their actions did not target the government or try to solve collective problems. If I strictly followed van Deth's definition, their action was not political participation. It is absurd to have two contradictory conclusions when examining one activity's nature.

Additionally, van Deth's definition would acknowledge interviewees' politicising activities in Chinese associations as political participation because they aimed to address the Chinese community's widely shared problems. However, I found the feature of solving collective problems alone was insufficient to determine whether politicising activities were political participation or civic engagement. Many scholars have also defined civic engagement as activities attempting to address collective concerns (Macedo et al., 2005). Therefore, I could not determine the nature of the interviewees' activities by relying on the purpose of solving collective concerns alone. It was another shortcoming of van Deth's definition when identifying interviewees' political participation, since I could not accurately differentiate political participation from civic participation.

The above two shortcomings indicate a more profound weakness in van Deth's definition, heavily relying on the instrumental purposes of activities. In fact, his definition is not the only one having this shortcoming. Many scholars have also followed the same principle of depending on the instrumental purposes of activities to define political participation, as Section

3.2 shows (Parry et al., 1992; Stolle et al., 2005; Theocharis, 2015; Verba, Nie, & Kim, 1978). By analysing interviewees' descriptions of their political participation, I argue that many activities are intrinsically political, regardless of their instrumental purposes. My arguments stem from Hannah Arendt's conception of politics. She believed that politics arose from people's sharing of speech and action (Arendt, 1958, pp. 178-200). Based on her theory, I argue that the processes of disclosing distinctive identities, creating consensus within conflicts, and deliberating solutions for collective concerns assign political attributes to activities. Once activities involve those processes, they have political attributes and become intrinsically political, even when they do not serve detectable instrumental purposes. For the coherence of my discussion, I do not elaborate on Hannah Arendt's conception of politics here. I explain her theory in detail in Sections 5.4 and 6.5 (Chapters Five and Six), where I use it to address the shortcomings of van Deth's definition.

To anticipate that discussion, my combined use of van Deth's definition of political participation and Arendt's conception of politics manifests a reflective equilibrium approach to differentiating political participation from social activities. Political philosophers often use the reflective equilibrium method to examine whether people's moral judgements about particular issues are coherent with their moral beliefs. An example is John Rawls (2001) in his writing of *Justice as Fairness*. Such an approach allows researchers to move back and forth between their considered judgements about particular cases and the theoretical considerations they believe bear on accepting those considered judgements. They revise elements wherever necessary to achieve acceptable coherence between their judgements and their theoretical basis. When reaching internal coherence, they call that status a state of achieving a narrow reflective equilibrium (Norman, 2020).[25]

I used such an approach to identifying interviewees' political participation. I first differentiated their political participation from their engagement in other social activities based on van Deth's definition of political participation. However, as explained above, I found the conclusions drawn from van Deth's definition sometimes controversial, either inconsistent with interviewees' descriptions or being internally incoherent. Nonetheless, I deemed those

[25] There is a difference between narrow and wide reflective equilibrium. Daniels Norman (2020) gave detailed explanation on the differences in his paper Reflective Equilibrium.

activities political participation and used Arendt's conception of politics to theoretically defend my judgements. Therefore, a significant contribution of this research was to present the shortcomings of van Deth's definition of political participation. The Arendtian framework showed how researchers could differentiate political participation from social activities based on the political attributes of activities.

Furthermore, using the reflective equilibrium approach to identify political participation helps me reduce the risk of conceptual stretching (Sartori, 1991). Conceptual traveling (Sartori, 1991) happens when scholars use the same conception (in my case, the definition of political participation) to examine new cases. However, since reality is socially constructed, applying the same concepts to new cases might lead to a phenomenon of conceptual stretching, which refers to "the distortion that occurs when a concept does not fit the new cases" (Collier & Mahon, 1993, p. 845). In other words, when I tried to explore as many political activities as possible that first-generation Chinese New Zealanders participate in, I faced the risk of including every activity relevant to politics in my study, which would entail the negative outcome of conceptual stretching.

I used the reflective equilibrium approach to maintain the coherence of my analysis and meet this research's purpose. I first used van Deth's definition to identify possible political activities that interviewees mentioned. However, as explained earlier, van Deth's definition sometimes caused conceptual ambiguity, especially when it came to politicising activities in Chinese associations and making counterspeech online. Purely relying on van Deth's definition failed to offer convincing arguments to demonstrate these activities were political rather than civic engagement. In these situations, I looked for evidence from the existing studies on people's political participation in general and found that other scholars also analysed these activities as forms of political participation (Adman & Strömblad, 2018; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2018; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2009; Wu & Wang, 2007). Although these empirical findings supported my identification of these activities as political participation, I still need convincing theoretical evidence to demonstrate the political nature of these activities and differentiate them from social activities. To achieve this goal, I consulted Arendt's conception of politics. Her interpretation of politics arising from people's words and deeds enabled me to identify the political essence of these activities. Moving back and forth between van Deth's definition,

empirical studies, my own judgments, and Arendt’s conception helped me reduce the risk of conceptual stretching.

3.5 Summary

This chapter reviews how the concept of political participation has been constructed within academia chronologically. People begin to engage in more personalised and symbolic forms of political participation to express their concerns and address their grievances due to the impacts of globalisation, the development of the internet, and changing citizenship norms. Scholars have expanded their definitions of political participation to embrace those novel forms of political participation. Many scholars have developed definitions to respond to continuously emerging forms of political participation, and van Deth’s definition is prominent among them. His definition has helped researchers identify political participation in their empirical studies.

I used van Deth’s definition as a reference to identify interviewees’ political participation for two reasons. First, his definition is easy to follow when identifying political participation. Second, his definition has been well-examined both theoretically and empirically. It is an advantage that other scholars’ definitions do not have. However, I found some shortcomings in van Deth’s definition. Accordingly, I used Arendt’s conception of politics to address those shortcomings and defend my identification of interviewees’ political participation. I analyse the shortcomings and explain how I used the reflective equilibrium approach to identify political participation in Chapters Five and Six.

Chapter Four Political Representation and Participation: Chinese New Zealanders' Engagement in Formal Representative Institutions

4.1 Introduction

This chapter fulfils the goal of exploring first-generation Chinese New Zealanders' political activities within government institutions. Guided by van Deth's (2014) definition of political participation, I observed that interviewees had various forms of institutional political participation, such as contacting politicians and donating to political parties or candidates. It is impossible to enumerate every institution-based political activity they participated in within one chapter. New Zealand is a representative democracy, and people's diverse activities in formal representative systems account for a significant proportion of their institutional political participation. Therefore, this chapter concentrates on their electoral activities and how they articulated their demands and concerns by interacting with elected Chinese MPs and with public servants. I explored and interpreted the interviewees' political activities in the formal representative system, using Hanna Pitkin's (1967) theory of political representation to guide my discussion of the interviewees' interaction with Chinese MPs and public servants. The analysis demonstrated that interviewees' political requests evolved through their participation in representative systems. It also showed how they dynamically responded to the practice of descriptive representation idea.

Voting is a well-examined form of political participation in existing studies on Chinese New Zealanders' political participation as an aspect of their electoral participation, so I integrated voting into my broader analysis of interviewees' electoral participation. Successfully sending Chinese candidates to Parliament does not guarantee that Chinese New Zealanders will be influential in representative politics. People's capacity to address political concerns depends on elected representatives' parliamentary performance. Therefore, I also explored the interaction between interviewees and Chinese MPs.[26] I primarily focused on how the interviewees reported their concerns to Chinese MPs and how they evaluated Chinese MPs' performance in responding to their demands and defending their interests in public decision-making. In addition to politicians, contacting public servants is another approach to articulating

[26] I use the term Chinese MPs to refer to MPs of Chinese descent. However, the nationality of those Chinese MPs is New Zealander.

political demands.[27] People's interaction with public servants is also a significant part of their institutional political participation. This chapter covered this aspect as well.

The rest of the chapter proceeds as follows. Section 4.2 introduces Pitkin's theory of political representation and explains how I used it to analyse interviewees' political participation in formal representative institutions. Section 4.3 discusses interviewees' participation in various electoral activities. In Section 4.4, I explain the interaction between interviewees and Chinese MPs. I also show how interviewees evaluated the performance of Chinese MPs in responding to their demands and protecting their interests. Section 4.5 explores how interviewees addressed their political concerns in other government institutions outside Parliament, mainly through interacting with public servants. The concluding Section summarises the key findings of this chapter and presents the implications for future studies.

4.2 Hanna Pitkin's theory of political representation

Political theorists have proposed various theories of political representation to help understand people's activities in representative democracies (Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2008; Pitkin, 1967; Saward, 2010; Warren, 2013). Among those theories, I chose Hanna Pitkin's (1967) theory of political representation as the guiding framework to analyse and evaluate interviewees' activities in institution-based representative systems, because her theory has been well-examined and widely used in academia (Dovi, 2015, 2018).

Pitkin proposed four views of representation - formalistic, descriptive, symbolic and substantive. Each view highlighted particular features of representation. Researchers can examine particular aspects of political representation by focusing on these four views. Formalistic representation concerned how representatives obtained their positions and offices. It also examined how institutional mechanisms encouraged representatives to respond to their constituents. It analysed the processes of authorisation and accountability. However, Pitkin (1967, p. 38) pointed out that formalistic representation had limited value for assessing

[27] There is no agreed-upon definition of public servants. I use this term to refer to people who work in different government institutions. They are different from public sector employees who work in public education, health care, and other institutions to offer public goods and services. Public servants include elected and non-elected government officials.

representatives' actions. Therefore, other aspects of representation were needed to understand and evaluate people's engagement in representative politics.

Pitkin then introduced the idea of descriptive representation, which focused on the resemblance or correspondence between the representative and the represented. Advocates of descriptive representation believe that representatives should be people who share the same characteristics as or similar experiences to the represented (Dovi, 2018). Pitkin (1967) maintained that the accuracy of the resemblance or correspondence between the representative and the represented was a standard for evaluating descriptive representation. The concrete indicators of that standard could be whether representatives share physical characteristics, relevant opinions or interests with the represented (Dovi, 2015). However, Pitkin (1967) warned that purely focusing on descriptive representation to evaluate political representation would distract people's attention away from what representatives do. Therefore, she proposed substantive representation to help understand political representation more comprehensively.

Substantive representation focused on representatives' activities, evaluated by examining whether representatives spoke and acted for the interests of the represented (Pitkin, 1967). However, scholars disagree on how representatives should represent their constituents. Some argue that representatives should do what their constituents want. Others insist that representatives should do what they think is best for their constituents. Those endorsing a 'delegate' version of representation believe that representatives are bound to their constituents' known preferences. In contrast, those advocating a 'trustee' version argue that representatives should act following what *they* consider to be constituents' best interests (Dovi, 2018).

Last, Pitkin proposed symbolic representation, which examined how a representative stood for the represented (Pitkin, 1967). It reflected the meaning that a representative had for the represented (Dovi, 2018). For example, many British people regard Queen Elizabeth II as a symbolic figure for the United Kingdom. Studies on ethnic minorities' political participation have shown that many ethnic minorities believe that the appearance of representatives of their ethnicities in Congress or Parliament delivers a symbolic message that they are represented in public decision-making processes (Hayes & Hibbing, 2017; Lawless, 2004).

The following discussion on interviewees' participation in electoral activities shows their engagement in formalistic representation. When discussing their interaction with Chinese MPs and public servants, I analysed and evaluated their political participation from descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation aspects.

4.3 Participating in electoral activities

Participating in electoral activities allows people to engage in formalistic representation. According to van Deth (2014, p. 356), I considered electoral activities as political participation because they happened within government institutions. Voting was the most frequently mentioned form of electoral activity among interviewees. All interviewees reported that they voted in the 2020 New Zealand General Election. The following analysis first presents the interviewees' difficulties and motivations when voting and how they overcame those difficulties. It then shows their participation in other electoral activities beyond voting.

Interviewees said they encountered many difficulties when voting. A significant difficulty was their lack of the latest political information about the election, party candidates, and political parties. The finding echoed many scholars' conclusions that insufficient political knowledge discouraged political participation (Verba et al., 1995). Interviewees reported that some of their friends gave up voting because they were uncertain about whom to vote for. Ten of the 38 interviewees (more than 25%) reported being unfamiliar before voting with the policies of various political parties and the relevance of the two referenda attached to the election. The 2020 General Election was held along with the referenda relating to legalising End of Life Choice and cannabis. Interviewees reported they were highly interested in these two issues, because they were closely related to their daily lives. Thus, they wanted detailed information on these two referenda before voting. However, they could not find detailed information in Chinese on the government's websites. Although many Chinese mass media, such as the *Chinese Herald* newspaper and the Skykiwi website, introduced information about parties' policies and two referenda in Chinese, the information was not as detailed as the English

language mass media reported.[28] No political party offered detailed information in the Chinese language on its policies and candidates during the campaign period.

Barker and McMillan (2017) reported in their study on Asian New Zealanders' electoral participation that the media failed to provide the latest comprehensive information on New Zealand politics in non-English languages. My finding showed that the problem remained a significant difficulty for interviewees' voting in 2020.

Although political parties paid little attention to disseminating up-to-date information in Chinese, the Chinese community organised many grassroots activities to help people overcome this difficulty. For example, Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 4 mentioned that Chinese associations, such as the Chinese Association of Sunnynook Auckland (CASA), organised public lectures to introduce the two referenda and the policies of two major political parties' (the National Party and the Labour Party). Additionally, they recalled many Chinese New Zealanders spontaneously circulated articles introducing the two referenda on WeChat groups. These activities improved the interviewees' knowledge of the two referenda and political parties' policies, further facilitating them to vote. Interviewee 4 commented that he might not vote without those activities. He argued that a blind vote was irresponsible, and if he did not fully understand the referenda and candidates' policies, he would rather not vote. The phenomenon mentioned by Interviewee 4 echoed some scholars' findings that improved political knowledge motivated people to vote (Maiello, Oser, & Biedermann, 2003; Ondercin & Jones-White, 2011; Verba et al., 1995).

Although political parties and candidates did not spend much effort updating relevant information in Chinese, other governmental institutions realised the necessity to help Chinese New Zealanders overcome the language barriers in the enrolment and voting procedures. For

[28] The Skykiwi is an influential news website and online platform for Chinese New Zealanders to exchange information, discuss events and news, and share information. It ran a special column called '2020 New Zealand General Election' in Chinese to introduce relevant information, such as each political party's proposed policies, background information about each candidate, and following reports on each party's election activities. Detailed information about this column can be found here http://www.skykiwi.com/election2020/. However, compared with information offered by other the English ;anguage news websites, such as NZ Herald, Stuff NZ, and RNZ, the information provided by Skykiwi was less detailed. Similarly, Chinese New Zealanders could get limited information about the 2020 General Election from the *Chinese Herald* newspaper.

example, the New Zealand Electoral Commission disseminated information in Chinese about how to enrol and vote.[29] It also sent workers and volunteers to various neighbourhoods to explain enrolment and voting procedures in Mandarin and Cantonese (Electoral Commission, 2021b). People who were not proficient in English could also find volunteers who could communicate in Mandarin and Cantonese at most polling stations to assist them in voting. Therefore, although studies found that unfamiliarity with the enrolling and voting procedures impeded first-generation immigrants from voting in receiving countries (Galicki, 2018; Lien, 2004), it did not inhibit interviewees from voting.

Studies on first-generation immigrants' electoral participation in other countries also found that institutional barriers to voting led to immigrants' lower turnouts (Bass & Casper, 2001; Lien, 2004). However, unlike other countries that restrict voting rights to citizens, New Zealand grants permanent residents voting rights. Individuals aged 18 years and over are eligible to enrol and vote if they are New Zealand citizens or permanent residents who have lived in New Zealand continuously for 12 months or more. Additionally, individuals can enrol to vote until the day before the election. People who are occupied on election day can choose advance voting for the two weeks ahead of the election. Therefore, interviewees seldom reported that they encountered institutional barriers to voting.

Two primary factors facilitated interviewees to vote. The first factor was people's eagerness to have Chinese MPs in Parliament. New Zealand's mixed-member-proportional (MMP) electoral system allows people to elect MPs with two votes, where one vote is for a candidate in their electoral district, and the other is a vote for the voter's preferred political party.[30] Candidates who enter Parliament through the former vote are electorate MPs, and candidates who enter Parliament through the latter are called 'list' MPs, selected through lists of candidates prioritised by each party. One reason to implement the MMP system was to facilitate more ethnic minority representation in Parliament (Denemark, 2001). Since its implementation in New Zealand in 1996, the two major parties have always nominated some Chinese

[29] The Electoral Commission (Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri) is an independent Crown entity set up by the New Zealand Parliament.
[30] New Zealand replaced the first-past-the-post (FPP) system with the mixed-member proportional (MMP) system in 1994 to mitigate the political disadvantages and underrepresentation of minority and vulnerable communities (Denemark, 2001).

candidates in their party lists, thus using the party lists to appeal for more party votes from Chinese voters.[31]

All interviewees recognised the success of the MMP system in diversifying the composition of Parliament. They praised its impact in increasing the number of Chinese MPs. There was no Chinese MP before the MMP system. However, five Chinese MPs entered Parliament from 1996 onwards.[32] Many interviewees explicitly expressed that they distrusted MPs of other ethnic descent would wholeheartedly speak and act for Chinese New Zealanders. They insisted that only Chinese MPs would better know their political demands and represent their interests in Parliament. Some older interviewees recalled that when there was no Chinese MP in Parliament in the past, they felt invisible in New Zealand politics. About 95% (34 out of 36) of interviewees stated they voted because they wanted to send Chinese candidates to Parliament. Scholars also endorsed the MMP system in New Zealand. They commented that the MMP system promoted descriptive representation of ethnic minorities and women in Parliament (Barker & Coffé, 2018; McMillan, 2020; Miller, 2015). It helped create and maintain relative representational fairness in New Zealand politics (Nagel, 2012).

Interviewees' eagerness to have Chinese MPs indicated that they adopted the descriptive approach to understanding political representation. They trusted descriptive representatives to articulate their demands and defend their interests. Interviewees' comments that lacking Chinese MPs made them feel politically invisible also suggested a positive relationship between descriptive and symbolic representation. The existence of Chinese MPs sent a symbolic message to them that Chinese New Zealanders were represented in public decision-making.

The interviewees' desire to have Chinese MPs is reasonable and understandable. Theoretically, scholars have assumed that adopting a descriptive representation strategy would improve the

[31] It is interesting to observe that most Chinese MPs served or are serving as 'list' rather than electorate MPs. I explain why the two major parties are more willing to nominate Chinese candidates as 'list' rather than electorate MPs in Section 4.4.

[32] The five Chinese MPs are Pansy Wong (1996 – 2011), Kenneth Wang (2004 – 2005), Jian Yang (2011 – 2020), Raymond Huo (2008 – 2014, 2017 – 2020), and Naisi Chen (2020 - 2023).

underrepresented situations of ethnic minorities (Haider-Markel, 2007). For example, Mansbridge (1999) believed that descriptive representation was indispensable when marginalised and vulnerable groups distrusted politicians from relatively more privileged groups. Bloemraad (2013) also pointed out that a parliament that lacked the presence of particular ethnic minorities conveyed a signal of exclusion and harmed the interests of minority groups. Studies have also found a positive relationship between descriptive and substantive representation. Ethnic minority MPs in the United States and the United Kingdoms addressed more ethnic-related issues than non-minority MPs (Baker & Cook, 2005; Chaney, 2015; Sobolewska, McKee, & Campbell, 2018). Therefore, the interviewees' preference for having Chinese MPs is reasonable because they initially assumed that the Chinese MPs would raise their concerns and defend their interests in Parliament.

Additionally, although the New Zealand Parliament has always had at least one Chinese MP since 1996, there has been sharp contrast between the proportion of Chinese MPs across all MPs and the proportion of Chinese New Zealanders in the entire population. The 2018 Census showed that Chinese New Zealanders accounted for 5% of the population (StatsNZ, 2019). The current 53rd Parliament (2020-2023) only has one Chinese MP among the 120 MPs, accounting for 0.8%. The former 49th, 50th, and 52nd Parliament had the maximal numbers of Chinese MPs. Each of them had two Chinese MPs, respectively, accounting for 1.7%. Some scholars have suggested that an ideal form to practise descriptive representation should be based on proportionality (Guinier, 1995; Mansbridge, 1999). More than half of the interviewees also complained that the Parliament did not have enough Chinese MPs. They still felt underrepresented in terms of the number.

Although many interviewees firmly believed that descriptive representation would help improve the Chinese community's overall well-being, a few had different views. For example, Interviewee 27 and Interviewee 38 did not understand political representation within the descriptive representation framework. They did not think Chinese MPs would necessarily represent and defend the Chinese community's interests in Parliament. Nor did they think that non-Chinese MPs could not represent and protect Chinese New Zealanders' interests. Their political trust (distrust) in politicians had nothing to do with politicians' ethnicities.

Their statements also are understandable. Like them, many scholars have also suspected that descriptive representation would improve ethnic minorities' substantive representation in public decision-making (Dovi, 2018; Young, 1986). They think having descriptive representatives does not necessarily benefit ethnic minorities since the former do not necessarily speak and act for the latter (Gay, 2002; Saalfeld, 2014; Sobolewska et al., 2018). Minority representatives may sacrifice their groups' interests in exchange for better political careers in the future (Bergman, Comisso, Migdal, & Milner, 1999). The diverse political preferences within each ethnic group also weaken minority representatives' capacities to accommodate and protect their communities' interests when formulating policies (Saalfeld & Bischof, 2013). Empirical studies even discovered that increased descriptive representation was followed by a backlash in terms of substantive representation (Krueger & Mueller, 2001). Those arguments explain why Interviewee 27 and Interviewee 38 downplayed the significance of having Chinese MPs.

The ease of communicating with Chinese MPs also facilitated interviewees to vote. Most interviewees reported that they had opportunities to talk to Chinese candidates during the campaign. They could also contact Chinese MPs after the elections through various channels. Communicating with Chinese MPs allowed them to articulate demands directly without language barriers. The Chinese MPs also introduced relevant information on the issues people cared about during those talks. The smooth communication between Chinese MPs and interviewees increased their trust in Chinese politicians, encouraging them to vote. This finding echoed many scholars' conclusions that political trust boosted political participation (Verba et al., 1995). For example, Interviewee 13 said,

> I consistently voted for the National Party in the past two elections because I trusted Dr Jian Yang. He is a good politician. He always came to Chinese cultural events and talked with us. I talked with him several times. You could directly complain to him about your dissatisfaction without further concern.[33] (Interviewee 13)

[33] "过去的两届选举我一直都给国家党投票。这是因为我信任杨健博士。他是一位优秀的政治家。他经常会来参加各种中国文化节活动。我和他聊过几次天。你可以毫无顾虑地向他抱怨你的任何不满，反应任何问题。" (Interviewee 13's words in Mandarin)

In addition to voting, three interviewees (approximately 8%) also joined voluntary activities for party candidates during the campaign. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Park (2006) found that about 9% of Chinese New Zealanders reported volunteering or donating to a political campaign. My finding and Park's finding showed that Chinese New Zealanders engaged in various electoral activities to support their preferred candidates and political parties.

Interviewees chose to volunteer for Chinese candidates because they trusted Chinese candidates and wanted to raise Chinese New Zealanders' awareness of voting via their voluntary work. For example, Interviewee 16 explained why she volunteered for Naisi Chen's campaigns in the 2017 and 2020 General Elections.

> After talking with Naisi Chen, I felt she wanted to do something for the Chinese community. I was touched by her sincerity and decided to become a volunteer for her campaign activities. Also, I wanted to encourage more Chinese New Zealanders to vote and support her. We must have a Chinese MP; otherwise, no one will hear our demands and represent us in Parliament. Working with her makes me feel I am a part of New Zealanders rather than an alien immigrant.[34] (Interviewee 16)

For Interviewee 16, participating in electoral politics helped develop a sense of belonging to New Zealand. Studies found that the sense of belonging facilitated immigrants' political participation (Min, 2014; Stokes, 2003; Verba et al., 1995; Voicu & Rusu, 2012). Consistent with the literature, Interviewee 16's comments suggested a positive reciprocal relationship between immigrants' political participation and their sense of belonging to receiving countries. Such a finding also provoked me to reflect on the causal relationship between the sense of belonging and political participation.

Interviewee 8, who also volunteered for Naisi Chen in the 2020 General Election, claimed that he enriched his political knowledge through voluntary work. Some studies found that improved

[34] "通过和陈耐锶的聊天，我能感受的到，她确实是想为华人群体做一些事情的。我被她的真诚所感动，所以决定成为她竞选活动的一名志愿者。我成为志愿者的另一个原因是我希望可以通过自己的努力来动员更多的华人去投票。我们必须要有一名华裔议员在议会上来保护我们的利益，提出我们的顾虑。而且通过做她的志愿者，我渐渐有了一种归属感。我不再感觉自己是一个外乡人，一个移民。现在我感到自己是一名真真正正的新西兰人。" (Interviewee 16's words in Mandarin)

political knowledge facilitated political participation (Nah et al., 2007; Sotirovic & McLeod, 2001; Verba et al., 1995), indicating a positive reciprocal relationship between immigrants' political participation and familiarity with political knowledge. Meanwhile, Interviewee 8's comments provoked me to reconsider the causal relationship between improved political knowledge and political participation.[35]

Of the three interviewees who had assisted Chinese candidates during the campaign, none volunteered for non-Chinese candidates, even though they could communicate, read and write in English. On the other hand, Interviewee 16 mentioned she had six non-Chinese colleagues volunteering for Naisi Chen's 2020 campaign. This phenomenon indicated that some interviewees understood political representation within the descriptive representation framework. They preferred working and voting for Chinese MPs rather than non-Chinese MPs to represent their interests in Parliament.

Apart from assisting in a political campaign, five interviewees (13%) reported donating to political parties and candidates. However, none said they joined a political party or were nominated as a political candidate. It differed from Park's (2006) findings that 2.0% of those Chinese New Zealander respondents were party members, and 1.5% had been nominated as political candidates. The differences between my findings and Park's findings might be related to different sample sizes and definitions of Chinese New Zealanders.[36]

To conclude, interviewees participated in various electoral activities beyond voting. Most people understood political representation within the descriptive representation framework and applied this idea to every electoral activity they participated in. They felt politically visible by having Chinese MPs, which indicated a positive relationship between descriptive and symbolic representation. Additionally, although voting was an easy way to engage in electoral activities, lacking the latest political information about the election, political parties, and candidates in

[35] My research did not further explore the causal relationship between the sense of belonging and political participation. It might be an interesting research topic for scholars in the future.

[36] My research only tackled first-generation Chinese New Zealanders' political participation with a small sample of 38 interviewees. Park's research did not restrict Chinese New Zealanders' to first-generation immigrants and had a relatively large sample size of 1,000 Chinese New Zealanders.

the Chinese language caused difficulties for people's voting. Nonetheless, they solved the difficulties through different methods. On the other hand, the eagerness to have Chinese MPs, the accessibility of Chinese MPs, and understandable procedures for enrollment and voting all encouraged interviewees to vote.

4.4 Interacting with Chinese MPs after elections

As discussed above, most interviewees initially believed that having Chinese MPs would make their interests heard and protected in Parliament, and that was the primary reason they voted for Chinese candidates during the elections. However, people's success in sending Chinese candidates to Parliament through elections does not necessarily guarantee that their political interests will be well protected in the government's decision-making processes. Although interviewees reported their demands and grievances to Chinese MPs through various channels, most claimed that their problems remained unresolved. They commented that they had weak capacity to address concerns via interacting with Chinese MPs. It resonated with many scholars' findings that descriptive representation did not necessarily improve substantive representation. The following analysis depicts how interviewees interacted with Chinese MPs to articulate demands. It also explains why interviewees thought Chinese MPs failed to protect their interests and solve their grievances in public decision-making.

Writing to Chinese MPs' offices was a way for interviewees to articulate demands and concerns. Van Deth (2014, p. 356) would acknowledge this activity as political participation because it happened within government institutions. All interviewees recognised those approaches as political participation. Chinese New Zealanders used this method to report their concerns in previous decades (Park, 2006). Although most interviewees who wrote to Chinese MPs' said they received responses from the MPs, some felt dissatisfied with the MPs' replies. For example, Interviewee 24 mentioned she once wrote to a Chinese MP (person A)[37] to seek A's help. However, she was highly disappointed in A's responses. She expanded her individual experiences to the community and commented that Chinese MPs failed to protect Chinese people's interests.

[37] I intentionally delete this politician's name and use person *A* to refer to him/her. I made the decision under Interviewee 24's insistence. It also helps to protect the confidentiality of Interviewee 24.

> We used to trust A. A promised to help us whenever we needed A. However, we came to realise it was A's lies when we sought A's help. My friend's family had a horrible car accident because a young Kiwi boy intentionally hit their car on the highway. It is a racially discriminatory attack. We asked A for help, hoping A could publicly denounce the offender. However, A 'politely' declined our request and never made any public comments on the incident. A said we exaggerated the incident. It had nothing to do with racial discrimination. It was simply a driver's misbehaviour.[38] (Interviewee 24)

Interviewee 24's comments indicated that she and the MP (A) had different perceptions of their relationship. Interviewee 24 interpreted Chinese MPs as Chinese New Zealanders' delegates, and expected Chinese MPs to follow their Chinese constituents' requests and act as asked. Therefore, when A refused to condemn the misbehaving driver publicly, she felt betrayed by A. On the other hand, A likely understood the car incident differently from Interviewee 24 and did not act as she asked. It appeared that A, in this instance, conceived his/her relation to the Chinese community as a trustee of Chinese New Zealanders. A believed that (s)he had a better understanding of what was the best for Chinese New Zealanders and would act according to that understanding. Therefore, (s)he rejected Interviewee 24's request. This example showed that interviewees and Chinese MPs understood the principal-agent relationship differently. The disagreement made Interviewee 24 think Chinese MPs (*A*) did not represent and protect her interests. Based on that experience, she further claimed that Chinese New Zealanders had weak capacity to solve problems and satisfy demands by interacting with Chinese MPs. Therefore, the first reason interviewees felt weak at solving their concerns through elected representatives was the misunderstood principle-agent relationships between interviewees and Chinese MPs.

Additionally, Interviewee 24 indicated that descriptive representation did not enhance political trust. Instead, descriptive representatives' disappointing performance (in Interviewee 24's case

[38] "我们以前是非常信任 A 的。A 曾经许诺会在任何我们需要他（她）的时候来帮助我们。但是，当我们真正需要 A 的帮助的时候，我们才发现，他（她）曾经的许诺都是骗我们的。我朋友他们一家在高速公路上出了车祸，一个年轻的白人小伙子故意撞他们的车。毫无疑问，这就是赤裸裸的种族歧视。我们向 A 寻求帮助，希望他（她）可以公开指责这一行为。但是 A 最后礼貌地拒绝了我们的请求。他（她）从未就此事件公开发表过任何声明。A 认为我们夸大事实。他（她）认为此事与种族歧视没有任何关系，只是一名司机没有礼貌行车。" (Interviewee 24's words in Mandarin)

referring to *A*'s performance) generated political mistrust and decreased people's feeling of being represented. Meanwhile, Chinese MPs' (*A*'s) failure to actively respond to Interviewee 24's request also weakened her beliefs in political efficacy. The experience contradicted many studies' conclusions that descriptive representation enhanced ethnic minorities' feelings of political trust and efficacy (Banducci, Donovan, & Karp, 2004; Pantoja & Segura, 2003; Scherer & Curry, 2010).

Interviewees also communicated face-to-face with Chinese MPs to report their demands and grievances. Although most conversations happened outside government facilities, I identified this activity as political participation because they tackled issues of public policies. Van Deth (2014, p. 357) pointed out that activities that targeted issues within the spheres of government institutions were political participation. Ip (2001) mentioned this form of political participation among Taiwanese New Zealanders. I found that interviewees from the three cohorts (Taiwan, Hong Kong, and mainland China) all adopted this method to interact with Chinese MPs.

For example, Interviewee 18 mentioned his talks with the former National list MP, Dr Jian Yang. Although he praised Dr Yang's enthusiasm for collecting people's demands, he complained about no significant improvement in his reported issues.

> I met Dr Yang twice at Chinese cultural events and talked with him. I shared my concerns about intentional racial discrimination against Chinese New Zealanders. He gave positive responses, promising that he and the National Party would do something to address the problem. Nonetheless, nothing has improved so far. Instead, racial discrimination against the Chinese has risen after the breakout of COVID-19. I do not think Dr Yang fulfils his obligations well. I feel useless and meaningless to report our concerns to MPs since nothing would change in reality.[39] (Interviewee 18)

[39] "我曾偶然间在中国文化艺术活动上和他（杨健博士，前国家党议员）有过两次交谈。我向他提到过我很担心社会中出现的专门针对华人的种族歧视行为。他有就此问题作出积极的回应，他承诺他和国家党都将会对这一问题提出具体的解决方案，但是，事实上确实，直到现在为止，任何事情都没有改变。而且更甚的是自从 COVID-19 爆发以后，专门针对华人的种族歧视事件 发生的越来越频繁。我觉得杨健博士他并没有很好地履行他作为议员对人民所该尽到的职责。在政府制定公共政策的时候，他并没有代表和保护华人群体的利益。我感觉向他反馈我们的政治需求这件事在做无用功。一点意义都没有。因为不论如何，都不会有任何改变。" (Interviewee 18's words in Mandarin)

Interviewee 18 belonged to a group of people questioning Chinese MPs' capacities to represent and defend their interests in Parliament. They criticised Chinese MPs' failure to solve people's political grievances. This group also tended to view Chinese MPs as their delegates in Parliament. They expected the Chinese MPs to speak and act for their interests in public decision-making as requested. Therefore, when they found that the Chinese MPs did not make substantial changes to the issues they complained about, they questioned the MPs' competence and even lost trust in them.

Interviewee 18's comments suggested a negative relationship between descriptive and substantive representation. He claimed that Chinese MPs did not solve people's problems and demands. His feedback differed from the previous findings that descriptive representation significantly improved ethnic minorities' substantive representation (Bird, 2010; Chaney, 2015).

Interviewee 28 and Interviewee 32 thought that Chinese MPs failed to defend and accommodate people's political interests in public decision-making because they were 'list' rather than electorate MPs. Therefore, they kept emphasising the significance and necessity of having electorate Chinese MPs.

> It is good to see we have had Chinese MPs in the past two elections. This year, we also have Naisi Chen and Nancy Lu as the candidates on their party lists. However, they remain list rather than electorate MPs. I believe there are huge differences between the electorate and list MPs. You see how Jian Yang and Raymond Huo performed in Parliament. They had limited impact on developing and implementing public policies. Therefore, we need an electorate MP with more substantial influence who can fully and truly represent and protect our interests.[40] (Interviewee 28)

[40] "我很高兴看到在过去两届议会中，我们一直都有华人议员在其中担任职务。今年国家党和工党的党内名单中也有它们各自的华人候选人，陆楠和陈耐锶。但是她们仍然作为党内候选人而非选民候选人来参加竞选。你要知道，这两种候选人还是有很大差别的。从霍建强和杨健之前在议会中的表现就能看出，党内议员他们在议会真正能发挥的影响十分有限。因此，我们需要一个有更多实权的选民候选人可以真正并且充分代表和保护我们的利益。" (Interviewee 28's words in Mandarin)

Interviewee 28 noticed the differences between electorate and 'list' MPs. Although electorate MPs are often considered 'first-class' MPs and 'list' MPs are 'second-class' MPs (Miller, 2015, p. 63), the differences between these two types of parliamentarians in influencing public decision-making should not be exaggerated. Instead, I argue that what weakens Chinese MPs' capacity to defend people's interests and solve their concerns in public decision-making is their status as backbencher MPs. Four of five Chinese MPs who have entered Parliament from 1996 onwards have remained backbenchers.[41] In New Zealand's Parliament, the capacity of the Cabinet Ministers and backbenchers to affect the government's decision-making varies dramatically (Miller, 2015, pp. 61-85). All interviewees appeared not to understand the differences between the Cabinet Ministers and backbenchers. They expected the Chinese MPs to enjoy the same political power as MPs who are also in Cabinet to affect policy development substantively. Although some people realised that different types of MPs had different political power in Parliament, their interpretation was misguided, reflecting an unfamiliarity with New Zealand's political system.

Based on the above discussions, I argue that interviewees did not experience improved substantive representation via descriptive representation. They did not feel that having Chinese MPs substantially improved their political status. They had such a feeling, because they misunderstood the capacity of Chinese MPs. The interviewees' misunderstanding made them have expectations of the Chinese MPs beyond their actual capability as backbenchers. When the Chinese MPs could not reach the interviewees' expectations, they felt disappointed and criticised the Chinese MPs. Therefore, the interviewees' higher expectation of Chinese MPs as backbenchers was the second reason for their feeling of powerlessness to affect public decision-making via Chinese MPs.

As mentioned earlier, most Chinese MPs had entered Parliament as 'list' rather than electorate MPs.[42] Political parties' views on Asian candidates' roles in elections may explain why most

[41] Among the five Chinese MPs, only Pansy Wong has served as a Cabinet Minister. She served as Minister for Ethnic Affairs and Minister of Women's Affairs from 2008 to 2010.
[42] Among the five Chinese MPs, Pansy Wong was the only one who served as an electorate MP for Botany from 2008 to 2011. She was a 'list' MP from 1996 to 2008.

Chinese MPs served as ‘list’ MPs. In their study on how the MMP system represented diversity in New Zealand, Barker and Coffé (2018, p. 615) argued that the two major political parties viewed the representative roles of Asian and Pacific candidates differently. Pacific candidates were believed to “have sufficiently broad-based appeal across ethnic groups in society to win election as electorate candidates.” In contrast, the parties nominated Asian candidates for “their capacity to represent a particular ethnic or national group” (Barker & Coffé, 2018, p. 616). Therefore, political parties often nominated Pacific candidates as electorate candidates in the past. They were confident in Pacific candidates’ capacity to win the majority of constituents’ votes. On the other hand, parties often nominated Asian candidates for their party lists. They hoped to win more party votes from specific Asian communities by nominating Asian candidates. The parties had less confidence in Asian candidates to win the majority of constituents’ votes (Barker & Coffé, 2018).

McMillan (2020, pp. 96-98) also pointed out two factors that affected parties’ perceptions of the function of ethnic minority candidates. The first factor was the level of homogeneity within a particular minority group. The other factor was the extent to which minority interests coincided with the policies of particular parties. She argued that although the Pacific community had considerable linguistic and cultural diversity, they had a broadly shared socioeconomic profile. The shared socioeconomic profile further made them have similar political interests to defend. Additionally, Pacific voters had a long-standing alignment with the Labour Party (Salesa, 2017). Therefore, the shared political interests and the strong Labour support among Pacific voters enhanced the party’s confidence in nominating electorate candidates in places where Pacific people were concentrated (McMillan, 2020, p. 96).

However, Asian communities are internally diverse, as is the Chinese community. Chinese New Zealanders come from mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, and other places (StatsNZ, 2019, 2020). They also have varied socioeconomic backgrounds. The internal heterogeneity within the Asian communities makes it less likely for people of these ethnic groups to have broadly shared interests. They cannot vote as a bloc in specific electorates. That principle also applies to Chinese New Zealanders. Additionally, Asian New Zealanders, including Chinese New Zealanders, did not have a long-standing alignment with any political party (Vowles, Coffé, Curtin, & Cotterell, 2022). No political party felt confident about

winning the other because their voters were geographically dispersed. Therefore, the decision to nominate Asian or Chinese candidates on their party lists was a strategy for parties to win more parliamentary seats. It helped the parties to attract the support of specific Asian ethnic communities across the country (McMillan, 2020, p. 97).

I argue that interviewees' complaints about Chinese MPs' failure to integrate their interests into public decision-making also resulted from an assumption that the Chinese communities had broadly shared interests. McMillan (2020) already showed that the diversity across the Asian communities made it hard for minority representatives to speak and act for the broadly shared interests of an 'Asian' community. I also found that Chinese New Zealanders had diverse interests and demands during interviews. Therefore, I believe that McMillan's finding was also relevant to explaining interviewees' feelings of powerlessness to defend their interests in public decision-making by interacting with Chinese MPs. The difficulty for Chinese MPs to discover widely shared stable interests among Chinese New Zealanders was the third reason interviewees complained about their failure to defend people's interests in public decision-making.

People's varied attitudes towards migration policies exemplified the Chinese community's lack of commonly shared interests. Most interviewees brought up the issue of migration policies and expressed their views. Some supported the government in implementing restrictive policies that limited the influx of immigrants. Meanwhile, some harshly criticised the current policies. They wanted more friendly policies to attract more migrant workers. Therefore, when MPs organised debates in Parliament over migration policies, interviewees would always complain about the Chinese MPs' failure to protect their demands, no matter which positions the Chinese MPs supported. Because of the divided interests among Chinese New Zealanders, the Chinese MPs could not satisfy everyone's demands simultaneously. Unsatisfied interviewees tended to claim their interests were not protected by Chinese MPs during public decision-making.

Additionally, interviewees suspected that Chinese politicians sometimes intentionally downplayed people's demands and interests to secure their political careers if people's requests inhibited their promotion in the future.

> Although those Chinese MPs come to our communities and collect our demands, they sometimes sacrifice or neglect our demands for their own interests. After all, they are also members of their political parties. They need to win their parties' support. So, when our requests conflict with their long-term goal of getting promoted within the parties, they have to make hard decisions and often downplay or ignore our interests. I think when they do so, they betray us.[43] (Interviewee 18)

Interviewee 18 explicitly pointed out that Chinese MPs sometimes voluntarily downplayed the Chinese community's interests to secure their political careers. Although he thought the Chinese MPs' behaviour was irresponsible for the Chinese community, their decisions were reasonable as party members. Sometimes, if pursuing the interests of the represented impedes representatives from achieving upper political positions, the representatives may prioritise their interests and ignore people's demands (Bergman et al., 1999). It explains why the represented cannot ensure that elected representatives always speak and act for them (Dovi, 2018). It was the fourth reason interviewees felt Chinese MPs failed to protect their interests when making public decisions.

Although interviewees rarely mentioned how Chinese MPs were constrained by their party's discipline when making public decisions, I argue it was another factor why interviewees felt Chinese MPs failed to adequately and timely responds to people's demands. New Zealand's political parties have a long history of internal cohesion and discipline (Miller, 2015, p. 70). MPs are anticipated to speak and act under the instructions of their party's caucus, even when they cast conscience votes (Miller, 2015, pp. 72-73). Therefore, when interviewees' demands and interests contradicted the parties' discipline, it was reasonable to anticipate that Chinese MPs would ignore or downplay their requests.

[43] "尽管很多华人议员都会走进社区，听取我们的意见，了解我们的需求。但是，他们有时候会选择忽视，甚至牺牲我们的利益去更好地保护他们自己的利益。毕竟他们的首要身份是政党的一员，他们需要来自党内的支持。所以，如果我们的利益和他们想要实现更进一步的政治地位发生冲突的时候，他们一般都会忽视或者轻视我们的需求。当他们牺牲我们的利益以谋求自己的政治生涯时，他们就已经背叛了我们。" (Interviewee 18's words in Mandarin)

However, there was an important reminder. Although interviewees complained that Chinese MPs failed to solve their grievances and protect their interests in public decision-making, it might not be fact. Those Chinese MPs might disagree with the interviewees' complaints. They probably believed they adequately addressed people's problems and advanced their interests. It is difficult to accurately and objectively assess Chinese MPs' real parliamentary performance simply based on interviewees' feedback. Scholars interested in Chinese MPs' representative performance are encouraged to interview Chinese MPs' views on this aspect.

To conclude, interviewees contacted Chinese MPs to report their demands and grievances after the elections through various channels. However, most of their problems remained unresolved. Therefore, they argued that Chinese MPs did not solve their concerns and protect their interests in public decision-making. Some also distrusted Chinese MPs because they failed to respond to people's demands. It indicated that descriptive representation did not necessarily improve Chinese New Zealanders' substantive representation. Descriptive representation also did not necessarily enhance Chinese New Zealanders' feelings of political trust and efficacy.

4.5 Interacting with public servants beyond electoral cycles

In addition to contacting elected Chinese MPs directly, interviewees also had direct communication with public servants, such as being hired as consultants by the national or local governments (7.9%) and attending hearings organised by government institutions (23.7%). I identified these two activities as political participation according to van Deth's definition (2014, pp. 356-357). Van Deth claimed that activities targeting the government spheres were political participation. However, these two types of activities have not been analysed in the recent studies on Chinese New Zealanders' political participation (Clayton, 2016; Ip, 2001; Park, 2006). Therefore, I focus on these two activities to show how interviewees expressed their political concerns through institutional political participation. Additionally, interviewees evaluated differently how public servants responded to their demands. They also interpreted their identities differently when interacting with public servants. The following discussion analyses their disagreements.

Three interviewees mentioned they were hired as consultants by the Auckland Council or local boards.[44] The New Zealand governments, especially local governments, use this method to invite unofficial personnel with professional knowledge or backgrounds to participate in public decision-making processes. It is an inclusive practice because those professionals can introduce unique insights into the interests of particular groups that are ignored or downplayed by officials (Saward, 2010). Interviewees reported they could raise questions and suggestions to public servants by working in affiliated political institutions. However, they all felt they had not played a substantive, not to mention decisive, role in the decision-making processes.

For example, Interviewee 22, a co-founder of a new energy company, was a consultant for the business committee of his local board. He was excited when he received the invitation from the local committee of his neighbourhood asking him to be a consultant. Knowing he was the sole Chinese committee member, Interviewee 22 felt obliged to represent Chinese entrepreneurs, voice their demands, and protect their interests at the committee-organised meetings. Therefore, he collected other Chinese entrepreneurs' concerns whenever he attended activities organised by the chamber of commerce affiliated with the CSGANZ.[45] He also said that his business friends often came to him to share their problems and concerns. His friends' actions indicated that when Interviewee 22 thought he represented Chinese entrepreneurs on the committee, it was not only his claim. Other Chinese businesspeople also admitted his identity as a representative of Chinese entrepreneurs. They shared their concerns and problems with him and hoped he could address those issues with the local board. The interaction between Interviewee 22 and his entrepreneur friends showed that when Chinese people sought non-elected representatives to report demands, they still preferred descriptive representation.[46]

Interviewee 22 praised the local board for inviting him into the decision-making process and wholeheartedly fulfilled his perceived duty of representing Chinese entrepreneurs. However,

[44] The Auckland Council consists of 21 local boards. Local boards make decisions on public issues at a community level. They are aimed to serve the interests of communities and deliver public services and goods to local communities (GOVNZ, 2011).
[45] The full name of CSGANZ is Chao Shan General Association of New Zealand. I introduced this association in Chapter 1.
[46] Conventionally, people elect representatives to speak and act for them in formal representative system. However, Saward (2010) claimed that non-elected people could also make representative claims in certain situations, such as if they had expert knowledge in particular areas or were members of the represented.

he complained about having a limited impact on the committee's decision-making processes. He always felt powerless to defend Chinese businesspeople's interests and solve their problems.

> I am keen to collect other Chinese businesspeople's concerns and regularly report those issues to my manager. My manager appears to be concerned about those problems. He promises to address them with relevant personnel. However, most of my reported problems remain unsolved until now. Additionally, if I want to share Chinese entrepreneurs' complaints and concerns about our neighbourhood's future economic development at the committee-organised meetings, I must submit a draft to my manager for review in advance.[47] (Interviewee 22)

It is good that the government has realised the significance of inviting unofficial personnel from minority groups with professional backgrounds to represent those groups when developing public policies. It helps avoid neglecting or downplaying the interests of those groups. However, Interviewee 22 expressed a strong sense of powerlessness when trying to speak and act for the Chinese entrepreneurs on the committee. It showed that when non-elected descriptive representatives participated in politics, their presence did not necessarily generate greater substantive representation. The finding coincided with interviewees' feelings when interacting with elected descriptive representatives. Descriptive representation did not always promote interviewees' well-being and improve their substantive representation.

When asked why most of his raised concerns remained unresolved, Interviewee 22 assumed his manager pretended to take his suggestions seriously, but in fact had not. Although he reported Chinese businesspeople's concerns to his manager, he suspected his manager did not raise and discuss those concerns with other committees, let alone work out solutions. His feeling of powerlessness to affect public decision-making and assumed reason for his feeling reminds us that representation is a dual process of claim-making and claim-receiving (Saward, 2010). The audience (in his case, his manager) needs to acknowledge and respond to the representatives' claims. As Putnam (1993, p. 9) pointed out, "a high-performance democratic

[47] "我非常热衷于收集其它华人商人们的问题。我会定期将这些问题报告给我的经理。我的经理总是表现得非常关心这些问题。但是，到目前为主，我发现我反映上去的大部分问题都没有得到解决。另外，如果我想要在月会上公开分享一些华人社区所担心的问题，谈论我们对于社区未来经济发展的规划，我就要必须提前给委员会看我的稿子。只有他们同意后我才能发言。" (Interviewee 22's words in Mandarin)

institution must be both responsive and effective – sensitive to the demands of its constituents and effective in using limited resources to address those demands." Otherwise, having representatives from minority groups without taking their claims seriously will do nothing to improve minority groups' well-being.[48]

Apart from working with public servants, attending hearings and raising questions was another way interviewees could report their demands to public servants. Nine interviewees shared their experiences in this aspect. They commented diversely on their abilities to solve their problems in this way. Additionally, they disagreed about whether they represented other Chinese New Zealanders when raising concerns during the hearings. Their divergence offered another perspective on understanding the role of descriptive representation in ethnic minorities' politics.

Interviewee 17 shared her experience of attending Auckland Transport (AT) organised hearings.[49] She said the current public transportation system was unfriendly to immigrants who did not understand English. Some older Chinese immigrants understood simple phrases in English. However, most could not read and communicate in English in long sentences. They could not understand English instructions at bus stops and on the AT mobile application. It impeded them from taking public transport alone on long distances. Additionally, many older Chinese immigrants did not know how to drive in New Zealand because driving in New Zealand differs from mainland China and Taiwan.[50] The language barrier and different driving habits severely reduced older Chinese New Zealanders' freedom of mobility.

Interviewee 17 went to AT-organised hearings several times. She raised her concerns on this issue and requested AT to offer public transport information in Chinese. As an older Chinese who could communicate in English fluently, she felt responsible for speaking on behalf of the elderly who did not understand English and suffered from this problem. However, the problem

[48] However, it is also vital to understand that elected representatives do not have to respond to every request made by constituents. They also cannot respond to every request.

[49] Auckland Transport (AT) is a Controlled Organisation of Auckland Council. It is a government owned rather than private owned organisation. One of its major tasks is to offer bus, train and ferry services across Auckland.

[50] New Zealanders follow a convention of driving right-hand drive cars on the left-hand side of the road. Hong Kongers follow the same driving habit as New Zealanders. However, Mainlanders and Taiwanese drive on the other side of the road. Therefore, when some Chinese immigrants come to New Zealand, they are not familiar with the new driving convention and seldom drive cars by themselves.

has not been resolved so far. There is no Chinese instruction at the bus stop or on the AT mobile application. The AT website offers no information on timetables, live departures, or journey plans in Chinese.

> I am angry about it. The officials always expressed their significant concerns whenever I went to the hearings to complain about the issue. They said they completely understood how hard life was for older Chinese people without freedom of mobility. They always said they would do all they could to improve the situation. However, you see, nothing has changed. They pretended they listened to my complaints and cared about our well-being. But in fact, they did not. After all, it does not cause any trouble to most Aucklanders.[51] (Interviewee 17)

Interviewee 17 felt disappointed at AT's indifferent responses. Like Interviewee 22, she felt that contacting public servants was ineffective for solving political concerns. She assumed that the problem she raised did not harm most Aucklanders' freedom to mobility; in her perception, the public servants chose to ignore her complaints. She questioned the value of attending hearings because of these experiences.

Additionally, she speculated that the AT officials did not take her requests seriously because they saw her as an unimportant old Chinese lady. She suspected that the public servants might not believe her complaints represented other older Chinese New Zealanders' demands since not many people complained about this issue. In other words, the public servants in AT did not automatically associate her presence with descriptive representation when she raised the concerns at the hearings, regardless of the shared physical characteristics (and probably shared experiences) between her and other older Chinese people.

On the other hand, Interviewee 23 believed that raising concerns during the hearings effectively solved her problems. She said that she and other hearing participants prevented a golf course

[51] "我对他们的这种态度感到非常生气。每次我去听证会，我都会提出这个问题。那些官员们总是说他们很关心这个问题。他们总是说他们非常理解没办法随心所欲地想去哪就去哪对我们老年人的生活造成巨大的麻烦。他们也一直承诺说他们会尽一切努力来改善这种情况。但是，事实就是，没有任何改变。毕竟这个问题与大多数奥克兰人并没有关系。" (Interviewee 17's words in Mandarin)

from being built in her neighbourhood by expressing their objections. Additionally, she once complained that the equipment in the community activity centre of her neighbourhood was old and unsafe in one local board-organised hearing. Her complaints received other participants' support, and the equipment was replaced after the hearing.

However, Interviewee 23 had different views on her political identity when interacting with public servants. Both Interviewee 22 and Interviewee 17 said they represented Chinese New Zealanders when reporting concerns to public servants. On the contrary, Interviewee 23 explicitly stated that she did not represent other Chinese residents' opinions when raising questions during the hearings.

> I always ask questions at the hearings, but those questions are only what I am interested in. I do not think I have the privilege to claim I can represent other Chinese people or that my questions represent other Chinese residents' concerns. People always have varied demands and concerns. No one can represent others without others' consent. Therefore, whenever I ask questions, I always first emphasise that they are my personal problems, not representing anyone else.[52] (Interviewee 23)

Like AT public servants, Interviewee 23 did not automatically consider that physical similarity entailed her being a descriptive representative of other Chinese residents. However, other non-Chinese participants and public servants sometimes assumed she represented the Chinese community when she attended the hearings and asked questions. Interviewee 23 explained that maybe others saw she was the only Chinese participant; therefore, they automatically assumed that her opinions represented other Chinese residents' opinions. However, she clearly expressed that her questions were only her thoughts without representation whenever that situation occurred.

> Once, I was asked, 'What do you think the Chinese people will think of this project?' My answer is, 'I do not know other Chinese residents' opinions on it. I have never

[52] "我总是在听证会上提出很多问题，但是这些问题纯粹都是我自己感兴趣的问题。我认为我没有资格去声称我可以代表其它中国人提出这些问题。我的问题也不一定代表其它华人的担忧。人们总是有各种各样的要求和顾虑。没有旁人的授权，任何人都不能代表其他人。因此，每当我提出问题时，我总是会强调，这些问题都是我个人的问题，不代表任何人。" (Interviewee 23's words in Mandarin)

> talked with them about it. All I can say here is what I think of the proposal.' I always remind others not to assume that my views represent the Chinese community's views.[53] (Interviewee 23)

The above analysis showed that interviewees and public servants interpreted Chinese participants' roles differently when they reported demands and concerns at the hearings. Interviewee 22 personally claimed he represented the Chinese entrepreneurs. Meanwhile, other Chinese businesspeople acknowledged his representation by sharing concerns with him. Therefore, it is reasonable and legitimate for Interviewee 12 to claim he represented other Chinese entrepreneurs. Interviewee 17 also claimed that she represented the older Chinese people. However, I am uncertain whether other elderly admitted her representation or not since she did not mention it during the interview.[54] Therefore, her claim of representing other older Chinese New Zealanders is under question. On the contrary, Interviewee 23 firmly denied her representation because she never received requests from other Chinese residents asking her to be the representative. She firmly believed that representation stemmed from the consent of the represented.

It is also interesting to find that although Interviewee 17 and Interviewee 23 were the sole Chinese participants during the hearings, public servants interpreted their roles differently. According to Interviewee 17, the AT public servants probably did not think she represented the rest of the Chinese New Zealanders. However, the public servants from Interviewee 23's local board tended to assume she represented other Chinese residents. Contrasting public servants' different interpretations of Interviewee 17's and Interviewee 23's identities, I raise a further reflection on whether shared physical characteristics entitle people to claim representation.

[53] "我还记得有一次我参加一个听证会，被问到这么一个问题。你觉得其它中国人会怎么想这个项目呢？我的回答是，我并不知道其它华人住户对这个项目的想法，因为我们从来没有讨论过这个问题。我现在只能告诉你我个人对于这个问题的看法。我总是提醒别人不要认为我的观点就是其它华人的观点。" (Interviewee 23's words in Mandarin)

[54] I later contacted Interviewee 17 to ask whether she thought other older Chinese New Zealanders would accpect her as a representative in the AT-organised hearings. She said she had no ideas about it, but she confidently claimed that her question would receive popular welcome among older Chinese New Zealanders.

These differences remind us that when an individual or a group claims to speak or act for others, it is necessary to consider whether the represented communities acknowledge the so-called representation. It further provokes us to consider how to apply descriptive representation in practice. Having similar characteristics or experiences alone might be insufficient for someone to claim that they represent others. Policymakers, representatives and the represented all need to be aware of this issue.

To conclude, interviewees articulated their demands and concerns to public servants. People with professional knowledge or backgrounds had opportunities to work with public servants by acting as consultants for various government institutions. Others could communicate with public servants by raising questions during the hearings. However, many interviewees felt they failed to address their concerns and grievances by interacting with public servants. They complained that the public servants did not take their concerns and opinions seriously. A few had pleasant interacting experiences with the public servants. They argued that raising concerns during the hearings effectively solved their problems. Additionally, interviewees disagreed about their political identities as representatives of Chinese New Zealanders when raising concerns during the hearings. It reflected interviewees' deep thoughts on the relationship between shared physical characteristics and experiences and descriptive representation.

4.6 Summary

Throughout this chapter, I have shown how interviewees participated in various electoral activities. I have also demonstrated how they articulated their demands and concerns by interacting with Chinese MPs and with public servants. The discussions answer the first sub-research question mentioned in the Introduction Chapter. When interviewees participated in electoral activities, most believed in the descriptive representation principle and tried their best to support Chinese candidates during elections.

Although interviewees had various channels to raise their concerns within government institutions at the national and local levels, most felt they could not solve their problems by contacting Chinese MPs and public servants. Their feelings primarily came from four reasons. First, interviewees and Chinese MPs had different perceptions of their principal-agent

relationships. Most interviewees wanted the Chinese MPs to be their delegates, while some Chinese MPs likely understood themselves as people's trustees. Second, some interviewees neglected that Cabinet Ministers and backbenchers had different political power in Parliament. The neglect made them have higher expectations from the Chinese MPs as backbenchers. When the Chinese MPs could not address their complaints timely and adequately, interviewees started to blame those MPs' incompetence. Third, Chinese New Zealanders are internally divided with heterogeneous interests and demands. It is demanding for the Chinese MPs to satisfy every Chinese New Zealander simultaneously. Interviewees who were not satisfied tended to criticise the Chinese MPs' accountability. Last, when interviewees articulated demands and concerns to Chinese MPs and public servants, their requests sometimes were ignored or downplayed for various reasons, which made interviewees feel they could not solve their problems through institutional political participation.

The findings provoke us to reflect on how better to integrate Chinese New Zealanders into the current representative system. Most interviewees prioritised using a descriptive representation framework to understand how New Zealand should operate its representative system. They preferred having Chinese MPs. However, many interviewees complained that Chinese MPs failed to defend their political interests in public decision-making. Although the MMP system mitigated Chinese New Zealanders' underrepresentation in Parliament, they felt their well-being was not substantially improved on a large scale. Many interviewees felt the Chinese community remained underrepresented regarding the number of Chinese MPs in Parliament. Increased descriptive representation did not necessarily improve Chinese New Zealanders' substantive representation. Interviewees gradually realised that descriptive representation was not enough. Their political desires evolved from having Chinese MPs to having influential Chinese MPs.

Additionally, when interviewees reported their political concerns to public servants, they disagreed on their political identities. Some claimed they represented other Chinese New Zealanders because of the shared ethnic backgrounds and characteristics between themselves and other Chinese New Zealanders. Others insisted that the representation should come from the consent of the represented. Shared experiences, characteristics and interests did not generate qualifications for making representative claims. The contrast between these two

arguments showed that interviewees had different interpretations of who was eligible to make representative claims. Such a phenomenon reminds us to reflect on whether physical similarities or shared experiences entitle people to become representatives, as Dovi (2018) emphasised.

Chapter Five Constitutive Speech and Political Participation: Chinese New Zealanders Enacting A Political Sphere Online

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter analyses how interviewees participated in electoral activities and how they interacted with Chinese MPs and public servants as an aspect of their institutional political participation. This chapter explores interviewees' online political participation to reveal an aspect of their non-institutional political participation. The internet plays various roles in people's political participation. It serves as a tool for facilitating political participation. For example, political parties use the internet to disseminate campaign plans, approach voters and win supporters during election campaign periods (Bronstein, 2013; Pennington et al., 2015). The internet also serves as an independent political agent. It offers novel opportunities for people to engage in political activities that do not exist in the physical world, such as virtual sit-ins (Di Gennaro & Dutton, 2006; Halpern et al., 2017; Quintelier, 2008). Noticing the significance of the internet for political participation, I explore how interviewees participated in internet-specific political activities in this chapter. The analysis demonstrated how they engaged in politics as a form of everyday practice.

I observed that interviewees had various online political activities. For example, Interviewee 27 uploaded his self-made videos on Youtube and Bilibili to promote cultural exchange between the Chinese and non-Chinese communities. [55] He hoped more westerners could understand Chinese culture and eliminate their prejudice against Chinese people by watching those videos. Interviewee 28 wrote commentary articles on social media (primarily WeChat and Twitter) to express her opinions on hotly debated political and social topics. She also commented on political posts from politicians, social activists and celebrities on Twitter. When interviewees described those activities, they explicitly expressed specific political goals they wanted to achieve through those activities. According to van Deth (2014, p. 359), interviewees' engagement in those activities was political participation because those activities conveyed people's political intentions. [56]

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[55] Bilibili is a popular mass media platform among Chinese people, like Youtube. People can freely visit this website worldwide.

[56] Although van Deth (2014, p. 358) claimed that activities happening in civil society but conveying participants' political intentions were political participation, I found this view had practical problems in identifying political participation. I explain the problems and offer my solutions in Section 5.4 of this chapter.

In addition to those activities, I noted that interviewees had casual political discussions on WeChat.[57] However, when they talked about social and political topics on WeChat groups, the conversations were not always rational and harmonious. Interviewees reported that they felt some comments contested democratic principles or shared social norms in society. Following the interviewees' perceptions, I categorised those disruptive comments as messages contesting social-political principles of democracy. Some interviewees made counterspeech to refute disruptive messages,[58] while others chose to ignore them. This chapter particularly focuses on interviewees' actions of making counterspeech to refute disruptive comments, because the existing studies on Chinese New Zealanders' political participation have rarely analysed it.

The rest of the chapter proceeds as follows. Section 5.2 explains why I termed the counterspeech that interviewees made to rebut comments contesting social-political principles of democracy as a form of constitutive speech. I then depict how interviewees made online constitutive speech in Section 5.3. Most interviewees believed their constitutive speech could prevent disruptive comments from distorting public opinion, damaging democratic culture, and undermining commonly shared social norms. Section 5.4 first shows how van Deth would identify constitutive speech-making behaviour as political participation. However, I found some problems using van Deth's definition to recognise such behaviour. I then use Arendt's conception of politics to overcome those problems and offer solid theoretical support for identifying constitutive speech-making behaviour as political participation. Section 5.5 summarises the key findings and connects the chapter with the whole dissertation.

[57] WeChat is a popular social media application in China.

[58] Scholars have disagreed over the definitions of counterspeech. I followed Schieb and Preuss's understanding of counterspeech. They defined counterspeech as people's communicative actions "aimed at refuting rude, harmful, and hate speech and supporting targets and fellow counter speakers through thoughtful, cogent reasons and true fact-bound arguments" (Schieb & Preuss, 2018, p. 586). Therefore, interviewees' comments that protected social-political principles of democracy were counterspeech. People also adopt other strategies to refute speeches against the social-political principles of democracy, such as deleting them and educating online users on respectful conduct (Abdelkader, 2014; Richards & Calvert, 2000). Nonetheless, I only focused on interviewees' engagement in making counterspeech.

5.2 Defining counterspeech as constitutive speech

Interviewees made counterspeech to fight against online messages that contested social-political principles of democracy. I interpreted their counterspeech as constitutive speech for two reasons. First, the social-political principles of democracy were the common ground constitutive speech makers (interviewees) created and maintained for people to discuss public affairs. By making constitutive speech, interviewees created and maintained a common ground where individuals with varied political ideologies and opinions could discuss public concerns productively. Political talks might become battlegrounds among discussants if disruptive comments that threatened the social-political principles of democracy occurred online freely. Interviewees might get trapped in pure quarrels over their views without rationally and reasonably discussing the issues at the table.[59] In that situation, the normal ideological divergence might evolve into unhealthy and dangerous ideological polarisation and fragmentation, further threatening social stability. Constitutive speech helped prevent the social-political principles of democracy from being corrupted by hate and extreme speech. Additionally, new principles might generate from the interaction of constitutive speech makers and people who gave disruptive comments against the existing principles of democracy.

Second, constitutive speech disclosed speakers' distinctive political identities. Here I conceptualised identity as a broader phenomenon, including more than people's real names and socioeconomic status. Individuals' political ideologies, viewpoints on special issues and particular behaviour constituted part of their unique political identities. When interviewees made constitutive speech, they presented their specific views on discussed issues. The audience often did not know who constitutive speech makers were in the physical world. They profiled constitutive speech makers only based on the messages they gave. Additionally, sometimes people speak and act differently online and offline. They may also express completely opposite political views online and offline. Therefore, I claimed interviewees' online speech and action composed parts of their political identities, and constitutive speech makers (interviewees)

[59] Sometimes when people express their various opinions on discussed affairs online, they just argue with one another rather than giving logical and reasonable arguments. I did not treat those irrational quarrels as political discussions in this dissertation. My statement stems from Habermas's (1991) ideas. He argued that when individuals came to public spheres to discuss common affairs, they engaged in rational communication with one another (Canovan, 1983, p. 106). However, Tyler (2014, pp. 99-100) doubted to what extent individuals needed to act and speak rationally when discussing common affairs in public spheres. Young (2002) also criticised the idea of privileging particular rational and reason-giving deliberation in discussing common affairs over other types of communication, such as narratives. She thought it perpetuated the dominance of citizens with higher communication skills (Young, 2000, pp. 38-39).

revealed their multiple political identities via their counterspeech. Constitutive speech, from this aspect, created a political space where speakers could disclose their distinctive political identities.

Scholars have investigated people's engagement in online constitutive speech in European countries (Friess, 2021; Keller & Askanius, 2020; Porten-Cheé et al., 2020; Rieger, Schmitt, & Frischlich, 2018; Silverman, Stewart, Amanullah, & Birdwell, 2016).[60] Although no study has analysed Chinese New Zealanders' engagement in this respect so far, I noted that interviewees made constitutive speech during online political talks. Therefore, the following section illustrates how and why interviewees made constitutive speech to refute comments contesting social-political principles of democracy during online political discussions.

5.3 Enacting a political space via constitutive speech

A functioning democracy does not solely consist of institutional procedures of the rule of the majority. It also relies on citizens' voluntary and free participation in discussing public issues. Scholars have asserted that the soul of democracy is the process in which citizens exchange information about public issues, discuss politics, form opinions, and engage in political processes (Cohen, 1989; Elster, 1998). During the fieldwork, I noted that all interviewees had discussed social and political affairs on WeChat groups. I identified those discussions as political talks (or political discussions) because the topics discussed were politically relevant.

Most of the political talks mentioned by interviewees were casual and spontaneous conversations. They were not pre-scheduled. Instead, the conversations were often triggered by others sharing commentary articles and news reports on WeChat groups. People's comments on specific issues also incentivised other group members to join the discussions. Although WeChat groups were where interviewees often had online political talks, most people did not initially join those groups for political reasons. Nor did those WeChat groups form for political

[60] Scholars in those studies did not categorise people's speech to rebut comments contesting social-political principles of democracy as constitutive speech. They simply termed it counterspeech. However, I believed that counterspeech in those studies and constitutive speech in my research refered to the same strategy that people used to fight online messages threatening democratic principles and shared social norms in society.

discussion at first. Interviewees talked about diverse topics on the WeChat groups, and overtly political conversations accounted for a small proportion.

Interviewees' political talks on WeChat groups covered various topics. They talked about the government's COVID-19 response policies, racial discrimination, gender-related issues, economic development, house prices, public transport, the 2020 General Election and two referenda, pension reform, migration policies, employment, and other hotly debated political and social problems. They also talked about their everyday concerns, such as looking after children and aging parents, diverse gender roles in society, and boycotting specific products. Older and middle-aged, male and female, interviewees mentioned their participation in those casual online political talks. My observation differed from some scholars' conclusions that male, young and well-educated citizens were the main participants in political conversations (Baek, Wojcieszak, & Delli Carpini, 2012; Uldam & Askanius, 2013).

Although most political talks were harmonious, some interviewees reported they experienced unpleasant political discussions due to some discussants' aggressive, anti-democratic and anti-social comments. By making disruptive comments that contested social-political principles of democracy, speakers wanted to inject their 'noxious' ideologies into public spaces, change contemporary political principles, and reshape social norms in the wrong direction (Ganesh, 2018, p. 31). This phenomenon happened because the internet allows people with diverse ideologies and views to communicate with one another (Mutz & Martin, 2001). The internet also enables anonymous speech. Although it empowers individuals to express their unique views without worrying about sanction, people could also express anti-democratic and anti-social comments taking any or less responsibility (Ganesh, 2018; Rieger et al., 2018). The following analysis concentrates on how interviewees used constitutive speech to rebut those disruptive messages on WeChat groups because the existing literature on Chinese New Zealanders' political participation has rarely covered their actions in this aspect.

Interviewees mentioned they sometimes encountered comments that contested social-political principles of democracy during their online discussions.[61] When facing those disruptive comments, some interviewees made constitutive speech to refute them, while others chose to ignore them. However, most of those who talked about this problem expressed their concerns. They all worried that disruptive messages would distort public opinion and generate social antagonism and polarisation. Most of those making constitutive speech hoped their actions would prevent other participants who read those disruptive comments from being negatively affected.

Interviewee 12 recalled her engagement in discussing the 2019-2020 Hong Kong protests on a WeChat group. She said that during the discussion, participants talked about why these protests happened and how the Hong Kong and Beijing governments handled them. She remembered one discussant expressing the idea that violent protest was a workable strategy so long as people's ultimate goals could be achieved. She thought this idea violated the contemporary political principles of expressing political demands peacefully. She was worried that if more people accepted and practised this idea, more innocent people would get hurt during the violent protests, not only in current protests but also in the future. Thus, she immediately criticised the pro-violent protest idea.

> Protesting is for sure a legitimate way to express political demands. No government should suppress it. However, a violent protest is not ideal, even though it may help achieve political requests. It threatens people's physical safety. Meanwhile, it causes unnecessary confrontations between protesters and the police. I strongly recommend not to organise or engage in violent protests.[62] (Interviewee 12)

[61] Interviewees offered example comments that they believed contested democratic values and widely shared social norms. However, I noticed some of those comments were disputable regarding whether they were anti-democratic or anti-social. As I mentioned in Chapter 2, our reality is socially constructed. Democratic values and social norms might change across time and space. Additionally, different individual may perceive the nature of those comments differently. Some might consider those comments contested the social-political principles of democracy; while others might not. Nevertheless, I respected most interviewees' decisions and followed their ideas, considering those comments challenging the social-political principles of democracy.

[62] "抗议毫无疑问是一种合法的表达政治诉求的方法，任何政府都不应该抵制它。但是，暴力抗议永远都不是一种理想的表达政治诉求的途径，哪怕它有可能够帮助人们实现他们的政治诉求。暴力抗议威胁无辜市民的人身安全，导致抗议者和警方发生不必要的对抗冲突。我强烈建议大家不要去组织或者参加任何暴力抗议活动。" (Interviewee 12's words in Mandarin)

Interviewee 12 showed how she tried to persuade participants in the discussion not to accept violent protests by presenting reasonable arguments. She believed violent protests threatened social stability. Empirical studies found that online radical discourses sometimes succeeded in mobilising readers to engage in violent protests offline and generate social instability (Cardoso, Lapa, & Di Fatima, 2016; Gohdes, 2018).[63] Therefore, Interviewee 12's worry that other participants might reshape their understanding of protest and accept violent protest as a helpful approach to articulating political demands is understandable and reasonable. Meanwhile, studies also demonstrated that making counterspeech effectively delimited the adverse effects of comments that threatened social stability (Schieb & Preuss, 2018; Ziegele & Jost, 2016). Therefore, Interviewee 12's action of making constitutive speech might help prevent other discussants' from accepting the pro-violent protests idea.

Interviewee 12 recalled that she was not the only one against violent protests in that discussion.

> I am glad many participants also deny the view of violent protests. It shows that most of us share the same political principles – we respect protests, criticise the government for forbidding protests, and reject addressing political demands violently. Having such an agreement among most of us is important. It offers a basis for us to discuss public concerns.[64] (Interviewee 12)

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[63] Whether violent protest is a legitimate use of power to express dissent and resistance is under intense debate among scholars, as introduced in Section 3.2 in Chapter Three. For example, Martin Luther King Jr. believed that power was not given up without a fight. He explicitly articulated that "we have not made a single gain in civil rights without determined legal and nonviolent pressure" in his well-known writing Letter from Birmingham Jail (King Jr, 1992, p. 838). Barrington Moore Jr (1968) also expressed his support for violent protest and praised its contribution to promoting democracy. However, others have objected to admitting violent protests as a democratic way to express political demands and grievances. They insist that "the democratic citizen has an especially strong obligation to obey democratically derived laws' and 'violent protest is lawbreaking" (Kellner, 1975, p. 902). Based on this idea, some scholars further deny violent protests as political participation (van Deth, 2014). In this dissertation, I followed the interviewees' ideas that violent protest was not a legitimate use of power in a democracy. Therefore, comments advocating violent protests contested democratic values, and Interviewee 12's constitutive speech rebutting violent protests protected democratic values of doing politics peacefully. However, as I mention in the following section, democratic values might change over time. Public opinions on violent protests, therefore, may also vary across time and space.

[64] "我很高兴看到大部分的参与者都反对暴力抗议这一激进的想法。这表明我们大多数人都有相同的政治文化 – 我们尊重抗议，批评政府禁止抗议的行为，但同时我们反对通过暴力的手段来实现政治诉求。我认为我们大多数人对这一看法所达成的共识非常重要，它为我们讨论大家所关注的公共事务提供了基础。" (Interviewee 12's words in Mandarin)

She showed that most discussants agreed with and supported the principle of doing politics peacefully. Her agreement with most of the other participants indicated that most people shared a set of norms about how to manage public concerns in society. The shared norms offered a common ground for people to publicly discuss social and political concerns. When others attempted to damage the established common ground (the shared norm of peaceful protest in Interviewee 12's case), many tried their best to resist those attempts. This observation echoed research findings that people voluntarily fought against online comments threatening widely shared democratic values (Benesch, Ruths, Dillon, Saleem, & Wright, 2018; Friess, 2021; Mathew et al., 2019; Munger, 2017).

In addition to disruptive comments that challenged democratic political principles, interviewees also encountered messages threatening pervasive social norms during online discussions. For example, Interviewee 23 and Interviewee 20 faced offensive comments attacking their jobs when having discussions on WeChat groups. The attackers despised their career choices. Nonetheless, they did not become unconfident about their occupations because of those derogatory comments. Instead, they defended their career choices, presented the social values they created, and criticised the attackers' comments.

Interviewee 23 recalled that in a discussion about why some women chose to be homemakers, some participants attacked her after knowing she was a homemaker. They criticised she did not contribute to society. She felt offended by those words. However, unlike Interviewee 12*,* who immediately made constitutive speech to resist pro-violent protests, she defended her choice under the encouragement of other homemakers' comments.

> I was angry but did not want to argue with them at first. Each woman has the freedom to do whatever profession she wants. It is my choice to be a homemaker, and it is none of others' business. However, I was no longer silent at that time. I was encouraged to defend my choices after seeing other participants trying hard to demonstrate the value homemakers contributed to society and families. So, I joined them to refute those attackers' disrespectful comments. I am also worried that if we keep silent and allow those discriminating discourses to spread, it will generate and

> broaden the misunderstanding between homemakers and non-homemakers. [65] (Interviewee 23)

By presenting homemakers' social values, Interviewee 23 made constitutive speech to reject the offensive comments that homemakers did not contribute to society. The constitutive speech she and other homemakers made helped protect the widely shared social norm of granting each individual equal and free rights to choose careers. They also protected the social norm of acknowledging the contribution that people in various occupations created. [66] Like shared democratic political principles, those social norms were also the foundation for people to discuss social role-related issues publicly.

Comparing Interviewee 12's and Interviewee 23's responses shows that some people were self-inspired to make constitutive speech, and some were encouraged by others to make constitutive speech. Other interviewees also mentioned that they read disruptive comments contesting social-political principles of democracy during political discussions. However, they chose to ignore those comments. Their reactions echoed some scholars' findings that only a tiny fraction of online discussants were likely to make constitutive speech when facing disruptive comments that contested democratic principles and widely shared social norms (Gillespie, 2018; Schieb & Preuss, 2018). Some interviewees explained that they did not respond to those harmful comments because they did not want to generate further disputes with disruptive speakers. Others said that since other discussants already made counterspeech, they felt no need to do so.

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[65] "那些攻击我的评论让我很生气，但是我一开始并没有想和他们争论。每个女人都有自由选择她们职业的权利。选择做一名家庭主妇是我的权利和自由，与别人无关。但是这一次我不再沉默。看到其它家庭主妇们在群里非常努力地证明自己对整个社会和家庭所作出的贡献，我倍感鼓舞。所以，我加入了她们，和她们一起驳斥了那些攻击者们的无礼言论。我同时也担心，如果我们继续保持沉默，放任这种诋毁歧视家庭主妇的言论肆意传播，那么以后可能会让家庭主妇和非家庭主妇这两个群体产生隔阂，甚至是矛盾。"（Interviewee 23's words in Mandarin)

[66] Interviewee 23 believed that respecting individuals' free career choices and admitting their contributions to families and societies was a social norm when talking about people's various social roles publicly. People may or may not acknowledge it is a widely accepted social norm. They may also have different views on the correctness of Interviewee 23's statement. As mentioned above, social norms change across time and space. I took Interviewee 23's statement as a social norm in this dissertation, because the interviewees who brought out the issue agreed with her. They praised homemakers' contributions to families and societies and insisted they were productive to society. A critical task of interpretive research is to empower interviewees and respect their views. Therefore, I took Interviewee 23's position on this topic, yet it did not mean I totally agreed or disagreed with her social norms.

Interviewees made constitutive speech for various reasons. However, the ultimate goal was to protect democratic values and widely shared social norms in society. Interviewee 12 explained that if she did not emphasise the possible harm of violent protests, other participants might be misguided and choose a dangerous way to articulate political demands in the future. By making constitutive speech, she protected a shared principle of doing politics peacefully and prevented noxious comments from distorting public opinion. Otherwise, people who read and believe the discourse that protesting violently could effectively pressure the government to accept protesters' demands might be seduced into adopting violent protest. The violent protests might further undermine normal social order and disrupt others' routine lives. Interviewee 23 made constitutive speech to create and maintain a politically correct perception of homemakers in society – they were productive rather than useless to society. She made constitutive speech, aiming to protect social norms that each individual's career choice should be respected and their contributions to society should be valued.

Similarly, Interviewee 38 explained that he made constitutive speech during the discussion to prevent sexist speech from causing gender antagonism in society.

> You may read misogynist or misandrist comments in different online discussions. It is a hazardous signal. It may provoke confrontation between men and women. Gender antagonism has become a severe social problem in South Korea, and I do not want New Zealand to be the next one. There should be no animosity between men and women. Therefore, I criticise those misogynist or misandrist comments whenever I read them.[67] (Interviewee 38)

Interviewees also talked about making constitutive speech in a proper tone to refute disruptive comments. Interviewee 27 gave his viewpoints clearly.

> I always rebut radical and anti-democratic comments in a more euphemistic tone, not letting people who gave those statements feel disrespected. I want to convince them by logical reasoning and arguing. Some people choose more straightforward

[67] "现如今，你可以在不同的线上讨论中看到厌男或者厌女的评论。这是一个非常危险的信号。它很容易引发男女之间的对抗。性别对立已经成为当今韩国一个非常严重的社会问题了，我不希望新西兰成为下一个韩国。男女之间是不应该有仇恨的。因此，每当我看到这些仇视男性或者仇视女性的言论时，我都会批评这些评论。"(Interviewee 38's words in Mandarin)

> and sometimes rude tones. I had a horrible experience. The initially peaceful discussion eventually escalated into a scolding between the two discussants. It is not the correct way to handle disruptive speech.[68] (Interviewee 27)

He advised people to make constitutive speech appropriately. His observation echoed scholars' findings that when people made counterspeech in an uncivil and rude way, they would not mitigate or eliminate the adverse effects of harmful comments. Instead, aggressive counterspeech tended to worsen social antagonism and polarisation (Frischlich, Rieger, Hein, & Bente, 2015; Rieger et al., 2018).

Another interesting observation was that the interviewees' actions of making constitutive speech were not organised. They made constitutive speech independently whenever they thought they needed to do so. It was their intuitive reaction to messages contesting social-political principles of democracy. Their pattern of making constitutive speech differed from what happened in Germany and Sweden. Like some interviewees, some people in these two countries were also fed up with rude and confrontational online discussions on various social media platforms. Therefore, they launched social movements #ichbinhier and # jagärhär (German and Swedish groups that can be translated to #Iamhere) on Facebook. Those who supported this movement joined a Facebook group. The members posted counterspeech after offensive and hateful comments under the group's guidance (Guardian, 2019; Porten-Cheé et al., 2020).

However, the pattern of interviewees' constitutive speech-making differed from those of German and Swedish internet users. No one reported they joined any group like #ichbinhier or # jagärhär. Nor did I know such a group on WeChat. Therefore, although those German and Swedish people also made constitutive speech to fight against disruptive online comments,

[68] "当面对那些过激言论的时候，我总是选择用较为委婉和含蓄的方式来反驳它们，这样可以避免让那些持过激言论的人感到不舒服，不被尊重。我希望可以通过有理有据的论证来说服他们放弃原有的过激想法，从而接受正确的社会价值观。但是我注意到一些人倾向于用一种更为直接，有时候甚至有些粗鲁的方式来进行反驳。我就有过一次特别糟糕的经历。当这些人用粗鲁的言语来反驳那些过激言论的时候，最初和平的讨论变成争论双方单纯的对骂。这并不是反驳过激言论的正确方式。"（Interviewee 27's words in Mandarin)

their actions were sometimes well-organised. On the contrary, interviewees made constitutive speech without group mobilisation.

Such a difference might result from three primary reasons. First, overtly political talks only occupied a small proportion of interviewees' daily conversations on WeChat. Interviewees frequently used WeChat for work and entertainment rather than for political discussions. Therefore, they were not interested in launching a similar #Iamhere social movement on WeChat. Second, most WeChat groups where political discussions happened did not form for politics initially. Political discussions and various comments that emerged during the discussions were random events. Therefore, it was hard for people with a sense of responsibility for supervising the online communication environment to join every WeChat group and monitor every conversation. Last, the Chinese government and technology companies implemented stricter online censorship policies than North American and European countries. Comments containing extremely violent and hateful words were censored before people could read them publicly. Therefore, Chinese people on WeChat might be less likely to read extremist comments than Facebook and Twitter users. They might feel less necessary and urgent to establish particular groups to combat online noxious comments. Consequently, there was no organised group on WeChat to mobilise users to give counterspeech against those harmful messages.

To summarise, interviewees sometimes had political discussions on WeChat. Most political discussions were harmonious, but some participants expressed disruptive comments threatening the social-political principles of democracy. Some interviewees made constitutive speech to refute those disruptive comments. It was their intuitive reaction when reading those comments. They hoped to protect the shared social-political principles of democracy and prevent disruptive comments from distorting public opinion. People usually have divergent opinions during political discussions. However, ideological polarisation and fragmentation are dangerous (Bruns & Highfield, 2015). The constitutive speech helped avoid the normal we/they disagreements escalating to friend/enemy antagonism, as Chantal Mouffe (1999, 2016)

believed.[69] Additionally, interviewees believed constitutive speech should be conducted in a polite, civil and respectful way.

5.4 Placing constitutive speech-making behaviour into the repertoire of political participation

The above section discusses how interviewees made constitutive speech to refute online comments against social-political principles of democracy. However, most interviewees did not identify their actions of making constitutive speech as a form of political participation. They initially did not mention this activity when asked about their online political participation. Most of them shared stories about fighting against comments contesting social-political principles of democracy when asked more broadly about their online discussions about social and political topics. Interviewees' ignorance of this form of political participation showed that they had a restricted understanding of online political participation.

However, I argue that constitutive speech-making behaviour is political participation. I first identified interviewees' actions of making constitutive speech as political participation based on van Deth's (2014) definition. The constitutive speech conveyed the interviewees' political intentions, as demonstrated in the above section. However, I found a limitation when using van Deth's definition to determine the nature of constitutive speech-making behaviour. I then used Arendt's conception of politics to examine the nature of this behaviour. I argue that making constitutive speech is intrinsically political, regardless of its instrumental purposes. I made such an argument because interviewees enacted a political space when making constitutive speech. Arendt (1958, p. 198) thought that politics arose whenever people acted together to share words and deeds. Constitutive speech disclosed speakers' unique political identities in front of other participants, protected the common ground for discussing public affairs, and possibly generated novel social norms to replace the existing norms. This section first explains why I acknowledged constitutive speech-making behaviour as political participation based on van

[69] Mouffe (2005) argued for a radical democracy based on agonistic pluralism. Built on the premise that human beings were plural and plurality brings conflicts, Mouffe believed the best approach to handling those conflicts was through political expression. Instead of treating people with different views as enemies to be eliminated, she treated them as political adversaries that could be persuaded through political speech (Mouffe, 2009, p. 103). Therefore, political space became a site of agonistic contests and disagreements and politics paved the way for conflictual consensus. Only when there was no political way to express and resolve dissent did violence become an option (Mouffe, 2005, p. 14).

Deth's definition of political participation and also presents the shortcoming of his definition. I then explain why this behaviour is intrinsically political, based on Arendt's conception of politics.

Before explaining why constitutive speech-making behaviour is a form of political participation, I want to clarify that constitutive speech differs from political talks (or discussions). As shown above, constitutive speech occurred during political talks. When discussants expressed disruptive comments contesting social-political principles of democracy, some discussants made constitutive speech to counter those comments. However, constitutive speech did not necessarily appear in every political discussion. Interviewees reported that most of their political talks were harmonious, and no constitutive speech occurred in those discussions. Furthermore, although some discussants expressed disruptive comments during political discussions, others did not necessarily make constitutive speech. They might choose to ignore or delete those harmful comments. Therefore, constitutive speech and political talks (discussion) were two different events in this dissertation.

Additionally, constitutive speech and political talks were not the same type of activity. People express their political views during political talks, and sometimes their talks generate tangible political consequences (Vaccari & Valeriani, 2018; Vissers & Stolle, 2014). For this reason, some scholars have acknowledged political talks as a form of expressive political participation.[70] They think political talks share the same essence as other expressive political activities, such as posting political comments on personal blogs or liking politicians' posts on social media (Gibson & Cantijoch, 2013; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2009). However, I argue that speakers who made constitutive speech did not merely express their viewpoints on the discussed topics. Instead, they enacted a political sphere when making constitutive speech.[71]

[70] Some scholars have refused to acknowledge political talks as a form of political participation. They admited that political communication helped researchers analyse and understand the conditions of political participation. However, it was not political participation (Bakker & De Vreese, 2011; Kruikemeier et al., 2014). Others have indetified political communication as a preparatory action or a latent form of political participation (Ekman & Amnå, 2012, p. 292). Their decisions stemmed from the consideration that those political discussions did not aim at influencing people in power and public decision-making (Ekman & Amnå, 2012, p. 288).

[71] I explain how interviewees enacted a political sphere online through making constitutive speech in the following analysis of this section.

Therefore, it was inappropriate to equalise constitutive speech as a manifest example of political discussion and treat it as a form of expressive political participation.

Theoretical support from van Deth's definition of political participation

After understanding the differences between constitutive speech and political talks, I used van Deth's (2014) definition of political participation to examine whether constitutive speech-making behaviour was political participation. Constitutive speech-making occurred in interviewees' amateur and voluntary actions, meeting the first three features of his definition. Van Deth (2014, p. 359) further stipulated, "any activity that has the first three features but not occurs in government institutions, not aims at political actors or collective problems is political participation if it is used to express participants' political aims and intentions." Following this stipulation, I argue that constitutive speech-making behaviour is political participation. Many interviewees were motivated by particular political intentions when making constitutive speech. For example, Interviewee 12's constitutive speech against pro-violent protests aimed to protect a political principle of articulating political demands peacefully. Interviewee 23's constitutive speech intended to protect social norms of respecting each individual's career choice. Similarly, when Interviewee 38 made constitutive speech, he hoped to avoid gender-based antagonism in the discussion. Those intentions were all politically relevant. Therefore, according to van Deth, constitutive speech-making behaviour is political participation.

However, I found some practical problems when using van Deth's definition to identify constitutive speech-making behaviour as political participation. The problems resulted from the observation that not every interviewee who made constitutive speech thought their actions had political purposes. Some interviewees believed those disruptive comments challenged contemporary democratic political principles or shared social norms. Their constitutive speech consequently conveyed their political intentions. However, not every interviewee considered those comments harmful to the social-political principles of democracy. As a result, they did not think their counterspeech against those comments contained any political intention.

For example, Interviewee 30 recalled that his judgement of what constituted 'misogynistic' speech differed from his wife's. When reading the same comments, he did not consider them misogynistic, while his wife firmly believed they were misogynistic. He criticised those comments because they were not facts. However, his wife condemned those comments because she thought those comments disrespected and devalued women. According to Interviewee 30, although he made constitutive speech against the 'misogynistic' comments, he did not think his comments had any political intentions. Following van Deth's definition, his action of making constitutive speech was not political participation because it had no political intention. In contrast, his wife's action was political participation because it conveyed her political intentions. I think such a conclusion is absurd since he and his wife essentially engaged in the same activity. I argue that both of their actions of making constitutive speech are political participation, regardless of whether Interviewee 30 recognised his comments' political intention.

Theoretical support from Arendt's conception of politics

I maintain that constitutive speech-making behaviour is a political action by nature. I drew the conclusion based on Arendt's (1958) conception of politics. I believe making constitutive speech is a form of political participation, regardless of whether actors have political intentions or not when acting. As promised in section 3.4 of Chapter Three, I first explain Arendt's theory of political speech and action and then explain how her theory supports my argument that constitutive speech-making behaviour is political participation.

Conventionally, scholars have interpreted politics as a means to reach various ends, such as ruling nation-states, offering public goods, resolving conflicts, delivering welfare services, and the like (Crick, 2004; Peters, 2004; Weale, 2004). Unlike those theorists, Arendt (1958, pp. 178-200) conceived politics as an end in itself. Politics arose from people sharing words (speech) and deeds (action). She argued that people engaged in politics when they gathered publicly, expressed their unique views, and talked about common affairs of the world from all sides.[72] For her, politics was an interactive process – people not only physically showed up and

[72] When using the word 'world', Arendt particularly referred to a human-made world distinct from the 'earth' that we inherited from nature. When people engaged in labour to feed their biological needs, they were in a natural environment. Home was one of many places of that natural environment. When people conducted work to make

articulated their individual opinions on public affairs, but also heard others' viewpoints and gave feedback to those sayings (Canovan, 1985, pp. 634-635). Doing politics was a privileged condition only human beings could experience (Arendt, 1958, pp. 50-52). She termed the artificial space where people did politics a 'sphere of appearance' (Arendt, 1958, p. 198).

Arendt's depiction of politics derives from her understanding of three forms of the human condition – labour, work, and action. In her theory, labour referred to activities that sustained our lives and catered to our biological needs of consumption and reproduction. All labour-relevant activities were private, and the products of labour were to be consumed in a cycle of endless repetition (Arendt, 1958, pp. 79-118). Work referred to activities that built and maintained a world for us to live in. By working, people made things for use rather than consumption. The products of work were durable and outlasted the activity of making them (Arendt, 1958, pp. 136-154). Both labour and work were non-political because they fulfilled people's necessities of life. The only political activity was action through which people could disclose their distinctive identities and actualise their capacity for freedom (Arendt, 1958, pp. 175-232). Speech was a form of action because "most acts are performed in the manner of speech" (Arendt, 1958, p. 199).

Arendt maintained that the core feature of politics was that it allowed individuals to unveil their uniqueness in front of others (Arendt, 1958, p. 176). Her idea has roots in her belief that human beings were plural. Each individual was distinctive and capable of creating new things. The plurality of human beings enabled people to impose a human-made world upon their inherited natural environment. Thus, she wrote, "men(sic), not Man(sic), live on the earth and inhabit the world" (Arendt, 1958, p. 7). By sharing words and deeds, people could reveal their identities as distinct from what they were.[73] Each individual had multiple identities in the world. Speakers and actors disclosed particular identities from their sets of identities through words and deeds. Other people who interacted with the speakers and actors in the political space could

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new things or act politically, they placed themselves in an artificial world. Political space was one of many places in that human-made world where people could talk about common affairs of the world from different point of views (Canovan, 1994, pp. 107-109).

[73] Arendt distinguished 'who' agents were from 'what' they were. Individuals' identities were unique, representing their distinct personalities to the world. Individuals 'what' character referred to their abilities, talents, deficiencies and shortcomings, and she thought these characteristics were the traits that all human beings shared (Arendt, 1958, pp. 184-186).

only know the specific identities the speakers and actors wanted them to know. Their identities in private spheres, such as husbands or sons, were hidden and irrelevant in the political space (Arendt, 1958, pp. 175-176). Among various places in the artificial world, the political sphere (the sphere of appearance) was where people could most comprehensively manifest their plurality (Canovan, 1994, p. 227).

Additionally, doing politics was an interactive process. As mentioned earlier, politics arose from people sharing words and deeds with one another. Arendt believed that people could not speak or act politically by themselves alone. Individuals needed the presence of others in the political space and their feedback. Otherwise, people could not exchange their distinguishing views on common affairs (Canovan, 1985, pp. 619-620).

Saco (2002) introduced a three-layer model to help better understand Arendt's conception of politics. People's words and deeds were at the top because they were the core of the Arendtian depiction of politics (Saco, 2002, p. 107). The second layer was a framework consisting of formal laws (including institutions) and informal rules (primarily social norms). The framework offered guidance for people to do politics publicly (Saco, 2002, p. 76). It served as "the wall of the polis and the boundaries of the already existing public space" that offered "stabilising protection to assist action and speech survive and endure" (Arendt, 1958, p. 198). Volk (2010) also insisted on the necessity of such a framework to shape how people spoke, acted, and formulated political relationships with one another. He believed those formal laws and informal rules guaranteed equality and freedom of speech in the political space (Volk, 2010). The bottom layer was a location allowing people to speak and act politically (Saco, 2002, p. 78). Arendt kept emphasising that politics needed a worldly location for people's physical presence. If no such place offered people's physical presence, they were not engaged in politics (Canovan, 1985, p. 635). Although the two base layers, a physical location and a framework of laws and rules, were not political in themselves, they were vital constitutive elements of political space.

I used Arendt's conception of politics to interpret interviewees' actions of making constitutive speech online. However, some scholars have argued applying Arendt's theory to understand

online activities is inappropriate. First, they doubt whether the Arendtian political space could be virtual. In her original writings, Arendt emphasised that politics needed a worldly location allowing individuals' physical presence. People needed to be seen, and their voices needed to be heard in public. They needed to meet at a physical site so that their common concerns about the shared world could become visible to all (Canovan, 1985, p. 634). However, Smith (2017) believed restricting political space to physical locations was a narrow interpretation of Arendt's depiction of politics. He argued that political space needed not be a literal worldly location. Instead, he interpreted it as a web of relations in which plural individuals gathered to speak and act for the common affairs of the world (Smith, 2017, p. 16). It is uncertain about Arendt's opinions on Smith's interpretation. On the one hand, she might support Smith's interpretation since she wrote, "not Athens, but the Athenians were the polis" (Arendt, 1958, p. 195). However, she did not experience various online activities when writing her works, since she died in 1975, decades before the popularity of the internet. If she witnessed the power of the internet, she might review her works.

Second, some scholars have argued that bodily presence is necessary for doing politics in Arendt's theory of action. When reading "the only indispensable material factor in the generation of power is the living together of people" (Arendt, 1958, p. 198), we tend to infer that the body matters for the Arendtian space of appearance. Springer (2011, p. 528) followed this interpretation and ruled out the possibility of online political space. However, Honig (1993, p. 80) claimed that what distinguished us from others in the political space was our words and deeds rather than our bodies. Similarly, Saco (2002, p. 58) thought the body had no essential function in Arendt's conception of politics. Their proposals of a disembodied political sphere allowed me to use Arendt's conception of politics to interpret constitutive speech-making behaviour, even though interviewees did not physically appear when making constitutive speech.

After solving these two disputes, I have demonstrated that Arendt's conception of politics is a sound alternative to understanding people's online constitutive speech-making behaviour. I further argue that this behaviour is intrinsically political because it matches Arendt's depiction of how individuals enact an online political space via their speech. First, constitutive speech makers (interviewees) disclosed their distinctive political identities through their words.

Interviewees had multiple identities. Their real names and socio-economic status were parts of their identities. Their political ideologies and viewpoints on particular affairs also constituted their identities. They were significant proponents of the interviewees' political identities. When interviewees made constitutive speech online, they revealed, through their words, particular identities from their sets of identities. In most situations, the audience of constitutive speech recognised the speakers' (interviewees') identities only based on their speech. The pseudonymous or anonymous principle allowed people to make constitutive speech without revealing their real identities in the physical world. The identities that constitutive speech makers presented publicly did not necessarily have close connections with their other identities.[74] I expected possible disconnection between constitutive speech makers' online political identities and their other private identities. The disconnection between public/political identity and private/non-political identity was a crucial characteristic of Arendtian political individuals. When people came together to discuss their shared world's common affairs publicly, they were expected to leave aside their personal identities and interests (Canovan, 1985, p. 629).

Second, constitutive speech protected the fundamental framework for individuals with plural views to conduct politics publicly. The Arendtian political space consisted of three layers (Saco, 2002, pp. 75-107). People's words and deeds were at the top. The second layer comprised formal laws and informal rules, serving as a regulatory framework to guide individuals' speech and action in political space. The political space could not exist stably and permanently without the second layer. The social-political principles of democracy were parts of that regulatory framework. When harmful speakers posted disruptive comments, they damaged the regulatory framework, further threatening the stability and permanence of the Arendtian political space. Constitutive speech makers tried their best to protect and sustain that regulatory framework by rejecting the comments contesting the social-political principles of democracy through their speech. Therefore, I argue that interviewees who made constitutive speech not only enacted an online political space but protected that space via their words.

[74] I was aware that in many situations, the way people acted and spoke online was heavily affected by their socioeconomic status, gender, age, ethnicity and other relevant identities. Therefore, I did not entirely deny the connection between constitutive speech makers' presented online political identities when making constitutive speech and their other identities. The identities I focused on here were interviewees' political identities rather than their offline identities of real names, socioeconomic status and interpersonal relationships.

Last, constitutive speech-making behaviour has an innovative capacity, another crucial feature of Arendt's political speech and action. Arendt believed people created new things through speech and action (Canovan, 1994, p. 132). Constitutive speech's innovative capacity came from its potential to generate new democratic principles and social norms to replace the existing ones. I assumed that New Zealanders already had a set of informal rules guiding them to discuss common affairs publicly, and I called them social-political principles of democracy. However, those informal rules experience an ongoing dynamic process of being created, sustained, enhanced or abandoned. People abandon some outdated rules and introduce new principles over time. Take Americans' attitudes towards the LGBTQ community, for example. Prevailing public opinion used to condemn, demoralise and disrespect this community decades ago. However, thanks to a group of people bravely and continually making constitutive speech against offensive and disrespectful speech targeting the LGBTQ community, the popular public opinion nowadays in the United States supports and respects this community (Coley & Das, 2020). Therefore, I believe interviewees' political words and deeds might give birth to those informal rules. Informal rules probably emerged from the interaction between constitutive speech makers and disruptive speech makers.

For all these reasons, I argue that interviewees' constitutive speech-making behaviour was intrinsically political. Constitutive speech makers engaged in politics when making their speech. However, I do not think those observers who chose to ignore disruptive comments participated in politics. Smith (2017) disagreed with me in this aspect. He thought those people were also political participants because in the Arendtian political space, being a good spectator was a pre-condition for being a good speaker (Smith, 2017, p. 86). Arendt did not explicitly discuss whether spectators were political participants but admitted they should not be inhabited from political participation. She thought those spectators engaged in a critical political faculty, namely, judgement (Arendt, 1981, p. 192). Based on her emphasis on judgement, Smith claimed the spectators' ('judgmental audience' in his terminology) action of making critical judgements was as significant as the speeches and actions in political space (Smith, 2017, p. 87). He also said that barriers impeding people from moving from spectators to actors and speakers should be eliminated (Smith, 2017, p. 87).

I agree with Smith's emphasis on ensuring a smooth and free transition from spectators to actors and speakers. However, I disagree with him in considering spectators as active political participants. I drew my argument based on Arendt's depiction of politics as an interactive process. The interactive process not only included people expressing their views on common affairs and hearing others' opinions, it also involved people giving feedback on others' words and deeds (Canovan, 1985, pp. 634-635). Although observers (in my case, referring to people who ignore disruptive comments) read harmful speakers' comments and may think critically about them, they took no manifest action and gave no feedback to those disruptive messages. Therefore, they were not political participants. I preferred to recognise them as potential political participants.

Interviewees' intentions became irrelevant when I adopted the Arendtian framework to examine constitutive speech-making behaviour. Arendt cared most about how people spoke and acted in the political space instead of the motivations behind their words and deeds (Arendt, 1958, p. 176).[75] Following her idea, I only needed to focus on individuals' reactions to disruptive comments to see whether they made constitutive speech or ignored those disruptive messages. Unlike intentions, interviewees' actions of making constitutive speech were evident, with no difficulty or dispute recognising them. An advantage of using the Arendtian framework to determine the nature of constitutive speech-making behaviour was that it solved the shortcoming of van Deth's definition I mentioned above.

To conclude, interviewees' constitutive speech-making behaviour was political participation. Van Deth's definition of political participation identified it as political participation due to its instrumental purpose of expressing participants' political intentions. However, I found that van Deth's definition did not accurately capture the essence of constitutive speech-making behaviour. Constitutive speech-making behaviour did not rely on the instrumental purpose of expressing political intentions to become political. Instead, it was intrinsically political. Interviewees revealed their unique political identities and protected common ground for publicly discussing common affairs by making constitutive speech. Meanwhile, the interaction between constitutive speech makers and disruptive speech makers might generate new

[75] However, Arendt did emphasise that when individuals came to political space to conduct politics, they left their personal interests behind and only talked about common affairs of their shared world (Canovan, 1985, p. 629).

democratic principles and social norms to replace the existing ones. For these reasons, constitutive speech-making behaviour is political by nature, regardless of whether it conveys political intentions.

5.5 Summary

Throughout the chapter, I have demonstrated why and how interviewees made constitutive speech during online political discussions. The discussion about their constitutive speech-making revealed an aspect of Chinese New Zealanders' online political participation, answering the second sub-research question mentioned in the Introduction chapter. Some interviewees made constitutive speech to rebut disruptive comments that contested social-political principles of democracy. They did so to protect modern democratic political principles and shared social norms. Others had no noticeable political intentions when making constitutive speech. However, not everyone who encountered those noxious comments made constitutive speeches. Some interviewees chose to ignore them.

I identified interviewees' constitutive speech-making behaviour as political participation. First, according to van Deth (2014), I identified it as political participation because it conveyed the interviewees' political intentions. However, van Deth's definition had a shortcoming because not everyone had political intention when making constitutive speech. Based on Arendt's conception of politics, interviewees enacted a political space allowing them to reveal their unique political identities. They also enacted a political space where the common ground for publicly discussing social and political issues was protected. Novel democratic principles and social norms might also emerge from the interaction between constitutive speech makers and disruptive speech makers. Due to these characteristics, interviewees' actions of making constitutive speech were intrinsically political, regardless of whether they conveyed political intentions or not. Using the Arendtian approach to examining the nature of constitutive speech-making behaviour overcame the shortcoming of van Deth's definition.

Admitting the political nature of constitutive speech-making behaviour had further implications on our understanding of politics and political participation. Chapter Three shows that most definitions of political participation have been developed based on the instrumental

purposes of activities. For example, Verba and Nie (1972) identified activities affecting the choice of governmental personnel as political participation. Booth and Seligson (1976) defined political participation as activities aiming to influence the distribution of public goods. The tradition of determining whether an activity is political participation or not based on its instrumental purposes also affects van Deth's shaping of his definition. Although such an approach has helped scholars differentiate political participation from social activities, researchers sometimes may have difficulty identifying and determining the instrumental purposes of activities. The problem might weaken the researchers' ability to identify and assess people's political participation accurately in fieldwork.

The analysis of interviewees' constitutive speech-making behaviour shows that some activities might be political by nature, regardless of whether they have politically instrumental purposes. I have demonstrated that processes of disclosing distinctive identities and navigating consensus out of conflicts are intrinsically political. I argue that those processes assign political attributes to activities. Being aware of activities' intrinsically political attributes could help researchers get rid of a heavy reliance on the instrumental purposes of activities to identify political participation. Suppose researchers maintain the old tradition to judge whether an activity is political participation based on its instrumental purposes and ignore its political attributes. In that case, they will likely miss many distinct forms of political participation. Additionally, concentrating too much on the instrumental purposes of activities might seduce researchers into ignoring the essence of activities.

Furthermore, analysing interviewees' constitutive speech-making behaviour enriched the knowledge of Chinese people's online political participation. Existing literature on that participation primarily focused on how the internet boosted communication between ordinary people and politicians (Balla, 2012; Cai & Zhou, 2019; Luo, 2009). Others investigated how the internet motivated people to participate in more grassroots social movements (Lu, Huang, Kao, & Chang, 2021; Xue & van Stekelenburg, 2018). The chapter shows another aspect of Chinese people's online political participation – spontaneously combating speeches against social-political principles of democracy to protect widely shared democratic values and social norms.

Chapter Six Politicisation and Participation: Chinese New Zealanders Doing Politics in Chinese Associations

6.1 Introduction

I have analysed how interviewees participated in formal institutions to address their demands and how they participated in online political activities. The analysis revealed their diverse forms of political participation. However, online political participation was part of the interviewees' non-institutional political participation. People also participated in political activities in civic associations.

Scholars have demonstrated civic associations' roles in democratic governance from various aspects. For example, Tocqueville (2003) believed that by joining civic associations, individuals could solve collective problems that they otherwise would not be able to. Putnam (1993, p. 89) praised civic associations' contribution to the effectiveness and stability of democracy through cultivating association members' habits of cooperation, solidarity and public-spiritedness. Voluntary associations as self-organising groups also allowed individuals to articulate grievances and advance interests (Dalton, 2015). Meanwhile, scholars have reported that civic associations filled the blanks ignored by governments to provide public goods and welfare services for people and bolstered the consensus of social and political values (Dash, 2001; He, 2016; Uhlin, 2009). All those studies show that exploring the interviewees' political lives in civic associations is necessary, and this chapter examines their political lives within Chinese associations. The analysis answers the third research sub-question. It demonstrates how interviewees used Chinese associations to address their grievances and deliver welfare services to the Chinese community.

I found that interviewees participated in diverse political activities in Chinese associations, such as organising public lectures to disseminate information on general and local elections and mobilising members to attend street demonstrations and vote. They mentioned those activities when I asked about their political lives in civic associations. Van Deth (2014, p. 359) would acknowledge those activities as political participation because they targeted issues within the spheres of government institutions. It showed that interviewees recognised the significant role of Chinese associations in their political participation. Other scholars also

mentioned Chinese New Zealanders' participation in those activities (Ip, 2002; Park, 2006). Therefore, I do not analyse them in detail in this chapter.

In addition to those activities, I observed that interviewees used Chinese associations to reconstruct personal concerns as public affairs. They also used Chinese associations to provide people's requested welfare services with the government's financial support. I termed those two forms of activities as politicising activities. Van Deth (2014, p. 359) argued that extra-institution activities were political participation if they aimed to solve collective problems. According to his definition, I identified the two forms of politicising activities as political participation. This chapter focuses on those two forms of politicising activities because I have rarely seen them discussed in the existing literature.

The rest of this chapter proceeds as follows. I first explain why I termed those activities as politicising activities in Section 6.2. Section 6.3 discusses interviewees' deliberation over whether and how to politicise individual concerns as civic or governmental affairs. It also explains people's disagreements on politicising personal concerns. In Section 6.4, I show that the government politicised Chinese associations' activities of delivering community services by offering funds. However, interviewees' attitudes towards joining the government's politicising initiative varied, and I explain their disagreements. Section 6.5 first explains why people's engagement in those politicising activities was political participation based on van Deth's definition. However, I found some controversies when using van Deth's definition to examine the essence of those politicising activities. I again use Arendt's (1958) conception of politics to explain why those politicising activities were intrinsically political participation. In Section 6.6, I summarise the key findings and connect the chapter with the whole dissertation.

6.2 Explaining the concept of politicising activities

I interpreted interviewees' reconstruction of personal affairs into either civic or governmental affairs as politicising activities. Politicising activities describe a phenomenon where activities conventionally considered personal become public under people's intentional reconstruction. Politicising individual concerns was a pragmatic strategy for interviewees to solve problems that degraded their well-being but were outside society's and the government's attention.

I borrowed the concept of 'politicisation' from Colin Hay. He understood doing politics as engaging in a politicising process of reconstructing non-political issues as political affairs (Hay, 2007, pp. 79-90). Hay (2007, p. 79) maintained that political spheres included governmental, public and 'grey' spheres. Conventionally, scholars often adopted a site-based approach to determining whether an issue was political. They believed that activities within governmental institutions were political and those outside government institutions were non-political (Leftwich, 2004, p. 13). Hay suggested abandoning such a static and fixed understanding of politics. Instead, he understood politics in a mutual infiltration approach. Politics could occur in both government institutions (conventionally political spheres) and civil society (conventionally non-political spheres). Furthermore, the 'grey' spheres included conventionally private issues but could become public in certain circumstances. One example of issues in the 'grey' sphere is wearing face masks mandatorily before and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hay (2007, pp. 116-119) emphasised that the boundaries of each sphere were fluid. Issues might travel from one sphere to another depending on various contexts. Therefore, a non-political issue could become a public or governmental issue under people's intentional reconstruction. He described the reconstruction process as politicisation. Similarly, a governmental or public issue could be depoliticised as non-political. Interviewees' reconstruction of individual concerns into civic or governmental affairs fitted Hay's politicisation description. Therefore, I categorised their actions as politicising activities. Section 6.3 explores the interviewees' participation in reconstructing personal concerns as public affairs. I further categorised this form of politicising activity as a bottom-up politicising activity because they were initiated by people spontaneously.

Apart from the bottom-up politicising activity, the New Zealand government also implemented a state-funded politicising initiative to help Chinese associations deliver people's requested services. I regarded it as the government's indirect response to people's bottom-up politicising activities. When people politicised private concerns as public affairs, they wanted assistance from either the government or society to solve the politicised issues. On the one hand, Chinese associations sometimes responded to their members' demands. They organised various

activities to satisfy people's requests. Many studies have discussed the positive role of Chinese associations in this aspect (Ip, 2002; Kan et al., 2020). However, interviewees reported that funding shortages prevented associations from delivering requested services effectively. Facing difficulties, many Chinese associations applied for government funds. The government offered financial support to Chinese associations to help them deliver people's requested welfare services.

I interpreted the government's action of providing financial support to Chinese associations as politicising Chinese associations' activities. The government's initiative of politicising civic associations' activities implied that the government welcomed civil society to play an active role in democratic governance. I regarded it as the government's indirect response to people's politicising activities. The phenomenon reflected the government's efforts to include civic associations in the government-led public service delivery system. Although the existing literature has seldom mentioned Chinese New Zealanders' participation in this form of politicising activities, people of other ethnic communities have engaged in similar state-funded politicising initiatives (Jones, 2015; NZISM, 2022). Section 6.4 explores how the interviewees engaged in the state-funded politicising initiative.

6.3 Politicising individual concerns as civic or governmental affairs

Interviewees participated in diverse political activities in Chinese associations. The tradition of using Chinese associations to maintain contact with politicians and political parties has been well preserved. In addition, interviewees used Chinese associations to politicise personal concerns as public issues. Although many interviewees welcomed the politicising approach, they had different opinions on politicising personal concerns as civic or governmental affairs. A few interviewees opposed the politicisation strategy. They insisted that personal affairs should not be re-formulated as public issues. The following analysis presents how and why interviewees politicised personal concerns as public affairs and how they solved their disagreements when participating in politicising activities.

The issues interviewees politicised were often private concerns that affected their daily lives, such as elder care services, older people's social networking, family conflicts, children's

adaptation to the new environment, and school bullying. Interviewees adopted a politicising strategy to address those concerns because they were often outside the government's prioritised policy agendas yet negatively influenced interviewees' well-being. Interviewees found it hard to solve those problems without external assistance. Therefore, they believed that politicising those issues as public concerns and using civil society's or the government's resources to tackle them was a promising solution.

Chinese associations were a practical resource for politicising activities because interviewees could meet others who experienced similar troubles due to shared cultural and ethnic backgrounds. For example, Interviewee 26 said the Chinese Association of North Shore Auckland (CANSA) organised monthly peer support meetings to help mothers look after their children and families. Although the primary concerns discussed during the meetings were about children's nutrition, intergenerational family conflicts generated heated discussions among participants. She talked about how she met people who encountered the same problem of family quarrels as her.

> The issue has disturbed me for a long time, but I never thought that others also shared the same problem because I had never heard similar complaints from my friends. We [she and her parents] probably had one or two quarrels weekly because we had different views on many things. I mentioned it at a mother peer support meeting and surprisingly found many people also had this concern.[76] (Interviewee 26)

Interviewee 26's experience echoed some scholars' conclusions that immigrants tended to meet sympathisers who understood their difficulties and developed social trust with one another in ethnic associations (Fong & Ooka, 2006; Voicu & Rusu, 2012). Therefore, interviewees in need identified their personal concerns, found sympathisers in Chinese associations, and politicised their private matters as public problems.

[76] "这个问题困扰我很久了。我之前几乎从来没有听我朋友提过这方面的困扰，所以我并不知道其他人也面临相同的问题。我和我爸妈几乎每周都会吵上一两回。吵架的原因千奇百怪，我们对各种事情几乎都有不同的看法。我在一次妈妈互助会上提到了这个问题并且惊讶地发现很多人也有这个烦恼。" (Interviewee 26's words in Mandarin)

Among various politicised individual concerns, intergenerational family conflict was frequently mentioned by interviewees. People from different Chinese associations brought up this issue. It disturbed many Chinese New Zealanders, because most older Chinese New Zealanders came to New Zealand to take care of their grandchildren. Therefore, multigenerational family members living together in one household were common (Lysnar & Dupuis, 2015; Ran & Liu, 2021). Intergenerational family conflicts were often unavoidable because family members from each generation had varied ideologies, life expectations and socialisation backgrounds. Family conflicts could adversely affect the relationship between aging parents and adult children and damage their physical, psychological and mental well-being (Hämäläinen & Tanskanen, 2021; Whitbeck, Hoyt, & Huck, 1994). Despite those harmful effects, the New Zealand government has not officially placed the issue on its prioritised policies. New Zealand's pro-liberal culture treats families as an intimate and private sphere. Therefore, the government tended not to intervene heavily in family conflicts unless they violated laws or concerned vulnerable children. However, interviewees shared many sad stories about how intergenerational family conflicts had damaged their happy lives. They were eager to politicise it as a public concern, hoping to get sufficient and timely support from civil society or the government to tackle the problem.

The following analysis uses intergenerational family conflicts as an example to illustrate interviewees' debates over whether and how to politicise personal concerns as public affairs. First, people disagreed on whether to politicise individual concerns as public affairs. Most interviewees agreed with Interviewee 26 that politicising intergenerational family conflicts might be a promising solution. By doing so, they wanted to attract the attention of outsiders (the government and other civic associations outside the Chinese community). They expected those outsiders to offer external support to address the problem.

However, not every participant in the meetings wanted to reconstruct their personal issues as public affairs. Some objected to politicising intergenerational family conflicts as a public issue. Facing this situation, interviewees who believed politicising was a good strategy tried to convince others to accept their proposals by presenting logical arguments. I attended some of those meetings and witnessed the heated discussions among participants. Those who wanted to

politicise intergenerational family conflict not merely presented arguments to win more supporters during the meetings, but they also gave counterarguments to explain why keeping the problem private and non-political might deteriorate the conflicts.

> I wanted society to focus on this issue (intergenerational family conflict). When it became a public problem, we would have more resources to solve it. But not everyone wanted to make their family problems public during the meeting. It was their choice. But we showed them that being unified and publicising the problem was beneficial for problem-solving. When there was collaboration, any difficulties that appeared impossible to solve individually would be overcome.[77] (Interviewee 26)

Regardless of those efforts, some interviewees firmly opposed politicising intergenerational family conflicts.

> I do not think family conflicts should be a public concern. It does not need the government's intervention. I firmly support a clear borderline between private and public affairs. If we allow the government to take control over private affairs whenever it presents some seemingly 'acceptable reasons', its power will expand more and more. I do not want my family's privacy exposed to others.[78] (Interviewee 34)

When participants disagreed on politicising individual concerns, they had fierce debates over it, seeking to reach a solution. In most situations, the final decisions were made based on majority rule. Each participant had a free and equal opportunity to present their viewpoints

[77] "我从私心上来讲希望新西兰社会可以关注代际家庭矛盾。如果它变成了一个被广泛知道的社会问题，那么我们就有更多资源来解决它了。但是我观察到并不是所有参加会议的人都愿意把他们的家庭矛盾公开化，让别人都知道他们的家庭冲突。这是他们的自由选择。遇到这种情况，我们能做的就是努力说服这些人，告诉他们团结才是解决问题的最优方案。只有通过团结，凝聚大家的力量，我们才能解决那些难题。不然，凭借我们个人的力量是很难解决它们的。不论如何，这些都是他们自己的选择，我们绝对不会强迫他们做任何自己不愿意做的事情。" (Interviewee 26's words in Mandarin)

[78] "我并不认为家庭冲突应该成为社会关注的公共热点问题。同样，它也不应该受到政府的干预。我坚信私人事务和公共事务之间是需要有一个明确的界限的。它们两者不能混淆。如果我们允许国家通过给出一些听起来可信的借口就来随意控制我们的私人事务，那么国家的权力就会变得越来越大。我不希望别人知道我们家的隐私，也不想让它成为大家评头论足的话题之一。" (Interviewee 34's words in Mandarin)

publicly. They gave reasonable arguments to support or reject politicisation, as Interviewee 26 and Interviewee 34 mentioned during the interviews. Interviewees assumed that each speaker's view was treated equally as well. In interviewees' perceptions, no one's opinion was treated with higher value because of their age, gender or position in associations.

I interpreted interviewees' actions of presenting their logical arguments to defend their positions and giving reasonable counterarguments to reject their opponents' suggestions as public deliberation. My interpretation derives from a broader understanding of public deliberation as a communication-based approach to addressing problems by arguing, demonstrating and persuading (Ercan, Hendriks, & Dryzek, 2019).

Apart from disagreeing on whether to adopt the politicisation strategy, interviewees disagreed about politicising individual concerns as civic or governmental affairs. Some believed the government was the best agent to address their politicised concerns. Therefore, they chose to construct individual concerns as governmental affairs and aimed to launch policy changes in related aspects. For example, Interviewee 35, a member of the Chinese Association of Sunnynook Auckland (CASA), said she participated in two CASA meetings about dealing with conflicts in multigenerational families. Participants were encouraged to talk about why the conflicts happened and how they might get resolved. When coming to possible solutions, many older participants wished the government to launch specific projects to address the problem, and she was one of them. They represented people who wished to politicise intergenerational conflicts as a governmental affair.

> We hope the government attaches great significance to this issue. Many tragedies happened around because of it. I know some older people who committed suicide because they could not solve their conflicts. The government often neglect this issue, and people in need cannot get timely assistance. We want to change this situation but do not know how. What else can we do if the government does not help?[79] (Interviewee 35)

[79] “我们希望政府可以重视这个问题。我们已经见到太多的悲剧发生了。我身边就有朋友因为这个而自杀了。但是政府不是很重视这个问题。这就导致那些急需帮助的人们无法得到及时的帮助。我们非常想要改变这个困境，但是不知道从何入手。如果政府不帮助我们的话，我们真的不知道还能做些什么？” (Interviewee 35's words in Mandarin)

Interviewee 35 indicated that many older people believed an ideal solution to intergenerational family conflicts was the government's help. They wished the government could establish related programmes, allowing those who suffered from the problem to get proper and timely help in Chinese. However, she noted that some younger participants opposed their suggestions. She recalled that one participant said inviting the government to interfere in family conflicts would feed its greed to pursue more power in other private issues. Public deliberation also happened in her meetings. Participants from different sides freely and equally presented their arguments, explaining whether intergenerational family conflicts should be politicised as governmental or civic affairs.

Interviewees' actions did not stop at politicising activities in Chinese associations. They engaged in other activities trying to make the government respond to their politicised concerns. For example, Interviewee 35 described how she and others who politicised intergenerational family conflicts as a governmental affair had created a petition on this issue. In 2013, the CASA created a petition asking the government to establish a particular project to help Chinese New Zealanders solve intergenerational family conflicts. Many members of the CASA mobilised their families and friends to sign the petition. The CASA also asked other Chinese associations, such as the CANSA, to disseminate the petition among their members, hoping to collect more signatures. In addition to using the resources of Chinese associations, Interviewee 14 remembered that he and many other association members also circulated the petition on different WeChat groups to collect signatures. Although the New Zealand Parliament website showed 50 petitions presented to the Parliament from 2011 to 2014, it did not show specific petition focus. Therefore, I could not find the original petition mentioned by Interviewee 35 on the website.[80] Interviewee 35 also forgot how many signatures they collected in the end, because she said she was old, and that event happened many years ago.

[80] The official website shows petitions presented to the Parliament is https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/petitions/closed?criteria.Keyword=&criteria.ParliamentNumber=50&criteria.Timeframe=range&criteria.DateFrom=2011-01-01&criteria.DateTo=2014-12-31&parliamentStartDate=2011-12-13&parliamentEndDate=2014-08-14&criteria.SelectCommitteeName=.

Two interviewees also mentioned they reported their concerns over intergenerational family conflicts to a former Chinese MP, Dr Jian Yang, when they met him at cultural events. Interviewees' actions of contacting Chinese MPs and creating a petition showed that the interviewees did not stop at politicising personal concerns as governmental affairs within Chinese associations. They indeed took various actions within and outside Chinese associations trying to change public policies.

On the other hand, many interviewees favoured politicising personal concerns as civic affairs. Interviewee 27, another member from CASA, also mentioned his engagement in meetings of politicising intergenerational family conflicts. He noted that during the meetings, he was among the many young and middle-aged people who refused to associate individual concerns with the government's responsibility. Unlike most older people, who aimed to add intergenerational family conflicts into the government's policy agendas, they preferred to politicise it as a problem that needed civil society's assistance. They believed that civil society was competent to solve collective problems independently and expressed great reluctance to enlarge the government's responsibility and power. I described their choice as politicising individual concerns as civic problems.

> I decided to migrate to New Zealand because I embrace its liberal political atmosphere. People enjoy great freedom here. I notice a trend of appealing for a more accountable government to ensure and improve people's well-being. It is good, but it may risk a powerful government invading and interfering with personal issues. That is why I disagree with inviting the government to solve family conflicts. I believe civic associations are competent in addressing this problem.[81] (Interviewee 27)

Interviewee 27 strongly opposed enlarging the government's responsibility and power. He explained his objection from his belief in liberal thoughts and its proposed limitation on government. He debated with other participants in the meetings, explaining and defending why

[81] "我决定移民新西兰正是因为这里的自由氛围。人们在这里享有充分的自由。但是我注意到越来越多的人开始呼吁新西兰政府变成一个更负责任的政府，希望它可以管更多民生方面的事情。人们的愿望是好的，但是它有可能带来一个危害，那就是一个更负责任的政府可能会是一个管的非常宽的政府，对人们各个方面的事情都指手画脚。这是我拒绝让政府来插手管理家庭矛盾的原因。我相信民间团体有能力靠自己的力量解决这个问题。" (Interviewee 27's words in Mandarin)

politicising intergenerational family conflicts as a civic affair would better solve the problem. He described some adverse impacts that politicising this issue as a governmental affair might generate. According to all interviewees' descriptions and my observation, participants at politicising meetings actively deliberated over whether and how to politicise private concerns as public affairs.

Interviewee 35 and Interviewee 27 showed that interviewees disagreed on politicising intergenerational family conflicts as a civic or governmental affair. Older people from mainland China prefered to politicise it as a governmental affair, hoping the government to help them solve the problem. Young and middle-aged people favoured politicising it as a civic affair. They believed civil society was competent to address their politicised concerns.

Meanwhile, the government and civic society responded in different ways to the politicised intergenerational family conflicts. On the one hand, the New Zealand government has not directly addressed the problem yet. It has not announced any particular policy or project directly targeting the issue. The government's implementation of neo-liberal reforms in the 1980s partly explained its decisions in this aspect. If it actively responded to every politicised concern, it acted inconsistently with its strategy of devolving responsibility for some social issues to civil society organisations. (I explain this idea in detail in my discussion on the government's outsourcing policies in Section 6.4.) On the other hand, many civic associations organised various activities to tackle the problem. For example, Asian Family Services (AFS) offered psychological consultant services for Chinese New Zealanders who suffered from family conflicts.[82] Interviewee 23 advised friends disturbed by intergenerational family conflicts to seek help from AFS. Her friends told her that the AFS helped ease their family conflicts and made their emotions more stable.

[82] According to Interviewee 36, when AFS first offered its psychological consultant services for Chinese New Zealanders, its services relied on associations' own resources and donations from society. However, with the number of people who sought help climbing dramatically during the COVID-19-imposed lockdown period, it needed to hire more professionals and volunteers to offer the services. Therefore, they applied and received government funds.

In addition to intergenerational family conflicts, establishing and expanding social networks for older people was another politicised individual concern frequently mentioned by both older and middle-aged interviewees. The New Zealand welfare system has offered services to help older people who cannot look after themselves due to illness. Those services include personal care, such as getting out of bed and medication management; household support, such as cleaning and meal preparation; and carer support, such as offering equipment to help older people with their safety at home.[83] However, most interviewees reported that older Chinese people did not have those needs. Mental and psychological health was what they cared about most. They wanted to expand their social networks to maintain mental and psychological health.

Like intergenerational family conflicts, interviewees disagreed on politicising establishing and expanding social networks for older people as a civic or governmental affair. Five interviewees recalled how they deliberated with other association members about whether to politicise this problem as a civic or governmental affair during their meetings at the CANSA.

Civil society and the government also responded differently to this politicised issue. The government did not respond actively to address people's politicised concern about taking better care of older Chinese New Zealanders. So far, I have not found the government to have established any relevant programme to help older Chinese immigrants expand their social networks to enrich their leisure lives.

On the contrary, Chinese associations responded quickly to this politicised concern. They launched numerous associational activities to connect older Chinese New Zealanders across Auckland. Their interpersonal networks were no longer restricted to the geographic communities they lived in. For example, Interviewee 12 convinced her association to organise diverse social networking activities for older immigrants.[84] The activities ranged from weekly

[83] Detailed support services for older people can be found in Ministry of Health's website, https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/health-care-services/services-older-people/support-services-older-people

[84] Interviewee 12 was a manager of a Chinese NGO. The primary goal of her association was to meet the needs of older Chinese immigrants living in Auckland. It aimed to offer enjoyable living experiences for older Chinese people. It collaborated with other Chinese associations to connect older people to the services and activities available.

dancing, singing and Tai Chi exercise, to monthly short trips to Auckland's outskirts. Interviewee 37 suggested his association running a rambling project. The project organised older people to walk in parks and reserves twice a week in Auckland. Five older interviewees mentioned the rambling project during the interviews. Compared with the government's indirect responses, Chinese associations came up with many solutions to improve older Chinese immigrants' mental and psychological well-being. It showed that Chinese associations could solve some politicised problems independently without the government's involvement.

As discussed earlier, interviewees disagreed on whether and how to politicise individual concerns. Their varied decisions of politicisation primarily resulted from their different political socialisation processes. The finding echoed many scholars' findings that political socialisation affected immigrants' political participation (McAllister & Bilodeau, 2005; McAllister et al., 2010). Interviewees had varied political socialisation experiences in different political cultures. Their varied political socialisation experiences further led to the phenomenon that older people from mainland China preferred to politicise personal concerns as governmental affairs, wanting the government to help them solve the problems. Young and middle-aged people favoured politicising individual problems as civic affairs. They believed civil society was competent to address their politicised concerns.

Many older interviewees from mainland China got accustomed to the Chinese government's paternalistic governance model. For example, when talking with Interviewee 3 about the scope of the government's power, he asked whether I knew a famous saying, "Do not worry and be relaxed. We have the government."[85] He said this saying accurately reflected how Mainlander Chinese in their 70s and 80s, like him, viewed the role of the government in managing public affairs.

The paternalistic governance model has a deep cultural root in Confucianism. Cheng and Bunnin (2008) explained how the paternalist governance model shaped the meaning of citizenship and the behaviour of government officials in contemporary society in mainland China. Confucianism encouraged government officials to treat people as their children and take

[85] "别担心，放轻松，一切问题都有政府呢。" (Interviewee 3's words in Mandarin)

good care of their well-being from various aspects. The state was like a big family, and government officials were like the parents of the big family. The central and local governments were responsible for offering public goods and welfare benefits. Therefore, the term 'parenting officials' (父母官) was used in Mandarin to describe officials' obligations to citizens. Additionally, Interviewee 3 recalled that the mainland Chinese government always propagandised the discourse of "asking the government for help whenever facing difficulties".[86] After hearing this kind of discourse for a long time, older people might have developed psychological reliance on the government. For this reason, older interviewees from mainland China tended to politicise individual concerns as governmental affairs. They believed the government's direct intervention in politicised problems was the most effective solution.

However, older interviewees from Hong Kong and Taiwan, such as Interviewee 34, expressed a more cautious attitude towards expanding the scope of government power. They did not want the government to supervise every aspect of their lives and wished civil society to enjoy significant autonomy. Their divergence from older Mainlander Chinese resulted from the different political systems in these three places. Hong Kong and Taiwan governments follow liberalism's advocacy of limited governments.[87] They leave significant autonomy to civil society to deliver public goods and welfare benefits. Older people from these three places had different political socialisation experiences due to the different political systems. Therefore, the paternalistic governance model might primarily influence the elders from mainland China, but not heavily influence elders from Hong Kong and Taiwan. Older interviewees from Hong Kong and Taiwan tended to either refuse politicising strategy or choose to politicise individual concerns as civic affairs.

Many young and middle-aged interviewees, regardless of their origins, preferred to politicise individual concerns as civic affairs. Their preferences primarily resulted from their liberal-oriented ideologies. Most people from this age cohort were educated in Western universities and worked in New Zealand. Liberalism deeply affected their understanding of citizenship and the government's role in managing public affairs. They prioritised individual freedom,

[86] "有困难找政府。" (Interviewee 3's words in Mandarin)

[87] The extent of these two governments' practises of limited government remains a hotly debated question among scholars (Fell, 2018; Sing, 2009).

remained sceptical of the government's power, and sought to maximise individual autonomy. They tended to believe that civil society was autonomous in offering public goods and solving collective problems. Their scepticism of the government's power and confidence in civil society's autonomy underpinned their preference for a limited government and an independent civil society. Consequently, they often had different decisions from older Mainlander Chinese when politicising activities.

However, scholars have also noticed that political socialisation is a lifelong process. People's political ideologies, understanding of citizenship, and expectations from the government might change when migrating from one political culture to another. The longer they have been living in a liberal democracy, their political behaviour would be more likely to be affected by liberalism (Bilodeau, 2003; McAllister et al., 2010). Therefore, we might expect that older interviewees from mainland China who have been living in New Zealand for a long time may reduce their reliance on the national government and refuse to politicise private issues as governmental affairs. However, people might also become more vulnerable as their age increases. Their vulnerability may enhance their dependence on the government. It increases the difficulty of predicting the politicising decisions of older interviewees from mainland China.

Although interviewees often disagreed on politicising personal issues as governmental or civic affairs, most interviewees agreed that politicisation was a promising approach to addressing individual concerns that significantly reduced their life quality. Only a few interviewees objected to the politicising strategy. People's adoption of this approach resulted from both push and pull factors.

The most significant push factor was that interviewees felt they could not solve their problems and grievances by interacting with Chinese MPs and public servants. Chapter Four demonstrated in detail why many interviewees had such feelings. Although they reported their political demands and grievances through various institution-based channels, most of their problems remained unresolved. Therefore, they were keen to seek alternatives in civil society to articulate demands and solve grievances. Among various civic institutions, Chinese associations were suitable for interviewees to politicise individual problems and accumulate

associations' resources to address them. Interviewees had no language barriers when communicating in Chinese associations and had more trust in other Chinese people.

The primary pull factor was the tradition that Chinese associations had actively supported the Chinese community to articulate demands and address concerns. The previous discussion in the Introduction chapter showed that Chinese New Zealanders used Chinese associations to negotiate with the government to request additional welfare services or defend equal and legitimate rights in the past. The tradition has been preserved until now. Therefore, when interviewees could not resolve their demands through government institutions, they used Chinese associations to politicise personal concerns as government affairs and pressured the government to respond to their problems.

The intrusion of private spheres into public spheres also encouraged interviewees to politicise individual concerns as public affairs. Traditionally, politics is synonymous with government and the public sphere (Sales, 1991). With the rise of civil society, life itself has become the central preoccupation of contemporary politics (Arendt, 1958, pp. 28-49). Therefore, when interviewees encountered difficulties that undermined their well-being, they were tempted to construct them as public concerns and pursue political solutions. Chinese immigrants in Canada and France adopted the politicisation strategy to solve the problems widely shared within the Chinese communities (Guo, 2013; Lem, 2010; Trémon, 2013; Wu & Wang, 2007). The above discussion showed that Chinese New Zealanders were no exception.

To summarise, interviewees used Chinese associations to politicise individual concerns. When they encountered problems undermining their well-being yet outside the government's and civil society's attention, they chose to politicise them. The political context, people's dissatisfaction with the results of seeking help from Chinese MPs and public servants to solve their concerns, and the shift of political focus to people's lives together explained their adoption of the politicisation strategy. Although most interviewees concurred that politicising was an effective strategy to improve their well-being, a few felt reluctant to publicise their personal issues. Additionally, among those who advocated the politicisation strategy, interviewees disagreed on the extent of politicising. Some preferred politicising personal affairs as civic

issues, while others favoured politicising them as governmental affairs. Their disagreements resulted from their different political socialisation processes.

Furthermore, the New Zealand government and civil society responded differently to interviewees' politicised concerns. Interviewees saw the government as conservative towards including many politicised concerns in its policy agendas. Therefore, interviewees' politicising actions did not often receive the government's direct responses. Interviewees claimed that not too many public policies on politicised issues had changed. However, civic associations responded actively and timely to address people's politicised concernss. They organised associational activities to address interviewees' politicised concerns, hoping to improve the Chinese community's overall well-being.

6.4 Politicising Chinese associations' activities through financial support

The above section introduces how interviewees politicised individual concerns as civic or governmental affairs to address the problems undermining their well-being. In addition to their self-inspired bottom-up politicisation, interviewees engaged in a state-funded form of politicising activity. As mentioned above, Chinese associations invited people to articulate their demands and ran relevant projects to provide people's requested welfare services. However, Chinese associations encountered many difficulties in providing those services, one of which was funding shortages. When facing difficulties, Chinese associations often went to relevant government institutions asking for funding. The government financially supported Chinese associations to deliver the requested services to the Chinese community. I interpreted the government's action of providing financial support to Chinese associations as politicising Chinese associations' activities. The government incorporated Chinese associations into its welfare service delivery system by offering funds.

This section first presents the three reasons for the government's implementation of the state-funded politicising initiative. Some interviewees welcomed it, while others opposed it. I then illustrate people's engagement in the state-funded politicising initiative and explain their different attitudes towards it. I lastly analyse people's difficulties when engaging in the state-funded politicising initiative.

The government implemented the state-funded politicising initiative for three reasons. First, according to New Zealand's pro-liberal conventions, many politicised issues were often private affairs outside the government's responsibility. Therefore, if the government tried to intervene in the politicised concerns directly, it was likely to receive many people's opposition. Second, the state-funded politicising phenomenon could be traced back to the New Zealand government's tradition of supporting the third sector to offer public goods. The structure of a benevolent third sector existed in the 1940s. People in need at that time could get help from various civic associations, such as informal community aid, religious and ethnic associations, and other types of voluntary associations (Tennant, 2011). The tradition has been well preserved until now. Since the new millennium, successive governments have instituted programmes and allocated major funds to support the third sector in providing public services. For example, government agencies such as Oranga Tamariki – Ministry of Children,[88] Manatū Hauora – Ministry of Health and Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities, have worked closely with civic associations to provide timely help for people in need (Sanders, O'Brien, Tennant, Sokolowski, & Salamon, 2008).

Last, the state-funded politicising process could be integrated into the governments' outsourcing practices (Bel, Fageda, & Warner, 2010; Boardman, Vining, & Weimer, 2016; Jing, 2008).[89] Currently, the New Zealand government outsources its public service delivery in three ways. First, the government purchases services from non-government agents and offers them to relevant target populations. Second, the government hires non-government agents to deliver certain public goods directly to people. Third, the government offers financial and technical support to non-government agents and helps them deliver public services to the entire population or particular communities (Jones, 2015; NZISM, 2022). Chinese associations' engagement in the state-funded politicising initiative is the third type of the government's outsourcing practices.

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[88] Child, Youth, and Family (CYF) was a government agency that had legal powers to protect and help children who suffered from abuse and neglect. It was replaced by the Ministry for Children in 2017.

[89] Scholars in the field of government outsourcing have different definitions to describe this phenomenon. In this dissertation, government outsourcing refers to "the transfer across non-government organisations of the production of goods and services previously provided within goverments" (Clifton, Díaz-Fuentes, & Alonso, 2017, p. 333).

The government's practice of outsourcing policies was heavily influenced by its neo-liberal reform in the 1980s. The fourth Labour government (1984-1990) under Prime Minister David Lange initiated broad-ranging neo-liberal reforms. The reforms re-engineered various areas of public policy, such as significantly reducing the generosity of welfare assistance and corporating with and/or privatising many commercial state assents (Humpage, 2011). The reform aimed to "provide better economic outcomes and end the long-term dominance of egalitarian and communitarian values among citizens" (Boston & Eichbaum, 2014, p. 374).

Many interviewees welcomed the government financially and technically supporting civic associations' provision of welfare services, because Chinese associations encountered financial gaps when offering those services. As demonstrated in the previous section, Chinese associations could deliver some welfare services that people requested. However, the associations could not do it alone for a long time due to the lack of a steady flow of funds. Currently, Chinese associations rely heavily on donations from association members to offer people's requested services. It is unstable for two reasons. First, not every association member is willing to give regular donations to associations. Second, the majority of association members are older people. Although many older members were willing to pay fees regularly, interviewees worried those older members would leave the associations some day in the future. If associations wanted a stable source of funds in the future, they needed to recruit more younger members. Some interviewees reported that it was hard to recruit younger members. Therefore, many interviewees wanted the government to financially support Chinese associations' delivery of people's requested services.

Interviewee 6 explained how the government's financial support would help Chinese associations promptly deliver people's requested services.

> Thousands of Chinese New Zealanders do not have a basic knowledge of New Zealand laws. It is an urgent problem to solve. We [his association, which aims to offer legal aid to Chinese New Zealanders] planned to organise public lectures to promote legal literacy within the community. However, we only had five public lectures. Our registered lawyers were all occupied by their cases. We need more

> funds to hire new lawyers to run the project. We need the government's help.[90] (Interviewee 6)

Other interviewees also mentioned how funding shortages prevented their associations from offering welfare services to the Chinese community. For example, helping Chinese New Zealanders with depression was a severe problem to address within the Chinese community. Although Chinese associations established some programmes to tackle the issue, Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 4 complained that they could have done better if they had sufficient funds. They said their associations had to give up many helpful projects due to funding shortages. Additionally, the CANSA planned to offer food and other necessities for people in need during the COVID-enforced lockdown in 2020 and 2021. However, it eventually abandoned the plan due to limited funds.

The difficulties Chinese associations encountered when offering welfare services echoed the finding that the third sector often faced shortages of resources when providing public goods (Mok, Chan, & Wen, 2021). Studies found that such difficulties forced civic associations to either give up their original plans or focus on a single issue while ignoring others (Brandsen, Trommel, & Verschuere, 2014). The difficulties also weakened civic associations' competence in delivering public goods (Brandsen, Trommel, & Verschuere, 2017).

Interviewee 1, Interviewee 4 and Interviewee 6 represented people who welcomed the government's funding because of perceived financial deficiency. Others also supported the state-funded politicising initiative, because they did not trust cooperating with other civil agents in the third sector, such as entrepreneurs, chambers of commerce and NGOs. They said that when those civil agencies expressed willingness to cooperate with Chinese associations to deliver public goods, they often expected to benefit from the cooperation. Therefore, although other civic associations could offer financial support to Chinese associations, people often

[90] “好多新西兰华人对新西兰的法律缺乏基本的了解。这是一个非常重要且急需解决的问题。我们本打算通过举办公益讲座来向华人社区普及新西兰的基本法律知识。但是目前为止，我们仅举办了五场讲座。这是因为我们机构所有的在职注册律师都在忙他们自己的案子。我们需要更多的资金来帮助我们雇佣更多的专业律师来管理这个项目。我们需要政府的支持和帮助。” (Interviewee 6's words in Mandarin)

rejected the offers. They believed that cooperating with the government was optimal for solving funding shortages.

> When some businessmen offer their donations to our association, they ask us to promote their products among our members. We always reject their requests and cooperation. Our members trust us, and we do not know the quality of those products. So, we will not risk harming our members' interests in this situation. But seeking the government's help is different. The government does not have commercial interests. Plus, providing welfare services is the government's responsibility. We are helping it perform its duties. Therefore, the government should offer us financial aid.[91] (Interviewee 4)

Cooperation between the government and civil society to deliver welfare services has also received policymakers' support. For example, the former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, David Cameron, proposed the concept of 'Big Society' to describe the cooperation between the government and civil society. He expected social enterprises, charities and voluntary associations to partially take over the government's responsibilities in taking care of citizens (Pattie & Johnston, 2011). Additionally, studies found that agencies from the third sector, such as NGOs and religious and ethnic associations, sought cooperation with governments to deliver welfare services worldwide (Evers, 2005; Evers & Laville, 2004; Hodgson, 2004). Those findings illustrated that similar state-funded politicising initiatives where the governments offered financial, human and technical support to civic associations to offer public goods happened elsewhere. In New Zealand, the Ministry of Ethnic Communities (Te Tari Mātāwaka) offers funds and other resources to support ethnic service providers and communities to improve ethnic minorities' well-being.[92]

[91] "曾经有一些商人提出给我们协会捐款，但是作为交换条件，他们希望我们可以向协会成员推荐他们的产品。遇到这种情况时我们都会拒绝他们的捐赠。一方面，我们的成员非常信任我们。另一方面，我们并不知道这些产品的质量好坏。所以我们不会冒险去向我们的成员推荐那些我们并不熟悉的产品，否则就是损害我们成员的利益，辜负了他们对我们的信任。但是向政府寻求帮助就是另外一回事儿。政府的资金援助并不涉及商业利益。而且，向群众提供公共服务本来就是政府的职责。我们在帮助政府履行它的职责。所以政府没有道理不向我们提供财政支持。" (Interviewee 4's words in Mandarin)

[92] Detailed support offered by the Minister of Ethnic Communitie (Te Tari Mātāwaka) can be found from their official website, https://www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/.

Although many countries practised the state-funded politicising initiative of delivering public goods (Alonso, Clifton, & Díaz-Fuentes, 2015; Hodge, 2018; Vaughan-Whitehead, 2013), some scholars expressed their concerns about the phenomenon. They worried that the government would completely transfer its responsibility for offering welfare services to civil society in the future (Hay, 2007, pp. 121-127). Some found that such practice did not reduce central government spending but increased it on the public sector (Clifton et al., 2017). Pressure from interest groups also devalued the efficiency of outsourcing or increased the existing social injustice (Brown & Potoski, 2005). Additionally, different communities might not receive fair distribution and/or equal access to welfare services if private organisations and markets controlled the provision of public goods (Alonso et al., 2015).

Some interviewees agreed that the state-funded politicising initiative might generate adverse outcomes. They believed it would commercialise welfare services, further generating many tragedies. For example, Interviewee 27 acknowledged the government's benign rationales for outsourcing, but thought the state-funded politicising initiative often led to the privatisation and marketisation of public goods and generated undesirable outcomes.

> I know non-governmental actors play a significant role in delivering public goods in some Western countries. A typical example is the healthcare issue in the United States. You see how worse it is when the government transfers this responsibility to private companies. If the state leaves the market to take responsibility for delivering welfare services, inequality will become more prominent than it is now. Therefore, civic associations should remain distant from the capital, businesspeople, and the market.[93] (Interviewee 27)

He was not alone in opposing Chinese associations joining the government's state-funded politicising initiative. Other interviewees also objected to Chinese associations joining the state-funded politicising initiative. They did not think the government was responsible for

[93] "我知道在一些西方国家，非政府机构在提供公共服务方面起着重要的作用。最典型的例子就是美国的医疗保险服务。但是你可以看到当政府把提供公共服务的责任转交给市场后，整个情况会变得非常糟糕。原本就已经存在的社会不公会变得更加严重。所以，当我们机构在向大家提供公共服务的时候，我秉承的理念就是远离市场，资本力量和逐利的商人。" (Interviewee 27's words in Mandarin)

providing every service that people demanded. They believed civil society should offer certain public services to help the government better serve the people.

> I do not think the government should be responsible for taking care of every public issue. Nor does it have sufficient resources and capacities to do so. It explains why the government prioritises unemployment, poverty, and housing issues. Civil society can step in and take care of the things left behind by the government, such as promoting cultural exchange or an environmental protection lifestyle. [94] (Interviewee 29)

Although some people opposed Chinese associations engaging in the state-funded politicising initiative, the previous analysis has demonstrated that Chinese associations could not effectively deliver people's requested services alone. Therefore, interviewees recalled that many Chinese associations participated in the government's politicising initiative despite people's objections. When engaging in the politicising initiative, Chinese associations encountered various difficulties. For example, Interviewee 36 believed that Chinese associations experienced institutional discrimination when receiving government funding.

> The Ministry of Health allocated funds supporting civic associations to offer psychological consultation services to New Zealanders of different ethnicities during the first lockdown in April 2020. We [his association specifically serving Asian New Zealanders] applied but only received a tiny amount of money. It was unfair. The government distributed most of the funds to the associations that serve the Māori and Pacific communities. It ignored the Asian community. [95] (Interviewee 36)

[94] "我并不认为政府有义务对每一项公共事务都负责。实际上，政府也没有足够的资源和能力来管理它们。这也是为什么政府会优先解决失业，贫困和住房问题。至于其他政府没有管到的公共事务，它们需要民间社会的力量来解决，比方说促进不同族裔间的文化交流和推广环保的生活理念。" (Interviewee 29's words in Mandarin)

[95] "在 2020 年四月第一次封城期间，卫生部曾经提供一笔资金来支持民间机构向新西兰人提供心理咨询服务。我们机构也申请了这笔资金，但是只收到很小的一笔钱。大部分的钱都拨给了那些向毛利人和太平洋岛民提供心理咨询服务的机构。这不公平。我认为整个亚裔社区完完全全被政府给忽略了。" (Interviewee 36's words in Mandarin)

His complaints were not groundless. Although Asian, Māori, and Pacific peoples accounted for 15.1%, 16.5% and 8.1% of the whole population (StatsNZ, 2019), the Treasury's released *Budget at a Glance 2021* allocated no special funds to the Asian community in general or the Chinese community in particular in any aspect. In sharp contrast, it left $225 million for Māori health, $380 million to solve Māori housing problems, $7 million to lift Pacific well-being and aspirations, and $68 million to stimulate economic development for Pacific communities (The Treasury, 2021). The *Budget at a Glance 2022* did the same. It did not allocate specific funds to other ethnic communities except the Māori and Pacific people (The Treasury, 2022). Those numbers showed that the government did not proportionally distribute its funds to support different communities' development based on their population proportion.[96]

To summarise, funding shortages prevented Chinese associations from effectively delivering people's requested services. The state-funded politicising initiative by which the government offered financial support to Chinese associations to deliver services people requested mitigated the problem of funding shortages. The government's implementation of this initiative resulted from New Zealand's political context. On the one hand, the third sector in New Zealand has a long history of offering public services for people in need since the 1940s. On the other hand, the New Zealand government practises outsourcing strategies.

The New Zealand government politicised Chinese associations' provision of public services by offering financial support. It was the government's indirect response to people's bottom-up politicising activities. Many interviewees welcomed the state-funded politicising initiative because they distrusted other civil agencies in the third sector and rejected cooperating with them. Some opposed the initiative. They worried that its popularity would lead to the privatisation and marketisation of welfare services. Furthermore, some interviewees complained that the government did not allocate funds fairly to each ethnic group when implementing the politicising initiative.

[96] It is noteworthy to mention that New Zealanders' socioeconomic status have close relationships with their ethnic backgrounds. The average income and household equivalised disposable income of Māori and Pacific communities were lower than the Asian community (StatsNZ, 2022). Therefore, another explanation for how the government allocated its funds was that those decisions were made based on poverty distribution, which coincided with ethnicity. Furthermore, the Treaty of Waitangi promises to offer fundings to serve Māori's community and their well-being.

6.5 Placing politicising activities into the repertoire of political participation

The two sections above have introduced two forms of politicising activities interviewees conducted in Chinese associations. During the data analysis, I first used Jan van Deth's definition of political participation to identify their engagement in those politicising activities as political participation. However, I found that his definition could not offer undisputable support for my judgement. This section first illustrates why van Deth's definition would acknowledge the two forms of politicising activities as political participation. It also presents the problems of his definition when identifying politicising activities as political participation. I then use Arendt's (1958) conception of politics to defend my argument that politicising activities are political participation. Her theory also solved the problems of van Deth's definition. The second part of this section explains how the Arendtian approach identified politicising activities as political participation.

Theoretical support from van Deth's definition of political participation

Van Deth (2014, p. 358) argued that people's engagement in many civil and social activities was political participation if those activities addressed collective problems. Following his statement, I identified interviewees' engagement in the bottom-up politicising activity as political participation. As described in Section 6.3, interviewees politicised personal concerns as public affairs when they found those concerns severely downgraded their well-being. The issues being politicised as governmental or civic affairs were widely shared problems within the Chinese community. Therefore, I argue that interviewees aimed to address collective problems by politicising individual concerns as public affairs. Consequently, their engagement in bottom-up politicising activities was political participation.

People's engagement in the state-funded politicising initiative was political participation as well. When Chinese associations asked for and accepted the government's financial support, they cooperated with the government to offer people's requested public services. From this aspect, the state-funded politicising activity targeted the government. People engaged in this form of politicising activity to work with the government to deliver people's requested services and goods. According to van Deth (2014, p. 357), "if citizens' voluntary activities target the

government, then they are political participation." Following his statement, I identified interviewees' participation in state-funded politicising activities as political participation. Furthermore, Chinese associations received the government's financial support to offer people's requested welfare services. Those state-funded politicising activities also aimed to solve the collective problems of the Chinese community. It again demonstrated that interviewees' participation in state-funded politicising activities was political participation.

However, relying on the instrumental purpose of solving collective problems alone to identify politicising activities as political participation generated a conceptual overlap between political participation and civic engagement. When reviewing the literature on political participation and civic engagement, I found that many scholars used the same instrumental purpose – solving collective and community problems to differentiate civic engagement from other social activities. For example, Adler and Goggin (2005, p. 241) defined civic engagement as "citizens participating in the life of a community to improve conditions for others or to help shape the community's future." Macedo and his collaborators (2005) also understood civic engagement as "any activity, individual or collective, devoted to influencing the collective life of the polity." Following their definitions, politicising activities, particularly bottom-up politicising activities,[97] also belonged to civic engagement.

Since bottom-up politicising activity could be identified as either political participation or civic engagement, does it mean political participation and civic engagement are the same?[98] If they are not, it is unreliable to determine whether an activity is political participation based on the purpose of solving collective problems alone. I needed further evidence to demonstrate that interviewees' engagement in bottom-up politicising activity was political participation.

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[97] State-funded political activity could be considered a form of political participation without dispute because it simultaneously tackled the government and solved collective problems. It met the fifth and sixth features of van Deth's definition. However, using van Deth's definition to identify bottom-up politicising activities as a form of political participation was disputable because it only met the sixth feature of solving collective problems, and the instrumental purpose of solving collective problems generated conceptual overlap between political participation and civic engagement.

[98] The relationship between civic engagement and political participation is under debate among scholars. Some have considered civic engagement as political participation. For example, Diller (2001, p. 7) defined civic engagement as "activities directed individual efforts towards collective action in solving problems through political processes." Others have considered it as citizens' active actions aimed to influence broad civil society (Hollister, 2006). They believed civic engagement and political participation overlapped in certain aspects, but they were essentially two concepts (Fox, 2014).

I agree with Teorell and his collaborators' (2007) claim that civic engagement differed from political participation. Although the two concepts overlap, civic engagement is broader than political participation. Civic engagement includes political and non-political activities that aim to address public concerns and promote the quality of the community. One example is people forming voluntary groups to assign neighbourhood residents to clean their community. If the district used to be dirty, people's cleaning actions undoubtedly solve a collective problem and improve others' conditions in the community. However, I could not identify their cleaning actions as political participation since their actions do not involve public deliberation on how to assign people for cleaning jobs and how to clean the neighbourhood. The residents passively receive the groups' assignments of cleaning the districts on particular days. Nozick's (1974) example of people delivering content for an already established radio station in a community also shows there is no necessary connection between public goods provision and political participation. The activities of cleaning the neighbourhood and running a public radio station are civic engagement rather than political participation. Therefore, civic engagement and political participation are different. Activities aiming to solve collective problems are civic engagement, yet they are not necessarily political participation.

After clearly distinguishing political participation from civic engagement and understanding the relationship between solving collective problems and political participation, I still argue that interviewees' engagement in bottom-up politicising activity was political participation. It was political participation because it involved public deliberation. As shown in Sections 6.3 and 6.4, interviewees engaged in public deliberation to resolve disagreements on whether and how to politicise individual concerns. They also publicly deliberated whether to receive the government's financial support to provide welfare services. I argue that public deliberation itself is political. Since the politicising activities, both the bottom-up and the state-funded forms, included public deliberation processes, they were political participation, regardless of what instrumental purposes they contained.

Theoretical support from Arendt's conception of politics

I argue that interviewees' engagement in the two forms of politicising activities mentioned above was intrinsically political because it included the process of public deliberation. My argument derives from Arendt's (1982) conception of politics.[99] She interpreted public deliberation as a form of 'doing politics' (Lederman, 2014).[100] In Sections 6.3 and 6.4, I described how public deliberation was embedded in interviewees' engagement in politicising activities. The process of public deliberation attached a political attribute to politicising activities; therefore, interviewees' engagement in those politicising activities was political participation.

According to Arendt, public deliberation was an intrinsically political process for two reasons. First, public deliberation attached a political attribute to activities because when people engaged in public deliberation, they experienced Arendt's depiction of political freedom. Instead of understanding freedom as an end that people aimed to achieve via political participation (Carter, 2022), Arendt conceived freedom as a unique political experience where individuals enjoyed free and equal rights to raise and address common concerns. She believed that doing politics was the sole method to actualise freedom. In other words, people enjoyed political freedom when they negotiated their immediate concerns as equal and free individuals and deliberated about possible solutions to those raised common concerns with one another (Arendt, 1982, p. 214). Public deliberation allowed people to take their common concerns into their own hands (Arendt, 1982, p. 218).[101]

Second, public deliberation manifested the communicative essence of Arendtian politics (Habermas & McCarthy, 1977). Arendt (1983, p. 241) claimed that "debates constitute the very essence of political life."[102] In the book *On the Origin of Totalitarianism*, she used totalitarian rule as a cautionary tale to demonstrate how political liberty could be destroyed without the space of freedom and public deliberation. She claimed that Nazism and Stalinism were not

[99] I explained her conception of politics in Chapter Five. Therefore, in this chapter, I do not spend lengthy words elaborating on her conception of politics again.

[100] It is necessary to address that Arendt's understanding of politics was not limited to this aspect. She thought public deliberation could be a form of politics, but politics was more than freedom and public deliberation. For example, the previous chapter shows her understanding of politics as a public space for disclosing identities, creating formal equality and generating consensus among conflicts.

[101] I elaborated on her idea that politics arises from speech and action in Section 5.4 of Chapter Five.

[102] The idea could be understood as an expanded interpretation of Arendt's claim that people participated in politics via their speech.

merely modern versions of tyranny. They were living examples of how people got depoliticised. Those two political orders destroyed public deliberation through which citizens could determine and address common concerns. People were isolated from each other, and the public exchange of opinions disappeared. The two political orders created illegitimate regimes based on violence, and people had restricted opportunities for political participation (Arendt, 1976).

Arendt also emphasised the essentiality of public deliberation for politics in another book, *On Revolution*. She quoted Thomas Jefferson's words to show that a desirable way of doing politics relied on cooperation and dialogue. Jefferson said, "it is dangerous to allow the people a share in public power without providing them at the same time more public space than the ballot box and with more opportunity to make their voices heard in public than election day" (Arendt, 1982, p. 256). The quotation showed Arendt's belief that ordinary citizens' rights to political participation were deprived because of limited platforms for expressing, discussing and deciding common concerns in representative democracy (Arendt, 1982, p. 218).

Reviewing interviewees' politicising activities, I noticed they participated in the processes of expressing, discussing and deciding to address communally-shared problems. When interviewees engaged in politicising activities, they first publicly raised their shared concerns with other members of Chinese associations about particular issues that downgraded their well-being. They then discussed possible solutions to their politicised issues. Interviewees had various views on whether to politicise personal concerns as public or governmental affairs to solve their problems. They also disagreed on whether to accept the government's financial support. Despite those disagreements, they eventually found solutions with other participants through public deliberation in most cases. The minority of those who did not want to receive the government's funding accepted the majority's decision to engage in state-funded politicising activities. All those processes manifested participants' usage of communication to solve common concerns. Meanwhile, when engaging in public deliberation during those politicising activities, all participants had equal opportunities to express their views. Their views were also treated with equal weight. They were free and equal political actors during public deliberation. They indeed actualised their political freedom when engaging in those politicising activities.

Based on these two characters mentioned in the above two paragraphs, I argue that their politicising activities involved public deliberation. By having public deliberation, they experienced the Arendtian political freedom in which people took their concerns into their own hands through cooperation and dialogue. Therefore, their engagement in politicising activities was political participation.

Additionally, the Arendtian framework offered strong theoretical support that the bottom-up politicising activity was political participation rather than civic engagement. As the above analysis showed, van Deth's definition identified bottom-up politicising activities as political participation because they solved collective problems. However, other scholars also identified activities tackling collective concerns as civic engagement. Relying on activities' instrumental purpose of solving collective problems alone was insufficient to determine the nature of bottom-up politicising activities. When using the Arendtian framework to determine the nature of politicising activities, I did not consider their instrumental purposes. Therefore, it solved the conceptual overlap between political participation and civic engagement caused by van Deth's definition.

Although I strongly recommend understanding people's engagement in these two forms of politicising activities as political participation, some interviewees rejected connecting their actions with politics. Interviewee 37 explicitly denied his engagement in bottom-up politicising activities as political participation.[103] He explained that politics was self-interest driven. He discussed with other association members and decided to organise the rambling project for the good of Chinese New Zealanders, not for his reputation, political career or whatever. Thus, he refused to interpret his politicising action as political participation.

Most interviewees did not mention their engagement in these politicising activities when asked whether they participated in politics in Chinese associations. In my opinion, this phenomenon showed their limited understanding of political participation. They shared those stories when I invited them to talk about their associational lives more broadly. They did not even bother to give a label to describe these activities. Only three interviewees interpreted their engagement

[103] I described Interviewee 37's politicising activity in Section 6.3.

in these politicising activities as civic engagement without further clarifying its meaning. Therefore, I am uncertain how they understood the concepts of civic engagement and political participation. The phenomenon reflected the interviewees' narrow understanding of political participation.

To summarise, interviewees' engagement in the two forms of politicising activities was political participation. Although van Deth believed the instrumental purpose of solving collective problems made activities become political participation, I argue that his definition could not identify the bottom-up politicising activities as political participation without dispute. Both civic engagement and political participation emphasise the instrumental purpose of solving collective problems. Nonetheless, interviewees' engagement in bottom-up politicising activities was political participation, because it included public deliberation processes. Meanwhile, interviewees' engagement in state-funded politicising activities belonged to political participation, because such activity also involved public deliberation. The theoretical support that public deliberation was intrinsically political stemmed from Arendt's conception of politics.

6.6 Summary

Throughout the chapter, I have analysed two forms of politicising activities. Interviewees politicised individual concerns as civic or governmental affairs. They participated in bottom-up politicising activities to solve the issues undermining their well-being but outside the government's and society's attention. Chinese associations organised activities to offer the services interviewees requested. However, funding shortages prevented Chinese associations from delivering the requested services sufficiently. Many Chinese associations asked the government for funds. Financial support from the government mitigated the problem. The government politicised the associations' delivery of welfare services by granting funds. The state-funded politicising initiative recruited Chinese associations into the government-led public service delivery system. It also reflected the government's indirect response to people's bottom-up politicising activities. Interviewees disagreed on whether and how to politicise individual concerns. They also disagreed on whether to receive the government's funding. However, most of them solved their disagreements through public deliberation.

Discussions about interviewees' engagement in these two forms of politicising activities in Chinese associations revealed a distinctive aspect of Chinese New Zealanders' political participation in civil society. As the Introduction chapter showed, the existing literature offered limited knowledge about Chinese New Zealanders' political lives in Chinese associations. The discussion in this chapter enriched our knowledge of Chinese New Zealanders'non-institutional political participation. Scholars and policymakers could pay more attention to their political activities in Chinese associations and use them to empower Chinese New Zealanders and improve their overall well-being. Like the discussion in Chapter Five, the analysis of this chapter again revealed how Chinese New Zealanders incorporate politics into their everyday lives.

On the other hand, the discussion also showed how interviewees affected the government's policy development by politicising activities in Chinese associations. Chapter Four showed that many interviewees complained that interacting with Chinese MPs and public servants could not solve their concerns and grievances. The present chapter continues the discussion, showing that interviewees were able to find alternative ways, using Chinese associations to address their collective concerns.

I used van Deth's definition of political participation and Arendt's conception of politics together to defend my identification of politicising activities as political participation. The analysis in this chapter, combined with my analysis of the previous chapter of why constitutive speech-making behaviour was political participation, expanded our understanding of political participation. Chapter Three showed that many scholars differentiated political participation from social activities based on the instrumental purposes of activities. Chapter Five revealed one shortcoming when using such an approach to identifying political participation in the fieldwork, that was, participants' intentions were unreliable in identifying political participation. The analysis of this chapter shows another shortcoming, that is, relying purely on the instrumental purposes of solving collective problems generated conceptual overlap between political participation and civic engagement.

My solution to the shortcoming mentioned in this chapter was again to focus on the political attributes of activities. The previous chapter showed that the processes of publicly disclosing identities and protecting common ground for public discussions attached political attributes to activities. The present chapter demonstrates that public deliberation also made activities have a political attribute. The analysis in Chapters Five and Six demonstrated that instrumental purposes were not the sole criterion for judging whether an activity was political participation. Heavily relying on activities' instrumental purposes might seduce researchers into neglecting other novel forms of political participation that did not have apparent political purposes. Focusing on activities' political attributes rather than their politically instrumental purposes was an alternative approach to identifying political participation.

Chapter Seven Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

First-generation Chinese New Zealanders account for a significant proportion of New Zealand's population. This dissertation explored how they participated in politics within and outside of government institutions in New Zealand. I analysed their institutional political participation by focusing on their electoral activities and interaction with Chinese MPs and public servants. Their non-institutional political participation included their constitutive speech against online messages that contested democratic principles and widely shared social norms in society and their politicising activities in Chinese associations. My discussion on their participation in those different activities revealed interviewees' diverse forms of political participation. It showed they incorporated politics into their daily lives.

This chapter proceeds as follows. Chapters Four to Six have explored the interviewees' diverse forms of political participation. Based on the analysis in those chapters, I present how the interviewees understood politics and integrated it into their daily lives in Section 7.2. Identifying political participation from other social activities was crucial for this research. Section 7.3 reminds readers of how I used the reflective equilibrium approach to moving back and forth between van Deth's definition of political participation, my judgements, and Hannah Arendt's conception of politics to identify interviewees' political participation. Section 7.4 lists the research's theoretical, empirical and methodological implications. Section 7.5 suggests possible topics for future research.

7.2 Integrating politics into daily lives

Interviewees' institutional political participation consisted of two major types – within and beyond electoral activities. I discussed those activities in Chapter Four. When interviewees participated in electoral activities, most believed in descriptive representation. They initially trusted that only Chinese MPs could better defend their interests and solve their grievances in public decision-making. This belief motivated them to vote for Chinese candidates during the 2020 General Election. They also mobilised their families and friends to vote for Chinese candidates, and some volunteered for Chinese candidates' campaigns. Most interviewees desired to have Chinese politicians in Parliament at this stage. They believed that the

appearance of Chinese MPs in Parliament demonstrated that Chinese New Zealanders had achieved descriptive representation in New Zealand's politics.

However, many interviewees began to suspect the real impact of descriptive representation when interacting with Chinese MPs. They complained that Chinese MPs failed to protect their interests and solve their grievances during public decision-making. Therefore, many interviewees began to request the inclusion of influential Chinese MPs with decisive power in public decision-making instead of their mere presence in Parliament. They wanted Chinese MPs to have decisive influence and accommodate people's interests when developing public policies. Interviewees at this stage experienced a psychological shift from requesting descriptive representation to substantive representation. Such a shift showed that as interviewees became more involved in politics, their political demands also evolved.

Interviewees also developed a deeper understanding of descriptive representation through their interaction with public servants. Since most interviewees initially believed in descriptive representation, some assumed they could represent other Chinese New Zealanders because of shared experiences. The assumption motivated them to raise their concerns to public servants. However, some felt that public servants did not think their complaints represented Chinese New Zealanders' general concerns simply because they were Chinese. Other interviewees also felt reluctant to represent the Chinese community when interacting with public servants, because they had no consent from other Chinese people. Those interactive experiences made interviewees doubt the premise of descriptive representation – whether shared physical characteristics and experiences entitled people to make representative claims. Their suspicion of descriptive representation might further influence their voting behaviour in future elections. It might also affect how they expected and evaluated Chinese MPs' performance in Parliament in their future interaction with Chinese MPs.

Chapter Five introduced interviewees' online political participation, primarily their actions of giving counterspeech to rebut online messages that contested democratic principles and widely shared social norms in society. I described those harmful messages as online comments contesting social-political principles of democracy and interviewees' actions of making

counterspeech as constitutive speech-making behaviour. Their online political participation showed they were not politically apathetic. Politics became an indispensable part of their daily lives. Interviewees' integration of politics into their everyday lives manifested in two aspects.

First, interviewees had political discussions from time to time with their families, friends and strangers on WeChat groups. They not only talked about issues related to their self-interest but also discussed affairs relevant to the overall well-being of Chinese New Zealanders or the whole New Zealand population. Their engagement in political discussions demonstrated that they were not simply interested in or attentive to politics. They engaged in serious discussions on social and political affairs that were widely debated in society. Additionally, they often expressed varying opinions on the affairs discussed. Their diverse views showed they were distinctive political actors with plural political ideas and ideologies. They not only understood political affairs differently, but were willing to share their different views with one another. Second, when they encountered disruptive messages that contested the social-political principles of democracy, many interviewees spontaneously made constitutive speech to rebut perceived disruptive comments, which showed they cherished the current democratic principles and shared social norms in society. They actively protected those social-political principles when those principles faced threats. In Chapter Five, I demonstrated that the interviewees' constitutive speech-making behaviour was political participation. However, many interviewees did not consider their constitutive speech-making behaviour political participation. The phenomenon suggested that politics had infiltrated interviewees' daily lives and affected their behaviour, yet most people had not realised it.

Chapter Six discussed interviewees' participation in two forms of politicising activities in Chinese associations. The analysis in this chapter demonstrated that interviewees were not passive recipients of public policies. Instead, they actively utilised grassroots resources to advance their interests, solve grievances, and affect public decision-making. The bottom-up politicising activity referred to interviewees using Chinese associations to politicise individual concerns as public or governmental affairs. The state-funded politicising activity referred to the government integrating Chinese associations' provision of welfare services into its public service delivery system by offering financial support.

A primary factor for interviewees' participation in bottom-up politicising activities was that they could not solve their problems through institutional political participation, as mentioned in Chapter Four. However, people did not give up using politics to achieve their goals. They sought political solutions in civil society and found Chinese associations were valuable resources to address their problems. Therefore, they went to Chinese associations to look for sympathisers with similar experiences, to persuade them to politicise shared concerns, and to deliberate on possible solutions. They succeeded in reconstructing personal concerns as public affairs by engaging in bottom-up politicising activities. Additionally, interviewees did not stop at the stage of politicising affairs in Chinese associations. Chapter Six showed that they participated in collective activities attempting to pressure the government to respond to their politicised concerns, such as initiating petitions. They also mobilised Chinese associations to offer welfare services people requested, demonstrating that interviewees actively participated in grassroots political activities to address grievances.

Due to funding shortages, Chinese associations sometimes could not effectively deliver welfare services to the Chinese community. Interviewees found that they could ask for financial and technical support from the government. I interpreted the government's provision of funds to Chinese associations to help them offer welfare services as state-funded politicising activities. As introduced in Chapter Six, interviewees' participation in state-funded politicising activities could mitigate the problem of funding shortages. The Chinese associations' reception of the government's funds to meet people's requests showed how the government and Chinese associations cooperated to improve the Chinese community's well-being. It also showed that people's grassroots political activities in society sometimes changed the government's decision-making in allocating financial resources. Interviewees' use of Chinese associations to affect public decision-making echoed Sedgwick's (1982) conclusion that Chinese associations played a significant role in Chinese immigrants' political participation.

To summarise, although studies often have stereotyped Chinese immigrants as inactive political participants (Hsu & Kassam, 2022; Lem, 2010), analysing interviewees' institutional and non-institutional political participation told another story. When interviewees had political demands and grievances, most of them first actively sought the government for help by contacting Chinese MPs and public servants. They also used Chinese associations to address

their concerns. Although the existing studies on Chinese New Zealanders' political participation have rarely analysed their online political activities (Ip, 2002; Park, 2006; Sedgwick, 1982), Chapter Five showed that interviewees had diverse forms of online political participation. Interviewees' recalled political activities echoed previous studies' conclusions that Chinese New Zealanders engaged in diverse institutional and non-institutional political activities to solve problems and advance interests (Ip, 2002; Park, 2006(Sedgwick, 1982)).

All my above discussions demonstrated that politics had become a part of interviewees' daily lives. They often sought political ways to address their concerns, even though some might not have realised it. Therefore, when thinking of Chinese New Zealanders' political participation, researchers and policymakers should expand their consideration beyond electoral activities. They should also pay attention to people's diverse political participation in civil society and online. Additionally, my discussions showed that interviewees participated in politics not merely to affect public decision-making. Their political participation also aimed to deliver welfare services, protect democratic principles, and maintain widely shared social norms. The numerous goals of the interviewees' political participation broadened our understanding of the role of politics in daily life.

It might be optimistic to claim that Chinese New Zealanders are not politically apathetic based on the small sample size of 38 interviewees. However, this dissertation showed that interviewees had diverse forms of political participation. Scholars interested in the topic can conduct survey-based studies to test whether Chinese New Zealanders participate in similar activities on a large scale. Such studies could further illustrate how Chinese New Zealanders incorporate politics into their everyday lives.

Furthermore, the previously discussed examples (such as older immigrants' well-being concerns and interviewees' objections to pension reform) in Chapter Five and Chapter Six have demonstrated that interviewees' institutional, associational, and online participation could work as complementary techniques to help interviewees address the same political concerns. On the one hand, when people found institutional participation failed to help solve problems or protect their interests, they used Chinese associations' resources and online activities to

address the problem(s). As analysed earlier, when older interviewees found Chinese MPs could not support them in refusing the pension reform, they mobilised people in Chinese associations and online to stop the reform from becoming law. They created a petition against the pension reform and circulated it among various Chinese associations and numerous WeChat groups to collect as many signatures as possible. On the other hand, when Chinese associations delivered people's requested welfare services, they often faced impediments, such as funding shortages. In these situations, Chinese associations often sought financial support from the government to meet people's political demands. However, it is noteworthy to emphasise that Chinese associations remained autonomous and independent when cooperating with the government. It only accepted financial support from the government, and the latter often did not issue instructions asking the former to follow. Therefore, interviewees' institutional, associational, and online participation interacted and functioned together to help people solve their problems and advance their interests.

7.3 Differentiating political participation from social activities

As mentioned above, interviewees participated in various online and offline political activities both in and outside of government institutions. They had no trouble identifying their institutional political participation, because those activities occurred within government institutions. However, when talking about their non-institutional political participation, most interviewees initially said they had no or few political activities in civil society. They mentioned engagement in politicising activities and making online constitutive speech when I asked them to talk more about their social activities related to their well-being. The phenomenon showed that interviewees had relatively narrow interpretations of political participation.

I first used van Deth's definition of political participation to differentiate political participation from social activities. I gave a detailed explanation of why I chose his definition in Chapter Three. Van Deth (2014, pp. 353-360) claimed that extra-institutional activities were political participation if they were citizens' voluntary and amateur actions and aimed to target government institutions, solve collective problems, or convey people's political intentions. According to his definition, engagement in politicising activities was political participation, because interviewees used the politicising strategy to solve the community-shared problems.

Constitutive speech-making behaviour also belonged to political participation, because it conveyed interviewees' political intentions of protecting shared democratic principles and social norms in society.

However, other scholars also identified civic engagement as activities aiming to solve collective problems (Adler & Goggin, 2005). Comparing their arguments with van Deth's definition, I found that solely relying on activities' instrumental purposes of addressing collective concerns could not accurately identify the nature of politicising activities. His definition could not differentiate political participation from civic engagement without dispute. It was his definition's first shortcoming. I believed political participation and civic engagement were two concepts. Therefore, I used Arendt's theory to support my identification of politicising activities as political participation. It was the primary reason for my adopting the reflective equilibrium method to investigate the nature of the interviewees' activities.

Additionally, I found that some interviewees had no political intentions when making constitutive speech. They were not motivated to protect the social norms or political cultures of New Zealand. They rebutted online disruptive comments simply because they viewed those comments as non-factual. In this situation, their constitutive speech-making behaviour was not political participation, according to van Deth's definition. However, I disagreed with this conclusion. It showed that relying purely on people's political intentions to identify political participation was inconclusive. It was the second shortcoming of van Deth's definition of political participation. I again used Arendt's conception of politics to support my argument that constitutive speech-making behaviour was political participation.

Arendt's conception of politics offered theoretical support to identify interviewees' engagement in politicising activities and their constitutive speech-making behaviour as political participation. Arendt (1958) conceived politics as a particular condition that people experienced in their daily lives. When individuals gathered to talk about the public affairs of their shared world, they were doing politics. Politics arose when people disclosed their distinctive identities, protected the common ground for discussing public affairs, and deliberated over possible solutions to collective concerns (Arendt, 1958, 1982).

As I claimed in Chapter Five, interviewees enacted online political space when they made constitutive speech. That political space allowed interviewees who made constitutive speech to reveal their distinctive political identities. The audience profiled who constitutive speech makers were only according to their online speech without knowing their identities in the physical world. Additionally, constitutive speech makers aimed to protect what they perceived as the shared social norms and democratic values. Arendt believed those social norms and democratic values were the common ground for people to conduct politics. They offered a regulatory framework for people's political action and speech. Last, the back-and-forth arguments between constitutive speech makers and disruptive speech makers might generate novel social-political principles of democracy to replace the existing ones. Therefore, I argued that the interviewees' constitutive speech-making behaviour was political participation, regardless of whether they had political intentions or not when acting.

A core feature of Arendt's conception of politics was cooperation and dialogue between free and equal individuals (Lederman, 2014). When doing politics, individuals were free and had equal rights to raise and address common concerns. They also evaluated each one's opinions equally. I described that process as public deliberation among equal participants. As I showed in Chapter Six, interviewees publicly deliberated with one another in Chinese associations to determine whether and how to politicise personal concerns as public affairs. They also publicly deliberated whether and how to receive the government's financial support to provide welfare services. Everyone had an equal opportunity to express their views. When they engaged in public deliberation, they experienced the Arendtian form of political cooperation and dialogue and actualised the Arendtian political freedom. Therefore, I argued that interviewees' engagement in politicising activities was political participation rather than civic engagement.

As shown above, I used van Deth's definition of political participation and Arendt's conception of politics to defend my identification of interviewees' non-institutional political participation. The combined use of these two theories manifested my practice of using the reflective equilibrium approach to differentiating political participation from social activities, as mentioned in Chapter Three. During the fieldwork, I first identified politicising activities and constitutive speech-making behaviour as political participation according to van Deth's

definition. However, I realised two shortcomings of his definition, as mentioned earlier. First, his definition caused conceptual overlap between political participation and civic engagement, further theoretically weakening my identification of politicising activities as political participation. His definition also generated conflicting judgements on whether constitutive speech-making behaviour was political participation. I then adopted Arendt's conception of politics to overcome those problems and offer a theoretical defence for my arguments that those activities were political participation. My working back and forth between van Deth's definition of political participation, my judgements on interviewees' political participation, and Arendt's conception of politics manifested my practice of the reflective equilibrium approach.

7.4 Implications for future studies

The present research had several implications for future studies on political participation. Theoretically, it proposed a method to identify political participation. My research showed the shortcomings of van Deth's definition when differentiating political participation from social activities. Those shortcomings resulted from his adoption of an instrumental purpose-oriented approach to identifying political participation. I proposed an alternative method that overcame those shortcomings. Empirically, my research enriched our knowledge of Chinese New Zealanders' political participation and offered suggestions for promoting their political integration in New Zealand. My research findings showed how a small sample of first-generation Chinese immigrants used multiple channels to express their demands, solve their concerns, and advance their interests. The findings offered advice on creating an inclusive environment to facilitate Chinese New Zealanders' political integration. The present research also offered empirical implications regarding ethnic minorities' participation in representative democracies. Furthermore, my research had methodological implications for studies on political participation. It demonstrated the advantage of interview-based qualitative methods in revealing the diversity and nuances of the target group's political participation. It also showed how to use the reflective equilibrium method to differentiate political participation from social activities in fieldwork.

The research had theoretical implications for defining and identifying political participation. As mentioned in Chapter Three, scholars have disputed how to differentiate political participation from other social activities, and have suggested numerous definitions of political

participation. Among those definitions, van Deth's definition has been well-examined and widely used in academia. Although van Deth (2014, p. 349) confidently claimed that his definition was competent to capture past, present and future forms of political participation, I found two shortcomings when using it to identify interviewees' political participation during fieldwork, as explained previously.

The shortcomings in van Deth's definition stemmed from his focus on relying on activities' instrumental purposes to identify politics. As I showed in Chapter Three, the instrumental purpose-oriented approach is a popular way to define politics in academia. Therefore, we could reasonably assume that those definitions of political participation might also have similar limitations when being used to differentiate political participation from social activities.

The review in Sections 5.4 and 6.5 showed how Arendt's conception of politics improved those two shortcomings and offered another approach to identifying political participation. The approach based on Arendt's conception of politics identified political participation by examining activities' political attributes. Activities' instrumental purposes became irrelevant for identifying political participation, because Arendt focused on the process of activities. Chapters Five and Six showed that the processes of disclosing identities, seeking consensus in conflicts, and publicly deliberating collective concerns attached political attributes to activities. In addition to those processes, other processes could also make activities have political attributes. Once activities involve those processes, they become political activities. Therefore, the present research proposed another approach to defining and identifying political participation – exploring the political attributes of activities. Such an approach allows researchers to identify political participation without considering the instrumental purposes of activities. It shifts the feature of political participation from instrumental purpose-oriented to attribute-oriented.

I want to emphasise that the two approaches – relying on activities' instrumental purposes and political attributes are not mutually exclusive. As I practised in this study, researchers can use them simultaneously during fieldwork. The attribute-oriented approach can compensate for the purpose-oriented approach's shortcomings in identifying political participation. The present

research showed researchers how they could practise the reflective equilibrium approach in empirical studies.

Further, to practise the attribute-oriented approach successfully, it is necessary to explore what processes are intrinsically political. To solve the problem, researchers need to broaden their understanding of politics. Many researchers often interpret politics as a means to achieve particular ends, such as coordinating different government institutions, solving collective problems, and delivering public goods (Crick, 2004; Peters, 2004; Weale, 2004). However, it is one facet of politics. Politics is also an end in itself. As Arendt (1958, p. 7) asserted, politics was people's daily experiences of exercising freedom through public deliberation, constructing and disclosing identities, and creating common ground in conflict and diversity. An expanded interpretation of politics would help researchers recognise various political processes in people's daily interactions with one another.

The present research also had empirical implications for understanding Chinese New Zealanders' political participation and facilitating their political integration in New Zealand. First, my research findings showed how interviewees engaged in diverse online and offline political activities both in and outside of government institutions to achieve their political goals. The diversity of their political participation forms demonstrated that these interviewees were active political participants. They turned to politicians and public servants for help when facing problems. When Chinese MPs and public servants could not solve their concerns, they sought help from civil society. They used the internet to accumulate collective power and exert their influence broadly. An example was that interviewees circulated a petition against the Pension Reform on the internet to collect more signatures, as I mentioned in Chapter Five. Interviewees also used Chinese associations to provide welfare services outside the government-sponsored welfare system. When they realised Chinese associations' limited capacities in offering welfare services, they worked with the government to meet people's demands. Chapter Six mentioned many examples of this aspect.

Second, my research revealed that the internet and Chinese associations played multiple roles in Chinese New Zealanders' political participation. On the one hand, they offered opportunities

for interviewees to participate in politics. Interviewees could express their political demands, grievances and opinions online and in Chinese associations. Meanwhile, the internet and Chinese associations facilitated individual capacity into collective power to help solve community-shared problems. Moreover, the internet and Chinese associations were effective tools for political parties and the government to approach the Chinese community. The parties and the government recruited potential political participants through these two platforms and interacted with interviewees through them. Interviewees themselves also used these two platforms to mobilise more people to participate in various political activities.

Last, based on the interviewees' diverse forms of political participation, I proposed some suggestions to facilitate Chinese New Zealanders' political integration. Firstly, in addition to the existing information collection channels within government institutions, the government could use Chinese associations to canvas people's demands and address their grievances. For example, the Ministry for Ethnic Communities was established to promote the inclusion of ethnic communities in society. It announced *Strategy 2022 – 2025 - A pathway to an Aotearoa where ethnic communities feel at home* to ensure government services were accessible and provided equitably for ethnic communities (MEC, 2022). It has also launched multiple programmes to empower ethnic communities.[104] However, as shown in Chapter Four, many interviewees did not know about existing institutional channels to report their requests and comments. Others could not raise their concerns through those channels because of language barriers. Chapter Six demonstrated that people could freely articulate their demands, concerns and opinions in Chinese associations without language barriers. Therefore, by focusing on Chinese New Zealanders' political activities in Chinese associations, the government could integrate the Chinese community into the current political system. One example was the state-funded politicising activities introduced in Chapter Six.

Secondly, Chapter Six also demonstrated that Chinese associations played a significant role in solving collective problems, such as offering welfare services and promoting political literacy for Chinese New Zealanders. However, Chinese associations encountered numerous difficulties when helping the Chinese community solve collective problems, such as financial

[104] The official website of the Ministry of Ethnic Communities presents many programmes aiming to connect and empower ethnic communities. Detailed information can be found here https://www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/.

shortages. If more money could be provided to Chinese associations, they would be more professional and effective in addressing collective concerns. It was another way to enhance Chinese New Zealanders' political integration.

The research also had empirical implications for understanding ethnic minorities' participation in representative democracies. Conventionally, scholars have assumed that improving the descriptive representation of ethnic minorities would enhance their feelings of political trust and efficacy (Merolla, Sellers, & Fowler, 2013; West, 2017) and generate positive outputs on ethnicity-related policies (Broockman, 2013; Wilson, 2010). However, analysing interviewees' interaction with Chinese MPs told another story. Most interviewees complained that Chinese MPs failed to solve their problems and defend their interests in public decision-making. Some lost trust in Chinese MPs because of their 'disappointing' performance. It showed that descriptive representation did not necessarily improve ethnic minorities' substantive representation, as many scholars have observed in other countries (Saalfeld, 2014; Sobolewska et al., 2018). The appearance of descriptive representatives in Parliament did not necessarily facilitate ethnic minorities' feelings of political trust and efficacy either. Meanwhile, the internal diversity of Chinese New Zealanders made interviewees have heterogenous political interests and demands. It reminded researchers not to assume people from the same ethnic group would always share coherent and solid political interests and requests when participating in politics.

Additionally, Chapter Four showed that interviewees understood their identities differently when reporting political concerns to public servants. Some believed they represented the Chinese community since they collected problems from other Chinese New Zealanders. Others insisted they only represented themselves, because no one asked them to represent the Chinese community. The phenomenon reminded researchers not to automatically assume that shared physical characteristics and experiences entitled people to make representative claims on behalf of others without others' consent. Researchers need to reflect on whether shared physical characteristics and experiences grant qualification of being representatives since such an assumption has already received suspicion from many scholars (Celis, 2012).

The last implication to draw from this research was more methodologically related. Chapter Two mentioned that most studies on Chinese New Zealanders' political participation were survey-based quantitative research. They had advantages in revealing people's political participation rates. However, they could not show how people themselves defined political participation and interpreted their political behaviour. Those survey-based studies may not accurately reflect people's political participation rates either. They asked respondents whether they participated in common political activities, such as voting, contacting politicians, signing petitions and joining protests. However, they neglected some novel activities, such as their politicising activities and constitutive speech-making. I believe Chinese New Zealanders have other novel forms of political participation waiting for investigation. My research demonstrated the strength of semi-structured in-depth interview-based qualitative research in discovering novel forms of political participation. It opened up an alternative way to explore political participation. Furthermore, my research exemplified how researchers could practise the reflective equilibrium approach, by moving back and forth among different definitions of political participation, conceptions of politics, and researchers' own judgements to accurately differentiate political participation from social activities.

7.5 Suggestions for future studies

The findings and implications of my research suggested some interesting research topics for researchers interested in political participation. First, I want to encourage researchers to conduct more studies exploring Chinese New Zealanders' political participation. As I have emphasised throughout the dissertation, the existing studies revealed limited knowledge of how Chinese New Zealanders participated in politics. My research showed two novel forms of political participation among Chinese New Zealanders – engaging in politicising activities and making online constitutive speech. Some studies found that Chinese New Zealanders were transnational or global citizens (Liu, 2010, 2011). Chapter Two also mentioned that some interviewees participated in their homeland or global politics, even though I did not analyse those political activities in this dissertation. Therefore, I believe future researchers may find more novel forms of Chinese New Zealanders' political participation, whether through quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods research.

Second, I encourage researchers to investigate and understand Chinese New Zealanders' political participation from the politicians' perspectives. As mentioned above, many interviewees complained that Chinese MPs failed to respond to their demands and protect their interests in public decision-making, and argued that Chinese MPs failed to represent the Chinese community in the political arena. However, the conclusion was drawn based on the interviewees' views. In order to fully understand Chinese New Zealanders' interaction with Chinese MPs, researchers also need to investigate the issue from the perspectives of Chinese MPs.

Third, researchers could examine whether the findings of the present research apply to other ethnic minority communities in New Zealand. My research showed diverse forms of Chinese New Zealanders' political participation. As I explained in Chapters Four to Six, interviewees' choices of engaging in those political activities primarily resulted from their identities as an ethnic minority group in New Zealand. New Zealand is a multi-ethnic society. Similar to Chinese New Zealanders, first-generation immigrants accounted for a large proportion of some ethnic minority communities (StatsNZ, 2019). They may encounter similar problems, such as being unfamiliar with New Zealand's political system, having language barriers, and having different political demands from the ethnic majority. Given the similarities between Chinese New Zealanders and other ethnic minorities, researchers are encouraged to conduct comparative studies on their political participation and Chinese New Zealanders' political participation.

Last, I hope researchers will comparatively analyse Chinese immigrants' political participation in New Zealand and other countries. The *World Migration Report 2022* showed that China (59.5 million emigrants) ranked as the second emigrant-sending country after India in 2019 (83.2 million emigrants) (IOM, 2022). Chinese immigrants in other countries, like Chinese New Zealanders, are an unignorable community in societies. Exploring their political participation helps to evaluate the democratic performance of those countries and understand Chinese immigrants' political participation globally. As discussed in Chapter Six, political socialisation affected Chinese immigrants' political participation. Since some Chinese immigrants in other countries probably experience similar political socialisation processes as interviewees, they might engage in similar political activities as Chinese New Zealanders.

Chapter One showed how Chinese immigrants participated in politics in different host countries. Based on the existing literature, scholars interested in this topic can investigate whether my research's findings apply to Chinese immigrants' political participation in other countries. They can also conduct comparative studies on Chinese immigrants' political participation in different countries.

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Appendix A Interview outline

Department of Politics & International Relations

10 Symonds Street, Social Science Building

Email: ydu859@aucklanduni.ac.nz

The University of Auckland

Private Bag 92019

Aucklad, New Zealand

Interview outline

The interview is a semi-structured interview and lasts approximately 60 minutes. Only the researcher, the two supervisors of the researcher, and the interviewee will know the content of this interview. The interview will cover three broad themes: the interviewee's local integration in New Zealand, her or his politically participatory experience in New Zealand, and how she or he interprets her or his own political participation experience.

Regarding local integration in New Zealand

1. Why did you choose to come to New Zealand and decide to live here?
2. Do you think you have successfully integrated into the local society? What difficulties have you faced during this integration process? Have you tried any method to help you integrate into society?
3. Have you ever participated in a club/organisation/foundation? How do those clubs/organisations/foundations affect your life? Do they facilitate your local integration?

4. Do you think the level of your local integration affects your well-being in New Zealand?

Regarding political participation in New Zealand

1. Do you usually pay attention to political news? Do you discuss political or social issues with others?
2. Did you vote in the general election in the past? Why did you vote/not vote?
3. Did you interact with Chinese MPs or public servants ever to articulate your demands or express your complaints? Did you have any other forms of political participation within government institutions?
4. Have you ever participated in any political activity in a Chinese association?
5. Have you had any online political participation experience?
6. Do you think there is a clear demarcation between political and social issues or between public and private issues?
7. What kind of political participation do you consider to be active participation? And what type of activity is passive political participation?

Regarding the interviewee's own interpretation of her or his political participation experience

1. Do you think you are an active political participant?
2. How do you think political participation has affected your life?
3. By participating in those political activities, did you finally achieve the goals you initially wanted to achieve or solve the related political problems?

政治与国计关系学院

58 Symonds Street, Auckland Central, Auckland

邮箱: ydu859@aucklanduni.ac.nz

奥克兰大学

私人包 92019

奥克兰，新西兰

访谈提纲

此次访谈将持续大约 60 分钟，访谈为半结构化访谈。访谈内容仅限采访者和受访者两人知晓。访谈涉及三个主题，分别是：受访者在新西兰的当地融合情况；受访者在新西兰的政治参与经历，受访者如何理解自己的政治参与经历。

关于在新西兰的当地社会融合情况：

1. 请问您当初为什么选择来新西兰并决定移民新西兰？
2. 请问您是否认为自己成功地融入到新西兰本地社会？您在融入新西兰社会的过程中遇到过哪些困难？您有做过什么尝试来帮助您融入本地社会吗？
3. 请问您有参加过社团/组织/基金会吗？这些社团/组织/基金会对您的生活有什么影响？（各个方面都可以，不局限于对当地社会融合的影响）
4. 您是否认为自己的当地社会的融入程度影响到您在新西兰的生活质量？

关于在新西兰的政治参与经历：

1. 请问您平时关注新西兰的政治新闻吗？会和自己的家人，朋友讨论政治问题吗？
2. 请问您参加每三年一次的大选投票吗？您为什么参加/不参加大选投票？

3. 除了投票外，您还参加过什么其他方式的政治活动吗？（游行，集会，签网上请愿书，主动联系区/市议员……）
4. 您在华人社团中有过政治参与活动吗？有过网上政治参与的经历吗？
5. 您是否认为政治问题和社会问题，私人问题和大众问题他们之间有明确的划分界限？
6. 您认为什么样的政治参与是积极的政治参与？什么类型的参与是被动的政治参与？

关于对自己政治参与经历的理解

1. 您认为自己的一名活跃的政治参与者吗？
2. 您认为政治参与对您的生活造成什么影响？
3. 通过政治参与，您最终实现了当初想要实现的愿望或者解决了相应的政治诉求吗？

Appendix B Approval of UAHPEC

Office of the Vice-Chancellor

Office of Research Strategy and Integrity (ORSI)

The University of Auckland

Private Bag 92019 Auckland, New Zealand

Level 11, 49 Symonds Street

Telephone: 64 9 373 7599

Extension: 83711

humanethics@auckland.ac.nz

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE (UAHPEC)

15-May-2020

MEMORANDUM TO:

Dr Stephen Winter

Politics & International Relns

Re: Application for Ethics Approval (Our Ref. 024522): Approved with comment

The Committee considered your application for ethics approval for your study entitled: **An interpretive case study of Chinese New Zealanders' political participation in Aotearoa New Zealand.**

We are pleased to inform you that ethics approval has been granted for a period of three years with the following comment(s) or required minor change(s):

Please have someone with an excellent grasp of English proof-read all of the public documents before distribution, as there are still a few grammar and syntax errors throughout.

The current restriction of contact in person with participants due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) lockdown may make the proposed methodology impractical. The Committee would like to remind researchers that they should check guidance updates and submit an amendment request if any changes need to be made to an approved ethics application to enable you to continue with your study.

The Committee would like to remind researchers that they should frequently check guidance updates, at the following sites:

New Zealand and the University of Auckland guidance in connection with the Coronavirus (COVID-19): https://covid19.govt.nz/

https://www.staff.auckland.ac.nz/en/research-gateway/research-support-gateway/manage-ethics- and-regulatory-obligations/human-ethics-approvals.html

Research continuity:

https://www.staff.auckland.ac.nz/en/human-resources/staff-support-services/covid-19-coronavirus-outbreak/researcher-support-and-information.html

If you have any questions about research continuity, not answered by the pages linked above, please contact your Faculty/Institute Research Service Team representative, your Faculty/Institute Business Continuity Lead, or mail researchcontinuity@auckland.ac.nz.

Research storage:

https://www.staff.auckland.ac.nz/en/news-events-and-notices/news/news-2020/covid-19/drop-in-virtual- help.html

The expiry date for this approval is 15-May-2023.

Completion of the project: To maintain up-to-date records, you must notify the Committee once your project is completed.

Amendments to the project: Should you need to make any changes to the project, please complete an Amendment Request form giving full details along with revised documentation. If the project changes significantly, you are required to submit a new application to UAHPEC for approval.

Funded projects: If you received funding for this project, please provide the approval letter to your local Faculty Research Project Coordinator (RPC) or Research Project Manager (RPM) so that the approval can be notified via a Service Request to the Research Operations Centre (ROC) for activation of the grant.

The Chair and the members of UAHPEC would be happy to discuss general matters relating to ethics approvals if you wish to do so. Please contact the UAHPEC Ethics Administrators at humanethics@auckland.ac.nz in the first instance.

Additional information:

Do not forget to complete the 'approval wording' on the PISs, CFs and/or advertisements and emails, giving the dates of approval and the reference number. This needs to be completed before you use the documents or send them out to your participants.

Please quote Protocol number **024522** on all communication with the UAHPEC regarding this application.

(This is a computer-generated letter. No signature required.)

UAHPEC Administrators

University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee

c.c. Head of Department / School, Politics & International Relns

Dr Stephen Winter

Appendix C Information of interviewees

No.	Age	Gender	Place of Origin	Length of Residence	Occupation
1	83	Female	Hong Kong	61	Retired business manager
2	72	Male	Taiwan	50	Retired professor
3	70	Male	Taiwan	47	Retired civil servant
4	76	Male	Hong Kong	51	Retired engineer
5	45	Male	Taiwan	30	Self-employed
6	46	Male	PRC	8	Lawyer
7	42	Female	PRC	8	Homemaker
8	45	Male	PRC	11	NGO worker
9	30	Female	PRC	4	Engineer
10	39	Male	PRC	10	Self-employed
11	48	Female	Taiwan	26	Manager
12	36	Female	PRC	18	Homemaker
13	79	Male	PRC	6	Retired worker
14	73	Male	PRC	5	Painter
15	32	Male	Hong Kong	13	Self-employed
16	28	Female	Taiwan	10	White collar
17	67	Female	PRC	5	Retired teacher
18	40	Male	Taiwan	18	Co-founder of a company
19	36	Female	PRC	10	White-collar
20	31	Male	PRC	10	Chef
21	34	Male	Taiwan	7	Real estate agent
22	33	Male	PRC	12	Co-founder of a company
23	35	Female	PRC	14	Homemaker
24	39	Female	Hong Kong	8	Manager
25	46	Female	PRC	15	Research fellow
26	37	Female	PRC	7	Homemaker

27	30	Male	PRC	6	Civil servant
28	32	Female	PRC	6	Immigration agent
29	46	Female	Taiwan	19	Homemaker
30	38	Male	Taiwan	8	Businessman
31	38	Female	PRC	6	Homemaker
32	32	Female	PRC	7	Self-employed
33	34	Male	PRC	7	Carpenter
34	58	Male	Hong Kong	27	Artist
35	86	Female	PRC	63	Retired engineer
36	39	Male	Hong Kong	13	NGO worker
37	42	Male	PRC	18	NGO worker
38	37	Male	Hong Kong	10	Manager