Examining the perceived values toward regional factions and its impacts on the local election: The reasoned action approach perspective

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ABSTRACT

The regional faction, which is frequently perceived as a threat to the democratic system, has received limited attention regarding its representation of values in contemporary society and influence on voting behavior. This study employs the reasoned action approach (RAA) to investigate the influence of attitudes, norms, and values emerged as a crucial factor influencing voter behavior. These findings enhance our comprehension of the intricate decision-making processes within the electoral context and provide valuable insights for political campaigns and policy considerations.

Introduction

Elections represent a crucial juncture where candidates and political parties engage in the promotion of their distinct political ideologies, vying to gain acceptance and support from the citizenry. Concurrently, regional or local factions emerge as political groups in elections, competing for governmental positions. These factions typically align themselves with specific political parties and represent a distinct subset of citizens who have organized themselves, either formally or informally, to advocate for their unique ideas and objectives. Often, these objectives revolve around region- or area-specific interests, which may, at times, deviate from the broader goals of the party they are associated with. Given this context, understanding how voters make their decisions when facing a candidate affiliated with a regional faction warrants an advanced examination.

Voting in an election grants citizen the opportunity to select the right individuals to represent their community (Urbinati, 2006; Przeworski, 2018). The issue of the criteria employed by voters when making decisions to choose from the list of candidates has garnered significant attention. Decision-making is a complex process involving both cognitive and affective approaches (Pessoa, 2013). The cognitive aspect pertains to individuals evaluating or judging the suitability of candidates based on their qualifications, alignment with the position's requirements, and expected goals. On the other hand, the affective aspect is driven by personal preferences and an emotional attraction to a candidate.

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In essence, a faction represents a service network that operates discreetly, featuring privileged distinctions. Originally, factions were intended to be a positive presence, functioning as an underground system employed by rural society to compensate for the lack of government service efficiency. They can be likened to the local tyrants and gentry of bygone eras, responsible for handling various local resource allocation matters or acting as mediators in resolving disputes. In sum, the local faction is not of no value to the community and the society in the modern democratic system (Bosco, 1992; Göbel, 2012; Walder, 2019).

The positive contributions of political factions to social stability have been a subject of limited attention, and the potential beneficial impacts of regional factions in terms of promoting regional stability and local development are often downplayed or undervalued. The current research suggests that political factions hold specific values in the perception of citizens, and these values may influence citizens’ electoral behavior when considering candidates nominated by the factions (Göbel, 2012; Zeithaml et al., 2020).

Reasoned Action Approach (RAA) and its predecessor Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) have demonstrated strong predictive power in various behavioral contexts. Numerous studies have shown that attitudes and subjective norms can effectively predict individuals’ intentions to engage in behaviors, including voting. Since the mission of electoral campaigns often aim to influence voter behavior by shaping attitudes and perceptions. Therefore, by applying RAA to electoral behavior, researchers can generate insights into voting intentions, which are highly relevant for understanding voter turnout and political participation. Based on a review of various theories and previous research on voting behaviors, the current study adopts the Reasoned Action Approach (RAA) as its theoretical framework (Singh et al., 1995; Oni et al., 2017; Mohanachandran & Govindarajo, 2020). In this context, the voting can be conceptualized as an exchange between citizens and candidates, where candidates compete for votes by promising various benefits. In addition, RAA and TRA have been widely applied across various cultural contexts and behavior domains. Its cross-cultural ability to capture the universality of attitudes and social influences makes it relevant for studying electoral behavior in diverse societies and political systems.

The purposes of this research are to explain the electoral behavior with RAA and to verify the perceived values of regional faction and its effects on the citizen’s electoral behavior.

The structure of this paper is as follows: after the introduction, the second section comprises a literature review, presenting both theoretical and empirical studies that establish connections between theory and practice. The third part delves into the background information on the research and methodology employed. Following the analysis and findings, the authors engage in discussions and examine the implications of their study. Lastly, the paper concludes by highlighting key points, offering recommendations, suggesting future research directions, and acknowledging limitations.

**Literature Review**

The research first reviews previous studies on the subjects of regional factions as challenges to democracy and their potential impact on social stability. This is followed by a review of the theory adopted in this study.

**Perceived Values of Regional Faction**

**Challenges of Democracy**

Democracy means the state is owned by the people and is controlled and run by the persons that the people trust to assure the equality of resource allocation and to maximize the wellness of the entire state (Manin, 1997). The election was thought to be the best practice in the democratic system to select qualified persons to run the government as long as the fairness and justice of the election is assured (Urbiniati, 2006; Przeworski, 2018). It is not uncommon in the real world that an election could be purposefully manipulated by violent forcing or bribing or other unfair behaviors. Many researches claimed that the regional faction that collectively tries to affect the election results to capture the political power of distributing public resources is one of the major sources of this kind to be blamed (Balser, 1997).

**Regional Faction in The Democratic System**

In the realm of politics, a regional faction can be defined as a subgroup within a political party that experiences internal conflicts with other members of the same organization (Persico et al., 2011). This subset of members develops a distinct collective identity and may find themselves in competition over political resources with other factions. Factionalism, in this context, encompasses the conflicts that arise between the organizational faction and other members, as well as conflicts between different organizational factions. More specifically, factionalism pertains to the intra-organizational conflict within a political entity. However, it is important to note that the term "factionalism" is also used to describe inter-organizational conflicts within a broader social movement (Kretschmer, 2013; Chen & Wu, 2021). In the resource allocation perspective, local factions are often considered to be just a small group of people who combine the strength of the crowd to compete for the self-interest of the group in order to seek personal self-interest (Bosco, 1992; Hood, 1996; Knott, 2011; Hood, 2020). This will cause distortion to the reasonable and effective distribution of social resources and hinder the development of democratic politics (Fell, 2005; Hood, 2020).

On one hand, members' affiliation with a faction's emotions and economic benefits naturally leads to a supportive attitude and behavior towards the faction. In certain factions that exhibit higher levels of organization, they may even establish a set of behavioral
constraints in the form of a code of conduct. Such systems include both rewards for adhering to the code and punishments for violations.

On the contrary, as highlighted by various scholars (Diamond & Gunther, 2001; Göbel, 2012; Walder, 2019), the presence of factional organizations during the process of democratic development provides an avenue for more extreme members to express their emotions, particularly in scenarios featuring inter- or intra-organizational conflicts. However, when these factions are managed in an orderly manner, the adverse emotions resulting from such conflicts can be effectively contained and channeled within the controlled boundaries of the factions themselves. This containment of potentially deleterious emotions, which might otherwise pose a risk to social stability, plays a significant role in maintaining the smooth and stable functioning of both a society and formal organizations (Göbel, 2013; Fell, 2018).

Hence, factions should not be unequivocally labeled as malicious or worthless entities, nor should they be entirely dismissed. To faction members, these groups may hold sentimental value due to the emotional connections fostered by the concept of “Guanxi” (Hou & Zhu, 2020), or they may be valued for their utilitarian aspect, providing significant economic benefits. Even for non-faction members, the existence of factions can elicit emotional identification and positive sentiments, as these factions often align their actions with societal expectations, engaging in activities like social assistance and public welfare initiatives.

Furthermore, factions, in their pursuit of political objectives, leverage a diverse pool of talents and resources to carry out specific activities. Although these actions primarily serve the interests of the faction, their spillover effects can still yield economic benefits for non-faction members. Moreover, factions frequently prioritize the interests of specific constituencies, which are often overlooked when devising broader strategies. These neglected aspects, commonly disregarded or underestimated, can be addressed through a bottom-up resource utilization planning approach, which better reflects local needs and attends to the genuine concerns of the general populace. Consequently, ordinary citizens can also perceive the utility value that factions bring to the table.

**Perceived Values Affect Electoral Decision**

In the human behavior studies, the dual process theory advocates that human made decision based on two approaches. The dual process theory of reasoning implies that decisions are affected by both of the intuitive (system 1) and analytical (system 2) processes, or emotional and cognitive processes (Evans & Stanovich, 2013). The system 2 is triggered by the economic benefits that will be rationally considered to support the decision, whereas the system 1 is driven by emotional preferences that is originated by previous experiences or personal like or dislike. The cognitive process denotes that the citizen assesses the candidate’s qualification and other supporting information for a particular position, i.e. the possible utilitarian values the candidate will perform and contribute; the emotional process denotes that the emotional attachment to the candidate, such as personal preference, pleasant, joy, and other subjective favors other than the objective analysis, i.e. the perceived hedonic values (Babin et al., 1994). In other words, the system 2 represents the utilitarian values, and the system 1 the emotional values. We thus infer that the division of value perception into utilitarian and hedonic values is a useful typology (Babin et al., 1994) that provides a concise framework for understanding the dual process of human decision-making (Evans & Stanovich, 2013).

In the context of election behavior, voter’s decision in giving support to one of the candidates just like a consumer’s decision of purchasing a certain brand or product. Voter perceptions of values towards a candidate can be categorized into hedonic and utilitarian values as well (Babin et al., 1994). Utilitarian value arises from the fulfillment of expected goals for a political faction to perform on behalf of the public, whereas hedonic value is the pleasure and enjoyment derived from factors beyond the product itself (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Babin et al., 1994; Jones, 2006). The voter perceived certain values of the specific candidate just like the consumers perceived for a particular product or service.

These two distinctive values, utilitarian and hedonic, people may perceive toward the faction can be extended to the associated candidates because of the “halo effect”. The “halo effect” is a cognitive bias where an individual's overall impression of a person, organization, or thing influences their feelings and evaluations of specific attributes associated with that entity. The “halo effect” explains people’s tendency to extend their likes or dislikes on an organization or entity to its members (Verhulst et al., 2010). The voter’s preferences of a candidate will be greatly affected by the cues of the associated organizations, such as the party or the faction (Conroy-Krutz et al., 2016). In other words, citizens' perceived value toward a regional faction will be extended to its candidate and vice versa.

**Reasoned Action Approach**

The Reasoned Action Approach (RAA) is a social psychological model that aims to understand and predict human behavior by examining the role of beliefs, attitudes, and subjective norms. Originating from the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and later extended into the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), RAA emphasizes the importance of reasoned decision-making and the influence of social norms in guiding human actions. The TRA and TPB have been widely adopted in various behavior studies in different disciplines such as health psychology (Fishbein, 2008), marketing and consumer behavior (Kusumawati & Rahayu, 2020), communication and persuasion (Kim et al., 2020), public policy and social change (Bang et al., 2000) among others.

The RAA posits that human behavior is determined by behavioral intentions, which, in turn, are influenced by attitude and subjective norms as two key factors. Attitudes refer to an individual's cognitive evaluation of a behavior based on beliefs about the outcomes
of that behavior and the subjective value attached to those outcomes. Positive attitudes toward a behavior are more likely to lead to a favorable intention to perform the behavior. Subjective norms represent the perceived social pressures or expectations concerning a behavior from significant others. These norms arise from the individual's normative beliefs and their motivation to comply with those beliefs. The perceived social influence affects the intention to engage in the behavior.

RAA serves as a versatile model across various disciplines, emphasizing the significance of beliefs, attitudes, and subjective norms in shaping human behavior and intentions. Its applicability in diverse contexts has provided valuable insights into the factors influencing decision-making and the design of effective strategies for promoting positive behavioral changes. In the context of current study, RAA offers a robust and relevant framework for explaining electoral behavior by focusing on the key determinants of voting intentions. By understanding these psychological factors, researchers can gain insights into voter behavior and contribute to the development of effective strategies to encourage political participation and enhance democratic processes.

Attitude

The attitude component TRA represents an individual's overall evaluation of the behavior in question. It is assessed by considering the person's beliefs about the outcomes associated with performing the behavior and the subjective value or importance attached to these outcomes. Positive attitudes towards the behavior are more likely to lead to a favorable intention to perform the behavior.

In summary, attitudes embody enduring value judgments that form over time as a result of cumulative experiences and cognitive processes. Their remarkable stability and resistance to change can be attributed to their integration into an individual's cognitive and affective architecture, alongside the desire for cognitive consistency and preservation of self-identity. Recognizing the enduring nature of attitudes is crucial in comprehending human behavior, facilitating effective communication, and devising strategies for fostering positive attitudinal shifts where necessary.

In the Reasoned Action Approach (RAA), instrumental attitude and affective attitude can be explained as two distinct components that influence an individual's behavioral intention. RAA is a theoretical framework closely related to the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), all of which share common elements.

Instrumental Attitude

Instrumental attitude in RAA is equivalent to the attitude component in TRA/TPB. It refers to an individual's cognitive evaluation of a behavior or action based on the perceived instrumental outcomes or consequences of engaging in that behavior. Specifically, it involves the individual's beliefs about the outcomes resulting from performing the behavior and the subjective evaluation of these outcomes.

Affective Attitude

Affective attitude in RAA corresponds to the affective or emotional component in TRA/TPB. It pertains to an individual's emotional evaluation or gut-level response toward a behavior or object, such as vote for a specific candidate. Affective attitude is rooted in emotional responses, feelings, and visceral reactions to the candidate. In RAA, affective attitudes are considered to be influenced by emotional reactions and personal experiences related to the candidate. When voters encounter a candidate, they may experience positive or negative emotions based on the candidate's personality, charisma, relatability, perceived authenticity, or other emotional triggers.

Subjective Norms

Norms encompass a set of implicit guidelines that govern the acceptable behaviors and verbal expressions within specific contexts, with a commonly shared understanding among members of a given society at diverse levels of awareness. Subjective norms of RAA refer to an individual's perception of social pressures or expectations regarding the behavior from significant others, such as family, friends, or colleagues. If a person perceives that relevant others expect them to perform a certain behavior and they value these others' opinions, they are more likely to intend to engage in that behavior. Through an examination of relevant literature and theoretical perspectives, we aim to explore the pervasive nature of norms, their underlying mechanisms, and the implications they hold for social cohesion and order.

Norms indeed operate as implicit rules that govern the acceptability of behavior and speech within specific social contexts. While some norms are widely understood and practiced across society, others may be specific to certain groups, leading to varied levels of awareness. The pervasive nature of norms, their transmission through socialization, and their role in fostering social cohesion emphasize their importance in maintaining social order. A deeper understanding of norms is crucial for comprehending the intricacies of human behavior and the dynamics of social interactions in diverse cultural settings. Norms can be divided into injunctive and descriptive norms for better understanding of its implications (Cialdini et al., 1990). An Injunctive norm, also called a moral norm, refers to the perception of people's "attitudes" about a behavior, and descriptive norm refers to perceptions of how people actually behave.
The division of subjective norm into injunctive norm and descriptive norm is based on the distinction between different types of social influence that shape an individual's behavior (Cialdini et al., 1990). This differentiation helps to provide a more nuanced understanding of how social norms influence human actions and decision-making processes.

**Injunctive Norm.** Injunctive norm refers to the perceived social pressure regarding what one "should" or "ought to" do in a particular situation. It reflects the individual's perception of what significant others, such as family, friends, or authority figures, believe is the appropriate or acceptable behavior. Injunctive norms are based on normative beliefs, which are the individual's beliefs about what others expect them to do. For example, an injunctive norm could be the belief that one should vote in an upcoming election because it is seen as a civic duty or responsibility. The logic behind distinguishing injunctive norms is to capture the motivational aspect of social influence. Injunctive norms tap into normative pressures, which can be internalized by individuals who seek to conform to social expectations and norms upheld by their reference groups or society at large.

**Descriptive Norm.** Descriptive norm, on the other hand, refers to the perceived prevalence or actual behavior exhibited by others in a given situation. It is an individual's belief about what others are doing in a specific context. For instance, a descriptive norm could be the observation that many people in a community engage in recycling regularly. The logic behind differentiating descriptive norms lies in their role as informational cues or practical guide for individuals. Descriptive norms provide people with message about what is commonly practiced in a particular situation. Individuals often use these norms as a reference point to guide their own behavior, especially in situations where they may be uncertain about how to act.

In summary, the division of subjective norm into injunctive norm and descriptive norm allows researchers and practitioners to understand different dimensions of social influence on behavior. Injunctive norms capture the motivational aspects related to social expectations and perceived pressures to conform, while descriptive norms provide informational cues about what others are doing. By considering both types of norms, researchers can gain a comprehensive understanding of how social norms influence decision-making and behavior in various contexts.

Voting in the modern society has been a part of citizen’s obligation, citizens are expected to fulfill their obligation to involve in voting. Study proclaimed that voting is somehow an action to show to the peers or to the society that the voters has fulfilled their obligation by entering into the ballot room.

**Model Development and Hypotheses**

A political candidate can be perceived as possessing a range of attributes or personal characteristics, each varying in importance to the voter (Leong, Tan, and Wong, 1989). Voters make decisions based on their judgments, using specific criteria they consider important or effective. To derive voters’ attitudes toward the candidate, a multiplicative summation is performed, considering the importance of these attributes and the voters’ beliefs regarding the candidate’s possession of them.

In addition, other factors influencing voting intention come into play in the political marketplace. Notably, party affiliation has been found to significantly influence voting behavior (Page, Shapiro, & Dempsey, 1987; Sigel, 1964). Consequently, the proposed model should include attitudes toward the political party as a separate component from that of the political candidate. This component can also be derived through a multiplicative summation, considering the importance of party attributes and the voters' beliefs regarding the party's possession of them.

The second component to be modeled pertains to voters' subjective norms. Research on this aspect has yielded mixed results compared to the attitudinal component. While Glassman and Fitzhenry (1976) found subjective norm to be an insignificant predictor, Farley et al. (1981) determined that attitudes had a higher average standardized regression coefficient (beta) than subjective norms. Beyond the model as suggested by the theory, this research add perceived value as additional variable to capture the voter’s value perception toward the players, candidates and the fractions, in the election ().

**Instrumental Attitude and Electoral Intention**

In the context of electoral behavior, both instrumental and affective attitudes work together to shape the overall attitude towards a candidate and subsequently influence the individual's intention to vote for that candidate. The interplay between cognitive evaluations (instrumental attitude) and emotional responses (affective attitude) can lead to a more holistic and nuanced attitude formation process, affecting the voter's electoral intention.

Instrumental attitude refers to the cognitive evaluation of a behavior or action based on its perceived outcomes or instrumental benefits. In the context of electoral behavior, it pertains to the rational assessment of a candidate's policy positions, competence, and ability to address issues that are important to the voter.

Based on the logic of rational decision-making, the instrumental attitudes are driven by a more cognitive and logical process, where voters weigh the pros and cons of each candidate's policy proposals and qualifications. This rational assessment influences their electoral intention, as they are more inclined to support a candidate who aligns with their instrumental evaluations. Interest consistence is another perspective in explaining the effects of instrumental attitude on voting behavior. Since the instrumental attitudes involve assessing how closely a candidate's policy positions align with the voter's own preferences and priorities on key issues. If a voter perceives that a candidate's proposed policies are in line with their own values and interests, they are more likely to
form a positive instrumental attitude toward that candidate. In addition, voter’s instrumental attitude and behavior intention may also be affected the candidate’s competence. As far as the candidate’s competence is concerned, voters may evaluate a candidate based on their perceived competence, leadership qualities, and ability to implement proposed policies effectively. A candidate who is seen as competent and capable is likely to evoke a positive instrumental attitude, as voters believe that this candidate can bring about desired changes and improvements.

Cognitive dissonance theory posits that individuals are motivated to reduce inconsistencies between their attitudes and behaviors. This implies that the attitude and the behavior intention have strong relationship. Past research based on the TRA, TPB, and RAA have plenty evidence for the efficacy of attitude significantly and positively affected the behavioral intention behavior studies in different contexts and disciplines (Armitage & Conner, 2001; McEachan et al., 2011; McEachan et al., 2016).

**H1a: Instrumental attitude toward the behavior of voting to a candidate will positively affect the voting intention toward such a candidate.**

**Affective Attitude and Electoral Intention**

Affective attitude refers to the emotional evaluation or gut-level response an individual has toward an object or person, such as a candidate. It is based on emotions, feelings, and visceral reactions, rather than a rational analysis of instrumental benefits.

Affective attitudes in RAA focus on the individual's gut-level emotional response to the candidate, reflecting how they emotionally connect with or relate to the candidate. If a voter develops a positive affective attitude toward a candidate, it means they feel emotionally drawn to and supportive of that candidate. This emotional resonance with the candidate can influence their intention to vote for them.

Like as those for instrumental attitude, the affective attitude is mainly composed or affected by the emotional connection with the objects. Affective attitude, as the cognitive dissonance theory suggested, individuals are driven to minimize discrepancies between their attitudes and behaviors. This suggests a significant relationship between affective attitudes and behavioral intentions. Previous studies utilizing the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), and Reasoned Action Approach (RAA) have amassed substantial evidence supporting the influential role of attitudes in positively shaping behavioral intentions across diverse contexts and disciplines (Armitage & Conner, 2001; McEachan et al., 2011; McEachan et al., 2016).

**H1b: Affective attitude toward the behavior of voting to a candidate will positively affect the voting intention toward such a candidate.**

Subjective norm is a social force. Social involvement refers to the community connectedness (Anderson, 2010) has significant impacts on the citizen’s sense of political efficacy (internal and external) and trust (personal and political) (Anderson, 2010). This means the social forces indeed affect the citizens’ willingness to participate or get involved in political activities.

Community connection can be interpreted as the interaction and communications with the community, in which the norms intervened among them, i.e. the norms will act as a social force to regulate their behavior. Injunctive norm and descriptive norm can each play a distinct role in influencing electoral intentions towards a specific candidate.

**Injunctive Norm and Electoral Intention**

In the context of electoral behavior, the injunctive norm represents the perceived social pressure or expectations regarding which candidate one “should” or “ought to” support or vote for. This norm is shaped by normative beliefs about what significant others or social groups consider to be the appropriate or acceptable candidate choice (Fishbein, 2008; McEachan et al., 2016).

Individuals may feel motivated to align their electoral intentions with the injunctive norm to avoid potential social disapproval or to gain social approval from their reference groups. If a candidate is perceived as being endorsed or supported by influential figures, community leaders, or respected organizations, their candidacy may be seen as more socially acceptable. Consequently, individuals may be more inclined to form positive intentions towards that candidate to comply with the injunctive norm and maintain social harmony or approval.

**Descriptive Norm and Electoral Intention**

The descriptive norm in the electoral context refers to the perceived prevalence of candidate support or voting behavior displayed by others within the community or society at large. It represents what others are actually doing or what appears to be the prevailing pattern of candidate preference (Funk, 2010; McEachan et al., 2016).

Descriptive norms serve as informational cues that guide individual decision-making. When individuals observe that a particular candidate enjoys widespread support or that many people in their social network are endorsing a specific candidate, they may use this information as a reference point for forming their own electoral intentions. The prevalence of candidate support conveyed by the descriptive norm can create a bandwagon effect, wherein individuals may be more likely to support a candidate if they believe that candidate is already popular and likely to win.
Previous research grounded in the TRA, TPB, and RAA has substantiated that subjective norms serve as a prominent predictor of behavioral intention in behavioral studies spanning various contexts and disciplines (Singh et al., 1995; Armitage & Conner, 2001; McEachan et al., 2011; McEachan et al., 2016).

**H1c:** Injunctive norms will positively affect the voter’s supporting intention toward a candidate.

**H1d:** Descriptive norms will positively affect the voter’s supporting intention toward a candidate.

### Moderating Effects of Perceived Utilitarian / Hedonic Values

In voting decisions, it can be inferred that voters’ perception of different values may exert varying impacts on their behavioral choices (Vieira et al., 2018). Notably, both utilitarian and hedonic values have demonstrated positive effects on behaviors (Jones et al., 2006; Vieira et al., 2018). Furthermore, these values are associated with individuals’ personal attitudes and subjective norms (Armitage & Conner, 2001; McEachan et al., 2011; Magids et al., 2015; McEachan et al., 2016).

**On the relationship between attitude and intention**

Perceived hedonic values relate to the emotional or experiential satisfaction that individuals believe they will derive from voting for a specific candidate. These values can encompass feelings of excitement, hope, pride, or a sense of belonging. Hedonic values are emotionally driven. When voters feel emotionally connected, so called emotional connection (Magids et al., 2015) to a candidate, they are more likely to form a positive attitude toward that candidate. On the other hand, voters may support a candidate who represents or embodies values and aspirations that align with their own, fostering positive attitudes and intentions to vote for that candidate. This alignment of identity represents hedonic values the voters may incur with the candidate (Huddy, 2001).

In this context, the affective attitudes are derived from the emotional beliefs held by individuals concerning the subject matter under consideration. In the context of factions and their respective members, the likes and dislikes expressed, along with the emotions they exhibit or disapprove of, directly mirror the emotional value and voting intention attributed to that faction within the minds of voters. Consequently, the hedonic value ascribed to a faction plays a pivotal role in shaping affective attitudes and voting intentions.

In conclusion, perceived utilitarian and hedonic values can simultaneously affect attitude toward and intention of voting in support of a specific candidate. The rational decision-making driven by utilitarian values and the emotional connection and sense of identity fostered by hedonic values together influence voters’ overall attitudes and intentions in the electoral context. In other words, the value perception will moderate the relationship between instrumental / affective attitude respectively.

**H2a:** Perceived utilitarian values will moderate the association between instrumental attitude and supporting intention

**H3a:** Perceived hedonic values will moderate the association between instrumental attitude and supporting intention

**H2b:** Perceived utilitarian values will moderate the association between affective attitude and supporting intention

**H3b:** Perceived hedonic values will moderate the association between affective attitude and supporting intention

### On the relationship between subjective norms and intention

The rationales behind the moderation of the relationship between injunctive/descriptive norms and intention of voting by perceived utilitarian and hedonic values are rooted in the psychological factors that underpin voter decision-making. Perceived utilitarian and hedonic values can moderate the relationship between injunctive/descriptive norms and intention of voting in support of a specific candidate. The moderation occurs when the strength or direction of the relationship between injunctive/descriptive norms and voting intention varies depending on the levels of perceived utilitarian and hedonic values respectively. The interplay of these values influences how social norms affect voters’ attitudes and intentions toward a specific candidate. Understanding these rationales provides insights into the complexities of voter behavior and the role of various motivations in shaping electoral decisions.

A faction is a sub-group or group formed for certain common interests and values. Under the election competition, it is also necessary to put forward its political opinions and win the approval of voters. In contrast, facing the candidates recommended by factional organizations, voters of faction members can feel the emotional attachment and support of their own group members, that is, emotional value, on the one hand, and on the other hand, because the faction is for their own interests. Established, has a substantial utilitarian orientation, that is, utilitarian value. Based on the individual’s acceptance and compliance with social norms, it represents the influence of social norms on the individual, the degree of emotional attachment of the individual to the faction, and the degree of identification with the interests advocated by the candidate of the faction, which will simultaneously affect the degree of social identification and vote for the candidate people’s will.

Voters' decision-making processes are often influenced by multiple considerations, including both utilitarian and hedonic values. When perceived utilitarian and hedonic values interact, they can jointly shape the impact of injunctive/descriptive norms on voting intention. For instance, voters who place high importance on both utilitarian and hedonic values may be more receptive to social norms that align with their dual motivations, leading to a more pronounced effect on their voting behavior.
H2c: Perceived utilitarian values will moderate the association between descriptive norms and supporting intention
H3c: Perceived hedonic values will moderate the association between descriptive norms and supporting intention
H2d: Perceived utilitarian values will moderate the association between injunctive norms and supporting intention
H3d: Perceived hedonic values will moderate the association between injunctive norms and supporting intention

Research and Methodology

Research Framework

The Reasoned Action Approach (RAA) proves to be a compelling tool for predicting electoral intention towards a specific candidate nominated by a regional faction, as it considers individuals’ attitudes and subjective norms concerning their voting intention. Attitude, a pivotal component of the RAA, encompasses both instrumental and affective aspects. The instrumental attitude reflects an evaluative judgment based on the perceived effectiveness of voting for this candidate, while the affective attitude is rooted in emotional favor towards the candidate and the faction.

Moreover, the influence of subjective norms on voting intention is effectively captured through descriptive and prescriptive norms. Descriptive norms provide valuable insights into the prevalent behaviors within the group by understanding what the majority of individuals actually think, feel, or do. On the other hand, prescriptive or injunctive norms shed light on the socially expected or approved behaviors within the group (Sage reference, 2007).

In this research, to comprehensively explore the concepts and associated effects of perceived values that voters may hold towards the regional faction and its nominees on electoral decisions, both utilitarian and hedonic value perceptions are included as moderators in the model, as depicted in Figure 1. By incorporating these moderators, the study aims to capture the nuanced influences of value perceptions on the voting intentions within the broader RAA framework.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Study; Source: Author

Samples

Subjects are purposefully selected from the citizens who are qualified to have voting right in a nine-in-one election for the mayors and councilors / representatives of local government two months prior to the election date of November 26, 2022 in Taiwan. As prescribed by the law on election, voters shall be at least 18 years old to be qualified as a voter or a candidate, and shall register in that position’s administrative region for at least six months, and not under deprivation of civil right. Respondents were recruited on
a volunteer basis. There are 16 responses were deleted due to incomplete answers and unqualified citizens for the purpose of this research, and 469 responses were gathered and analyzed in this study.

Measurement

Perceived utilitarian and hedonic values pertain to the values that respondents perceive when evaluating the attributes associated with a faction and its candidate. To assess these values, the scale proposed by Babin et al. (1994) was employed. A structured questionnaire was initially developed based on the Reasoned Action Approach and later refined through a pretest involving 45 subjects with good levels of reliability and validity. The questionnaire employed a five-point scale to assess responses to the items related to each construct, namely Instrumental Attitude (IAT), Affective Attitude (AAT), Descriptive Norms (DN), Injunctive Norms (IN), Utilitarian Value (UV), Hedonic Value (HV), and Voting Intention (VI). Data was collected from residents through a web-based survey system. The average of each construct has been computed to represent the construct of each variable. The average score for utilitarian and hedonic value was separately computed and added to form a total value score. The value scores were then divided to high and low groups by adding or minus one unit of standard deviation. Data were analyzed using SPSS 25.0 (Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.) with significance level at p≤0.05.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

The reliability of each construct was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha, which is a commonly used measure to evaluate internal consistency. For a variable to be considered reliable, its Cronbach’s alpha should exceed 0.7. In our study, all constructs demonstrated high reliability, as evidenced by Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.742 to 0.964, surpassing the acceptable threshold of 0.7, as shown in Table 1. Additionally, Table 1 presents detailed information on the items, including their means and standard deviations, providing further insights into the construct's characteristics and distribution.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S. D.</th>
<th>Cronbach’s α</th>
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<tr>
<td>Instrumental attitude</td>
<td>IAT1</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>0.888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IAT2</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>0.827</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IAT3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>0.944</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IAT4</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IAT5</td>
<td>5.56</td>
<td>1.015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective attitude</td>
<td>AAT1</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>1.203</td>
<td>0.743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AAT2</td>
<td>5.72</td>
<td>1.093</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AAT3</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>1.413</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injunctive norms</td>
<td>IN 1</td>
<td>5.45</td>
<td>1.138</td>
<td>0.844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IN 2</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>1.087</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IN 3</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>1.329</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IN 4</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>1.072</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive norms</td>
<td>DN 1</td>
<td>5.67</td>
<td>1.387</td>
<td>0.861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DN 2</td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>1.531</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DN 3</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>1.482</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DN 4</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>1.636</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilitarian values</td>
<td>UV 1</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>1.638</td>
<td>0.941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UV 2</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>1.759</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UV 3</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>1.784</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic values</td>
<td>HV 1</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>0.964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HV 2</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>1.565</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HV 3</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>1.793</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HV 4</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>1.635</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting intention</td>
<td>VI 1</td>
<td>5.78</td>
<td>1.345</td>
<td>0.816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VI 2</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>1.356</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VI 3</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>1.705</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Convergent Validity

Convergent validity, as a concept in research methodology and psychometrics, refers to the extent to which a measure or assessment correlates with other measures that it is expected to be related to. It serves as a way to determine if a specific measure effectively captures the same underlying trait or construct as other well-established measures of the same trait (Bryman, 2016). When there is a strong positive correlation between the scores of these measures, it indicates good convergent validity, supporting the notion that they are all measuring the same construct.

Researchers often use statistical techniques such as calculating correlation coefficients to assess convergent validity. In this context, the term "average variance extracted" (AVE) is relevant, and it ranges from 0.664 to 0.905 in this study. This AVE value exceeds the suggested threshold of 0.5, as recommended in the literature, confirming that all constructs possess adequate convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2010).

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity pertains to the capacity of a measurement to distinguish between the variables being tested and other constructs, based on predetermined criteria. In this study, the validation of validity was carried out using two different approaches. The initial approach involved the use of the AVE method, a well-established technique that has been employed for many years. The AVE method is utilized to assess the discriminant validity of reflective indicators.

Fornell and Larker (1981) emphasized that the square root of the AVE for each facet should be greater than the correlation coefficient between each pair of variables. This condition ensures the presence of discriminant validity among the various facets. In this study, all AVE values surpassed the square of the correlation coefficient, as indicated in Table 2, thereby providing evidence supporting the existence of discriminant validity in the study's findings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>Intention</th>
<th>AAT</th>
<th>IAT</th>
<th>DN</th>
<th>IN</th>
<th>HV</th>
<th>UV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>0.733</td>
<td>0.856</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT</td>
<td>0.664</td>
<td>.601**</td>
<td>0.815</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAT</td>
<td>0.696</td>
<td>.621**</td>
<td>.678**</td>
<td>0.834</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DN</td>
<td>0.717</td>
<td>.269**</td>
<td>.233**</td>
<td>.184**</td>
<td>0.847</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN</td>
<td>0.682</td>
<td>-.316**</td>
<td>-.184**</td>
<td>-.401**</td>
<td>- 0.049</td>
<td>0.862</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HV</td>
<td>0.904</td>
<td>.133**</td>
<td>.117#</td>
<td>- 0.019</td>
<td>.388**</td>
<td>.114#</td>
<td>0.951</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UV</td>
<td>0.895</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>.136**</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>.369**</td>
<td>.142**</td>
<td>.911**</td>
<td>0.946</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AVE: average variance extracted; * p ≤ 0.05; ** p ≤ 0.01; *** p ≤ 0.001

Figures in boldface are the square root of AVE

Findings and Discussions

Findings

Sample profile

The gender distribution among the investigation respondents is nearly equal. Age aligns closely with the national distribution, with the exception of a slightly higher percentage of individuals aged 65 years old (94, 20.00%). Over half of the respondents had college or graduate education (268, 57.10%), while less than 17% were classified as having junior or lower education levels (76, 16.20%). Regarding employment, the majority of respondents were employed as staff (130, 27.70%) or engaged in home-based businesses (135, 28.80%), while 15.60% of the respondents were retired. A small proportion of respondents (24, 5.10%) earned less than 25,250 NT (equivalent to 850 USD) per month, possibly indicating part-time workers, as presented in Table 3.
Table 3: Sample Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>51.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>48.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE (years old)</td>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>14.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>15.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>18.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>17.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>8.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>&lt; Junior</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>16.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>26.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>46.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate +</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>10.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>27.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Home bus</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>28.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State employee</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>15.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Monthly income</td>
<td>&lt;25250 NT</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25251-35000 NT</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>17.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35001-45000 NT</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>18.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45001-55000 NT</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>22.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;55001 NT</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>36.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>469</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 USD ≒ 30 NTD; * Minimum monthly wage in the year 2022.

Predicting The Electoral Intention

Drawn from the RAA, this research proposed that electoral intention will be to be affected by the voter’s attitudes and the subjective norms. The predictors are instrumental attitude, affective attitude, injunctive norms, and descriptive norms.

The results of the regression analyses, as presented in Table 4, indicate that all predictors exert significant impacts on electoral intention. Specifically, the instrumental attitude exhibits a positive effect on electoral intention, with a standardized coefficient of 0.621 ($\beta$). This finding explains approximately 38.6% of the variance in intention ($R^2 = 0.386$), providing support for hypothesis 1a. Similarly, the affective attitude positively influences electoral intention, with a standardized coefficient of 0.601 ($\beta$). This predictor accounts for approximately 36.1% of the variance in intention ($R^2 = 0.361$) and supports hypothesis 1b. Moreover, the descriptive norms have a positive impact on electoral intention, as evidenced by a standardized coefficient of 0.269 ($\beta$). This predictor explains about 7.2% of the variance in intention ($R^2 = 0.072$) and supports hypothesis 1d. Conversely, the injunctive norms exhibit a negative effect on electoral intention, with a standardized coefficient of -0.316 ($\beta$). This predictor explains approximately 10.0% of the variance in intention ($R^2 = 0.100$). Despite being statistically significant, it is noteworthy that this finding diverges from the hypothesized direction in the research.

In summary, the regression analyses demonstrate that all predictors significantly impact electoral intention, each contributing to a varying degree of explained variance. While the instrumental attitude, affective attitude, and descriptive norms align with the research hypotheses, the injunctive norms present an unexpected inverse relationship with electoral intention. Further examination and theoretical considerations may be required to elucidate the underlying reasons for this counterintuitive result.
Table 4: Summary of Regression Analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>Non-standardized B</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Standardized β</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>Adj. R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.496</td>
<td>0.258</td>
<td>5.79***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT</td>
<td>0.752</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.601</td>
<td>16.26***</td>
<td>0.601</td>
<td>0.361</td>
<td>0.360</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>0.325</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAT</td>
<td>0.969</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.621</td>
<td>17.13***</td>
<td>0.621</td>
<td>0.386</td>
<td>0.385</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>4.329</td>
<td>0.223</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DN</td>
<td>0.264</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>0.269</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>7.821</td>
<td>0.309</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN</td>
<td>-0.415</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>-0.316</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moderating Effects of Perceived Values

The regional faction holds significant value within society, and this perception is also shared by the voters. Consequently, the present research posited that utilitarian values and hedonic values might act as moderators in the relationship between each predictor and electoral behavior.

To operationalize the categorization of utilitarian and hedonic values, the means plus and minus one standard deviation were used to form distinct groups representing high and low value perceptions, respectively. Subsequently, the investigation undertook separate analyses for utilitarian and hedonic values, employing regression analysis on the identified groups. By comparing the coefficients and standard errors of each variable, the Fisher’s Z score was then computed. A Sobel's Z score exceeding the threshold of 1.96 was interpreted as an indication of a significant moderating effect.

Utilitarian values as moderator

The examination of the moderating effect of utilitarian values indicates that the level of utilitarianism exerts a moderating influence specifically on injunctive norms and voting intention (Z = 2.225 > 1.96), as evidenced by the results presented in Table 5 and Figure 2. However, it is important to note that utilitarian values do not demonstrate a moderating effect on other factors, such as instrumental attitude (Z = -1.459 < 1.96), affective attitude (Z = -1.459 < 1.96), and descriptive norms (Z = 0.717 < 1.96). The test results support the hypothesis H2d, and do not support H2a, H2b, and H2c.

Table 5: Moderating Effects of The Utilitarian Value

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Utilitarian</th>
<th>Non-standardized B</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Standardized β</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Z</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>2.174</td>
<td>0.533</td>
<td>4.081***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT</td>
<td>0.617</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>0.600</td>
<td>7.384***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.135</td>
<td>0.954</td>
<td>1.190</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT</td>
<td>0.882</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.497</td>
<td>5.462***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.482</td>
<td>0.525</td>
<td>0.917</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAT</td>
<td>0.921</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.736</td>
<td>10.716***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-0.759</td>
<td>0.880</td>
<td>-0.863</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAT</td>
<td>1.175</td>
<td>0.145</td>
<td>0.646</td>
<td>8.081***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>3.622</td>
<td>0.585</td>
<td>6.196***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DN</td>
<td>0.419</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>0.395</td>
<td>4.233***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>4.822</td>
<td>0.452</td>
<td>10.664***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DN</td>
<td>0.321</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>0.336</td>
<td>3.398***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>6.610</td>
<td>0.669</td>
<td>9.875***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN</td>
<td>-0.103</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>-0.082</td>
<td>-0.814</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>8.378</td>
<td>0.416</td>
<td>20.153***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN</td>
<td>-0.445</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>-0.468</td>
<td>-5.045***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

250
Hedonic values as moderator

The investigation into the moderating effect of hedonic values reveals that the level of hedonic values exerts a significant moderating influence on the relationships between injunctive norms ($Z = 2.038 > 1.96$), affective attitude ($Z = 2.325 > 1.96$), and voting intention, as indicated by the findings presented in Table 6 and Figure 3 and 4. However, it is noteworthy that hedonic values do not exhibit a moderating effect on other factors, such as instrumental attitude ($Z = -1.252 < 1.96$) and descriptive norms ($Z = 1.093 < 1.96$). The test results support the hypotheses H3b and H3d, and do not support H3a and H3c.

Table 6: Moderating Effects of The Hedonic Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hedonic values</th>
<th>Non-standardized</th>
<th>Standardized</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Z</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>S.E.</td>
<td>β</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.161</td>
<td>0.673</td>
<td>1.726</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                | AAT              | 0.789        | 0.106 | 0.617 | 7.473***
| Low            | Constant         | -1.950       | 1.144 | -1.704|
|                | AAT              | 1.307        | 0.196 | 0.550 | 6.658*** -2.325|
| High           | Constant         | 0.194        | 0.572 | 0.340 |
|                | IAT              | 0.987        | 0.094 | 0.740 | 10.489***
| Low            | Constant         | -2.229       | 1.508 | -1.478|
|                | IAT              | 1.325        | 0.253 | 0.460 | 5.229*** -1.252|
| High           | Constant         | 3.955        | 0.577 | 0.375 | 6.860***
|                | DN               | 0.383        | 0.099 | 0.375 | 3.862**
| Low            | Constant         | 4.500        | 0.321 | 14.002***|
|                | DN               | 0.253        | 0.066 | 0.353 | 3.809*** 1.092|
| High           | Constant         | 7.497        | 0.715 | 10.483***|
|                | IN               | -0.252       | 0.132 | -0.196| -1.903|
| Low            | Constant         | 8.475        | 0.503 | 16.839***|
|                | IN               | -0.592       | 0.102 | -0.497| -5.790*** 2.038|

Figure 2: Utilitarian Value Moderates The Relationship Between Injunctive Norms and Intention

Figure 3: Hedonic Value Moderates The Relationship Between Affective Attitude And Intention
This research adopts the reasoned action approach (RAA) to investigate how perceived values of the regional faction influence voters’ electoral intention. The majority of hypotheses aligned with the RAA are supported, with one unexpected finding showing a reversed relationship between injunctive norms and electoral intention.

The study's confirmation of the significant impacts of RAA, instrumental attitude, affective attitude, and descriptive norms on electoral intention contributes significantly to the body of knowledge in political psychology. These findings underscore the importance of considering multiple factors in understanding electoral decision-making processes. Additionally, the contrasting impact of injunctive norms, showing a negative influence on electoral intention, offers new insights into the role of social norms in shaping political behavior. This finding challenges conventional assumptions and highlights the complexity of how normative influences can shape voting decisions.

Comparing the RAA to the theory of planned behavior (TPB), it is important to note that the RAA does not explicitly include perceived behavioral control. However, it is crucial to recognize that perceived behavioral control might still play a role in voting intention. Factors such as an individual's sense of political efficacy, their perceived ability to access polling stations, or overcome logistical barriers to voting could influence their voting intention.

In conclusion, this research enhances our understanding of electoral decision-making by demonstrating the significant impact of RAA and its related factors on voters’ intentions. The finding regarding injunctive norms adds complexity to our understanding of normative influences on political behavior. Additionally, acknowledging the role of perceived behavioral control can provide further insights into the complexities of voting intentions.

The Injunctive Norm and Intention

The unexpected result can be attributed to several potential reasons. Firstly, contextual factors, such as specific political or cultural contexts, may have influenced the impact of injunctive norms on electoral intention. Social and political climates vary across regions and time periods, shaping normative influences on voting behavior in different ways.

Secondly, possible mediating factors, such as individual-level variables like political knowledge, party identification, or personal values, could have interacted with the relationship between injunctive norms and electoral intention. These variables might have played a role in mitigating or intensifying the observed effect.

Additionally, social desirability bias might have influenced participants’ responses, particularly in self-report measures. This bias could have led individuals to align their responses with perceived societal norms, potentially obscuring the true relationship between injunctive norms and electoral intention.

Other potential reasons include temporal changes due to evolving social and political dynamics, as well as unaccounted-for variables that might influence the relationship between injunctive norms and electoral intention.

To fully comprehend the reasons for the unexpected effect of injunctive norms, further research is warranted. Exploring and addressing these potential factors can enhance our understanding of how normative influences impact electoral behavior within the framework of the reasoned action approach.

In conclusion, considering these potential explanations will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities underlying the relationship between injunctive norms and electoral intention. It will also contribute to the refinement of the reasoned action approach in the context of electoral decision-making research.
Hedonic Values and Utilitarian Values

Previous research has confirmed there are certain values for the regional factions (Bosco, 1992; Walder, 2019), and this research reconfirmed the perceived values of the regional faction have played a significant role in the voting decision. This research adopts the concept of hedonic and utilitarian values to assess the voter's perceived attitudes towards the candidates and regional factions, building upon prior studies that have confirmed the election decision-making process involves both cognitive and affective approaches (Evans & Stanovich, 2013; Pessoa, 2013). While previous research advocates for direct effects of these two values on decision-making, our study proposes a moderating effect in the RAA. The perceived hedonic value toward the regional faction appears to have a more pronounced moderating effect on the relationship between predictor variables and electoral intention toward the faction's candidate, compared to the utilitarian value. This could be attributed to several factors.

Firstly, hedonic values are often linked to emotions and subjective experiences of pleasure, enjoyment, and satisfaction, making them more salient and impactful in voters' decision-making. In contrast, utilitarian values tend to be more rational and utilitarian in nature, potentially making them less emotionally engaging in the electoral context.

Furthermore, regional factions often evoke a sense of identity and social bonds among their supporters. The perceived hedonic value toward the faction may be connected to emotional attachment and social connections, leading to a stronger moderating effect on electoral intention. In contrast, utilitarian values, while important, might not evoke the same level of emotional attachment and social bonding.

Moreover, the hedonic value associated with the regional faction may carry symbolic meaning and cultural significance for voters. These symbolic associations can deeply influence voters' attitudes and behaviors, including their electoral intention. Utilitarian values, on the other hand, may be more focused on practical and tangible benefits, potentially having a lesser impact on voters' decision-making.

Additionally, individual differences among voters, such as personality traits, values, and cognitive processing styles, can interact differently with hedonic and utilitarian values, leading to varying levels of moderating effects.

Considering these factors can enhance our understanding of how perceived hedonic value toward the regional faction plays a crucial role in influencing electoral behavior within the context of the reasoned action approach. Further research can delve deeper into these dynamics to provide comprehensive insights into the interplay between values, emotions, and electoral decision-making.

Academic Implications

Implications from the hedonic value as a moderator

The present research emphasizes the significant moderating influence of hedonic values on the relationships between injunctive norms, affective attitude, and voting intention. These findings suggest that the impact of these predictors on voting behavior is contingent upon individuals' levels of hedonic values (Armitage & Conner, 2001; McEachan et al., 2011; McEachan et al., 2016). To gain a more profound understanding of the underlying mechanisms and theoretical frameworks, future studies could explore how hedonic values moderate these relationships.

The identification of hedonic values as a moderator for certain predictors underscores the importance of considering individual differences and psychological factors when studying voting behavior (Jones et al., 2006; Vieira et al., 2018). Scholars and researchers can integrate this newfound knowledge into existing theoretical frameworks and develop more comprehensive models that incorporate the influence of hedonic values on electoral decisions (Magids et al., 2015; Vieira et al., 2018).

Moreover, it is essential to recognize the context specificity of hedonic values as a moderator. Replicating and validating these results in different socio-cultural contexts or specific demographic groups will be crucial in gauging the generalizability of the moderating effect (Armitage & Conner, 2001; McEachan et al., 2016).

Implications from the utilitarian value as a moderator

The research findings shed light on the moderating influence of utilitarian values, particularly in the relationship between injunctive norms and electoral intention (Jones et al., 2006; Vieira et al., 2018). This indicates that the association between these predictors and voting behavior varies based on the level of utilitarian values individuals possess. Such results contribute significantly to our understanding of how utilitarian values play a role in shaping political decision-making (Magids et al., 2015; McEachan et al., 2016).

Additionally, the observed moderating effect of utilitarian values on one of the four predictors suggests potential interactions that warrant further exploration. These interactions may provide valuable insights into the complexities of how utilitarian values interact with other psychological factors in the context of political decision-making.

Furthermore, the identification of utilitarian values as a moderator for certain predictors presents an opportunity to enrich existing theoretical frameworks or develop new ones that incorporate the interplay of utilitarian values with other psychological factors in the context of political decision-making (Jones et al., 2006; Vieira et al., 2018).
In conclusion, these findings on the moderating effects of hedonic and utilitarian values offer valuable implications for the study of voting behavior. Integrating these insights into future research endeavors can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological processes that underlie electoral decisions (Jones et al., 2006; Magids et al., 2015; McEachan et al., 2016; Vieira et al., 2018).

**Practical Implications**

This research yields several practical implications. Election messages can be tailored to resonate with voters' attitudes and normative perceptions during campaign efforts. By crafting targeted strategies that align with voters' beliefs and norms, political campaigns can enhance their persuasiveness and effectiveness (McEachan et al., 2016). However, caution is advised when using normative appeals, as the negative impact of injunctive norms on electoral intention necessitates thoughtful consideration in political messaging.

**Implications from hedonic values**

The test results on hedonic values have practical implications. Political campaigns can tailor their messaging to align with voters' hedonic preferences, increasing receptiveness. Policymakers should be attentive to hedonic values when developing communication and engagement initiatives to appeal to individuals with varying preferences. Election politicians must consider citizens' hedonic aspirations when crafting policies to enhance acceptance and effectiveness. Initiatives based on understanding voters' emotional reactions can increase voter engagement. Policymakers can use the knowledge of hedonic values to align policies with citizens' aspirations and enhance effectiveness.

**Implications from utilitarian values**

The study result offers practical implications. Campaign strategists and policymakers should tailor messages to align with utilitarian values. Recognizing the moderating effect of utilitarian values on injunctive norms and voting intention allows targeted communication strategies to influence electoral behavior positively.

Understanding how utilitarian values interact with predictors informs the design of voter engagement initiatives. These initiatives can effectively mobilize and engage different segments of the electorate by resonating with individuals with varying levels of utilitarian values.

Policymakers can reference the role of utilitarian values in shaping voting behavior when aligning policies. Considering citizens' utilitarian preferences enables the development of well-received and successful policies that achieve their intended objectives.

**Conclusions**

This study utilized the Reasoned Action Approach (RAA) model to investigate the effects of predictor variables, namely instrumental and affective attitudes, as well as injunctive and descriptive norms, on electoral behavior intention in a recent Taiwan local election. Furthermore, the research explored the role of perceived utilitarian and hedonic values toward the regional faction in shaping these relationships. The empirical analysis provided overall support for the hypotheses derived from RAA, demonstrating the relevance of instrumental and affective attitudes, and descriptive norms in influencing electoral intention. However, an unexpected finding was observed, indicating a negative relationship between injunctive norm and intention. Notably, the study revealed that hedonic values play a moderating role, influencing the relationships between affective attitude, injunctive norm, and electoral intention. Similarly, utilitarian value was found to moderate the relationship between injunctive norm and electoral intention. The study highlights the importance of voters' perceived value of the regional faction, revealing its influence on electoral intention. The interplay of attitudes, norms, and values emerges as critical factors shaping voting behavior in the examined Taiwan local election. These findings enhance our understanding of the complex decision-making processes in the electoral context, providing valuable insights for political campaigns and policy considerations.

**Limitations of The Research**

The present research exhibits several limitations that warrant acknowledgment. The primary limitation pertains to the sample's representativeness. Notably, the samples were not randomly selected from across the entire nation but rather confined to one county and one metropolitan area. While efforts were made to ensure the distribution of gender, age, and education of respondents aligns with the national distribution, caution must be exercised in interpreting the test results due to the limited geographical scope.

Furthermore, the research did not incorporate controls for regional faction identification in the model testing. This omission raises concerns since members of regional factions may harbor specific loyalties, potentially influencing their genuine responses to the survey questions. Similarly, respondents favoring either the ruling or opposition party may be inclined to conceal their true opinions when confronted with certain sensitive questions, introducing a potential bias in the data.

As a consequence of these limitations, the generalizability and validity of the findings may be affected, emphasizing the need for prudence in drawing broad conclusions from this study. Future research endeavors could address these limitations to provide a more comprehensive and robust understanding of the underlying phenomena.

**Future Research Directions**
The observed contrasting effect of injunctive norms in the context of electoral intention presents a compelling area for future research and theoretical exploration. To unravel the underlying mechanisms driving this counterintuitive finding, future studies could delve into contextual factors or individual differences that might elucidate the intricate interplay between injunctive norms and electoral intention within the framework of the reasoned action approach.

Regarding perceived values toward the regional faction, it is imperative to consider and investigate potential contributing factors to better comprehend why perceived hedonic value toward the regional faction exerts a stronger moderating effect on electoral intention. The integration of qualitative research methods, the exploration of specific contextual variables, and the consideration of individual-level differences hold promise in offering valuable insights into this complex phenomenon.

Additionally, the non-significant moderating effects of utilitarian values on other factors, such as instrumental attitude, affective attitude, and descriptive norms, shed light on the nuanced nature of their influence on electoral behavior. These results present avenues for further investigation, prompting researchers to explore potential interactions that may be present but remained inconspicuous in the current study. Expanding the scope of research in this domain can contribute to a deeper understanding of the multifaceted factors shaping electoral decision-making.

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