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# Political change and public security—the prospect of Taiwan

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## Abstract

This paper examines the change in public security of the Taiwanese society that was caused by the political democratization movements and the cross-Strait interactions. In addition to sociological explanations of crime, this paper adopts and integrates theoretical concepts of futures studies. Official statistics of longitudinal essence were utilized to serve the purpose of macro analyses. Delphi survey method was employed in collecting micro data that were subsequently used for forecasting the future social life individuals anticipate. Findings support the macro hypothesis that political alteration directly as well as indirectly contributes to the change of public security. A chaotic progress in social order is in sight, and the restoration of public safety is not far away. The series of scenarios, forecasting on the basis of the time-frame concepts of futurists, is likely to begin and conclude within the coming five years. However, the manner the scenarios proceed can be altered depending upon how knowledgeable the government is in foreseeing the forthcoming probable future of chaos. © 1999 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

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## 1. Introduction

Recently, Taiwan has been attracting the world's attention for two reasons. The first has to do with the economic miracle the country has created, which makes

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it prominent among those countries in Asia where an economic crisis is currently progressing. The second lies in the issue of the constant threats of military confrontation on the Taiwan Strait that has the potential to be triggered every now and then. The latest ignition occurred in 1996 when China launched missile drills, and the U.S. battle ships came to the rescue.

Going beyond foreign affairs, domestic issues have been on the rise. People on the island have been facing the dramatic transitions in political situation—the democratization movements and the interactions with China; as well as the concurrent change in public security. How the macro alterations descend to bringing impacts on the daily life of the citizens has been an issue that has not yet been thoroughly explored because the political factor has never been considered. In addition to achieving such a research goal, this paper attempts to conduct micro forecasts to picture how individuals are likely to enjoy their social life in the days to come taking a futurology perspective. Crime and its relevant issues resulted from the change in political system constitute the theme of the study.

## 2. Macro explanations of crime

Durkheim's theory has been viewed as a typical explanation of crime that considers the change in political and economical climate [1]. Many of his concepts have been applied and have been operated in various forms for empirical examination. Change measures in general are proved to be effective in predicting violent and property crime rates [2].

A recent study concluded that a plan for industrial reorganization of communities tends to be effective in reducing crime [3]. The rates of elite crime were also found to have been related to a set of macro variables, such as the overall structure of the political economy, time, and the relationship between social structure and social character [4]. Schissel examined the influence of macroeconomic factors and social control policies on crime rates in Canada from 1962 to 1988. Findings of the study indicated that crime and imprisonment rates tended to increase when hard and soft forms of control were simultaneously implemented during the time when economic conditions declined [5].

Industrialization was found to be the cause of the dissolution of the family-centred and community-based social control in Japan, and juvenile delinquency rates rapidly grew [6,7]. Similarly, Bouley and Vaughn concluded that property crimes increased when a country became more prosperous, while violent crimes might not multiply as a result [8]. Change in political system leads to the loosening of social control and indirectly causes the increase in crime rates, e.g. in Chechenian, a country that has recently become autonomous [9]. As for Russia, the country has been suffering from the rise of Mafia (organized crime). Private ownership and economic transactions increase along with few effective legal and administrative protection accesses, citizens consequently become more vulnerable to fraudulent and coercive appropriation plots [10]. Additionally, latent crimes have been generally underestimated because citizens believe that the law enforcement is unproductive in light of the fact that the case clearance rate has been low [11].

Political-economic theory makes the best point by arguing a concept of social structures of accumulation (SSAs). Following such a theoretical rationale, analysts have successfully proved that economic transitions tend to occur within identifiable time frames. For example, Carlson and Michalowski have defined a cycle of four SSA stages that the U.S. had experienced; namely, exploration (1933–1947), consolidation (1948–1966), decay (1967–1979), and exploration (1980–1992) [12]. In practice, economic indicator has been frequently operationalized by the measure of unemployment rate in most macro studies.

The unemployment–crime relationship has been shown to be associated most of the time and to be null in extreme circumstances. Positive and significant results are more frequently reported than the negative significant ones by a ratio of 15 to 1 in all studies that are relevant to the topic. The contention that unemployment is criminogenic is frequently concluded, based on the rationale that when economic conditions worsen, those who are less competitive in the job market tend to become more susceptible to crime. Taking the SSAs perspective, Carlson and Michalowski further concluded that the U–C (unemployment–crime) relationship is influenced by the distinctive transitions of stages of economic development [12]. The argument is that the association is weaker in periods of frictional unemployment and is stronger in periods of structural unemployment. Although it varies among different age and race groups [13], unemployment is generally found to be related to crime [14].

Although being less than their counterparts in ratio, a number of researchers reached opposing conclusions. Ortega et al. pooled cross-sectional and time-series data from 1969 to 1982 of 51 countries as an attempt to test the Durkheimian modernization hypothesis for homicide and theft rates. They found that the increase in the rate of crime is not caused by economic modernization, while it is contributed by the different levels of economic development, the variations in the age structure of populations, and the regional difference [15]. Johnson examined the difference in the cause of crime rates of urban–rural areas of Germany in the late 1800s and early 1900s. He found that urbanization, population growth, and urban living were not related to crime, while it the hardship occurring as a result of the interaction of particular ethnic groups with the native residents is what accounts for the consequence [16].

Messner and Golden analyzed the set of data composed of official statistics. They concluded that racial inequality of the 154 US cities positively influences the total homicide rates and the race-specified offending rates of the residents [17]. Racial heterogeneity, population size, population density, and level of employment are found to have positive impacts on interracial homicide rates [18]. In other words, crime naturally increases in places where population density is high. Citizens have more chance of becoming victims of crime because the room to bypass the danger is small.

Special laws designated for prohibiting certain kinds of deviant behaviour that serves as a convenience for administration purpose is found in Netherlands where a public morality act was enacted in 1911 targeted toward forbidding the prevalence of prostitution [19]. It is therefore a common phenomenon that laws can become strict or loose depending upon environmental alterations. All governments across the

world are likely to apply legislative power as a means of curtailing crime. It is what Hartikainen and Mannermaa introduced the second definition of “law and order” that “...the use of strict laws as a way of controlling a society, especially when the police or the army are used to force people to obey their government” [20].

### 3. A future perspective of crime in the changing society

According to the popular futurist, Alvin Toffler, there have been three waves in human history. When two waves coincide with each other, the first meets the second and the second encounters the third, psychological disturbances of members of the society are likely to develop along with physical changes-way of life. When evolution goes too fast and people get out of hand, they tend to become “confused and give up trying to make sense of their world” [21]. Individual maladaptations tend to occur, and anomie, as Durkheim observed in France amid the time when the first wave encountered the second, became in shape [22].

In the case of Taiwan with regard to its policy toward China, the initiation of good-will interactions across the Strait serves as a wave-equivalent change that is as dramatic as all forms of alteration of human life occurred within the three waves (a detailed discussion is in the following section). Reasoning in such a vein, it becomes likely that the Chinese of both sides who once held antagonistic attitudes toward each other are presumed to experience a change-shock following political transformation. The political alteration may have confused the people when the interaction began, and may remain confusing to quite a number of them even nowadays.

Haas points out 16 societal problems that are likely to constitute a “crisis of crises” (p. 36) in the next 25 years in societies all over the world [23]. Three of the 16 phenomena are relevant to the variables included in the theoretical structure of this paper. They are crime and other forms of human and property rights infringements, unemployment due to economic malfunction, and overschooling and overspecialization as a result of malpractice in education policy making. Given that these issues are essentially interwoven, they tend to resist any solutions that lack an overall consideration. Any specifically planned scenario targeted to deal with one issue tends to end up with generating a new one.

Researchers frequently employ chaos theory as a modelling method to forecast the trend of change that the society in turmoil tends to develop in the future. This theory argues that various possible scenarios can be probed by elaborating a certain set of macro factors that are likely to be the causes of the change, and the direction of the change trend can be observed. Following such theoretical rationales, Novaky operated and analyzed a number of macro indicators of Hungary as an attempt to predict the change that the society is directed up to the year 2020 [24].

Novaky observed that 60% of the 39 indicators appeared a steady and regular trend of change. Among the remaining 40% of the variables, 70% revealed a slight degree of chaotic progress; involving net national product, net national income, economically active population, electricity production, volumes of investments, gross electricity consumption, number of full-time teachers and educators, number of hos-

pital beds, number of doctors, number of deaths due to suicide and self-injury, and number of crimes committed. The remaining 30% showed a moderate degree of change; including GDP, number of home units built, deaths due to cardiovascular diseases and number of registered alcoholics. The number of beds in commercial places of accommodation was the only variable that indicated a likelihood of a high degree of chaotic course.

The study serves as an example for conducting a similar research in Taiwan where the society is in many aspects comparable with that of Hungary. The two societies are transforming as a result of the transition in political system. In other words, no change of social phenomena would have taken place dramatically if there hadn't been any alteration in politics.

However, the appropriateness of the time series technique that Novaky employed suffers from the defects that Bell once criticized [25]. Predicting the change pattern of a variable in the future merely on the basis of the change pattern of the variable occurred in the past tends to make simple the real world where in practice it correlates with other social phenomena. Other alternatives that purport to illustrate the complex and interwoven essence of the issue are called.

#### **4. Uniqueness in the case of Taiwan**

Variables causally related to the change of crime have been reviewed, taking a general sociological view as well as integrating the theoretical and empirical concepts of futurology. Researchers who have studied the relationship between crime and industrialization by examining statistics across countries frequently assign the samples into the developed and developing categories. Such studies suffer from empirical, methodological, conceptual and theoretical weaknesses because the categorization per se is invalid. A case study approach tends to be more effective in patterning crime in different societies [26].

As previously noted, Novaky's Hungarian social change research, a case study, bears a consideration of political transition and the influences it may bring to various aspects of the society. It inspires and enables this author to argue that the literatures pertaining to the study of crime trend reviewed earlier may not be completely replicable when one attempts to explore the similar phenomena in the society of Taiwan. It is because that the political factor has been crucial in the control of crime, which makes the condition of the island so unique that hardly can one find a totally comparable pattern of society.

In conceptualization, the uniqueness of the rise in crime rates in Taiwan is hypothesized to have been a phenomenon caused by the change in political condition in addition to the set of common factors. Taking into account the direct and indirect impacts that resulted from the political variable can thus enable more inclusively to explore how the trend of crime on the island is likely to progress in the future.

The government on Taiwan had exercised legitimate sovereignty over China since 1911 and lost the power after it retreated to the island in 1950. A quasi-democratic political system had been implemented ever since. The term quasi-democracy is so

defined by the author because the criminal justice processes bore democratic essence as well as the no less characteristics of autocracy.

The government created such a halfway system as a result of the constant military confrontation threat from the other side of the Taiwan Strait—the People's Republic of China. Moreover, the two former presidents, K.S. Chiang and his son C.K. Chiang, never abandoned the attempt of recovering their lost territories. In light of their view that a peaceful society is the basis of a firm national defence power, an armed status had been imposed upon the island; Martial Laws applied to a number of civilian offences.

For example, a gang robbery is a felony in Criminal Law. The same charge can also be found in the special statutes by the name of Ordinance of Bandit Penalty and Martial Law. Offenders who robbed but did not cause any damage to the victim other than the property loss (e.g. robbed but did not hurt or kill the victim) may receive a penalty no more serious than a life sentence if the judge applies the Criminal Law in making conviction. The same offence can result in capital punishment if either of the other two special laws are applied. That means, civilian criminals could face the trial of the court martial, depending upon the discretion of the justice authorities.

The period of validation (effected since 1950) was terminated in 1987, and President D.H. Lee, the successor of C.K. Chiang, began initiating a series of democratization movements in 1988. Political democratization descended to influence criminal justice procedure, and the aforementioned judicial discretion disappeared. In other words, the exercise of judicial power as a means of social control that the government used to employ has become history.

Civilian offenders are no longer put into the trial of the court martial. Even those military personnel who commit crimes that are defined in the Criminal Law are processed the same as if they are ordinary offenders. The alteration in processing offences bears the meaning of less serious punishment, although the penalty per se remains unchanged. In addition, the unique form of criminal procedure that used to serve as an effective means of social control disappears, and many new types of crime occur and prevail. Illegal guns and organized crime are the two most striking types among others.

Gun ownership has been strictly forbidden in Taiwan. Guns had rarely been found involved in any kind of crime before the interaction across the Strait began. Recently, criminals have frequently been found using such weapons in committing almost all kinds of crime. The most astonishing case was a kidnapping committed by three bandits in April 1997.

They kidnapped the daughter of a rich and famous female singer on her way to school, and blackmailed her mother for a ransom of US\$5 million. The mother refused to pay the ransom and reported the case to the police. The cold-blooded mob murdered the 17 year old victim and fled. It took the police more than 7 months of hunting. One of the three fugitives was killed and another one committed suicide in two different occasions of crossfire with the police. The remaining one broke into the house of a diplomat of South Africa, took hostages of his family. He then

accepted the telephone interview of an anchor of the local TV station, and the interview was immediately televised live island-wide for more than 2 hours.

The suspect eventually gave himself in after a 24-h standoff. He became the most well known offender in the criminal history of the island. The case was subsequently posted on TIME [27], and the bandit became world famous. What struck the public most, however, were the heavy-fire arms the mob used in committing the crime because the police found a large quantity of automatic and semi-automatic weapons. The fact that the three ex-cons had committed gang robbery, homicide and rape before they were shot or apprehended also astonished the public. No such fierce criminals comparable to the three have ever been found in Taiwanese society when the Martial Laws were in effect.

Ever since the democratization movements, heads of syndicates have participated in all levels of election campaign and have become legislators, senators of the province, and county house assemblers. These ‘bosses’ (or ‘godfathers’) take their political career as a means to ‘bleach’ (or ‘launder’) their ‘black spots’ (or ‘dirt’) of having been a rascal. In order to obstruct such a ‘self-straightening-up’ process, the justice authorities have been intensively implementing ‘dirt-sweeping’ tasks since 1996. Dirt-sweeping means that the authorities apply appropriate laws to convict those bandits of their wrongdoing and send them away to the prisons located on the small isles surrounding Taiwan. The purpose is to make these people lose contact with their gangs and hopefully, repent for their guilt.

However, such actions have never been effective and the former Minister of Justice once proclaimed that at least one-third of the city and county house assemblers are of illegal gang background. The total number is approaching a ratio of two-thirds, and as one scenario, “Taiwan is likely to become Sicily if the campaign fails” [28].

The National Police Administration estimates that the total number of notable illegal gangs is over 1000. One hundred and twenty-six of them have formed the structure of organized crime and have recruited more than 5800 members [29]. They are involved in all levels of elections as well as public constructions. Citizens are consequently threatened by the fear of eventually being controlled by Mafia.

## 5. Methods

Futurists frequently apply trend extrapolation techniques in the exercise of forecasting. The techniques are a form of exploration forecasting methods [30] and a quantitative approach as well. The rationale behind the techniques is the assumption that the factors that contribute to the formation of a certain phenomenon tend to continue to work in the future [23]. Time-series analysis techniques serve as a typical example for the trend extrapolation approach, which assumes that the pattern of change of a variable over time repeats its change pattern in the past [25].

However, Schwarz and others contend that the trend extrapolation quantitative techniques are not the only approach to conducting futures studies [31]. The techniques that bear the nature of exhibiting long-term exponential trends risk the danger that factors other than the time-plotted ones are likely to interrupt the regularity the



curves progress and consequentially invalidate the forecast. For example, political, economical or technological factors often function as interrupts [30]. A technique that considers the joint effects among a set of variables causing the change of the society over time can better serve the purpose. Additionally, operationalizing a dependent variable that can indicate the consequence of social change given the variations of a set of related predictors can help forecast how the dynamics of the future world is structured.

Moreover, a combination of different techniques other than the quantitative one can better serve the attempt. Inayatullah has postulated a causal layered analysis technique for dealing simultaneously with various levels of a problem, from the quantitative to the metaphorical [32]. Similarly, Swedish researchers of futures studies frequently employ general econometric modelling—the quantitative approach, as well as scenario writing—the qualitative method [32]. On the bases of such views, a number of variables are selected, and two different methods are employed.

The design of the study includes both exploratory and explanatory techniques in data collections and analyses. One set of the data is quantitative in essence and qualitative for the remaining one. The earlier data set attempts to forecast the trend of crime at macro level and the latter one draws the picture of the daily social life that individuals anticipate.

Macro data are composed of official statistics, which are utilized for serving the quantitative analysis purpose. The variable of political transition is operationalized by a dummy (Interaction) that segregates the time periods before and after the cross-Strait interaction with a one-year lag (1988). The variable also can be viewed as an operationalization of the democratization movements. It is because that the two kinds of phenomena serve as two sides of a coin of the political alteration. They were set forth at the same time and can thus amount to the same measure.

Social and economic variables are operationalized by utilizing the annual statistics of population density (Population), education advancement (number of high school students entered college, Education), per capita GNP (PCGNP), and unemployment rate (Unemployment). A multivariate technique is employed in light of the defects the single variable trend analysis tends to suffer. It also serves the attempt of exploring how the selected indicators affect crime in a more detailed manner.

Delphi survey method was employed to collect micro data. According to Schwarz and others, experts in the targeted field of research are most eligible [31] (pp. 12–14). Administering questionnaires to candidates of non-experts can be an alternative, which has frequently been defined as a modified version. It can serve the same purpose because some research topics are targeted toward ordinary people. Asking questions to a selected panel, examining their opinions of agreement and polarization, and concretely synthesizing the likelihood of the development of targeted phenomena compose the elements that such a research method involves.

Lo Presti argues that “how an ‘expert’ sociologist looks at the future and builds alternative scenarios is not a priori more complete or comprehensive than the way in which the same option is performed by an individual thinker” [33]. Karel and others also question the process of expert selection because the representativeness of the panel may constitute a threat to the overall validity of the study [34]. Delphi



technique is particularly employable in the case that “it is difficult to bring together a large group of experts, in which case the Delphi can be used as a tool for accomplishing this objective” [35]. Individuals have various ways of looking at the future. Those who personally experience the problem that is targeted to be studied are the ones eligible to be involved in scenario building. In Street’s scenario workshops for policy making for sustainable urban living, for example, participants include politicians, civil servants, members of business community, and residents [36].

Students of one futures studies class of this writer were selected as subjects. Although they are not experts, they are not totally unknowledgeable (because they are taking the class). They are, therefore, more eligible than ordinary citizens of the society. These individuals were required to write down whatever they think may appear in the future society of Taiwan in terms of crime, justice, and the overall social life (which are taken as open-ended questions). A total of 40 composed the final sample size. Various responses are synthesized accordingly to the specifically defined topic of the three categories of issue.

## 6. Results of macro forecasting

Table 1 summarizes the results of structure analysis. Equation V indicates how each of the set of predictors directly influences the change in crime rates when holding other variables constant.

Political variation is found to have a negative impact on the dependent variable. Interaction between Taiwan and China benefits the island because crime rates tend to consequently decrease. The political change per se brings positive impact on the safety of the society when variations in other dimensions of the country are taken for being constants. Distorting the historically antagonistic confrontation status against China helps Taiwan deflate the pressure on its public security that otherwise would have become more critical.

Similarly, the shrinking living space due to the growing population of the island leads to the decrease in its crime rates. The possible explanation may have been the case that frequent contact among people defuses individuals the risk of being a victim because environmental conditions inviting for committing certain types of crime are absent. It especially holds for Taiwan where houses in residential areas are built one next to the other within an extremely space-saving segregating distance. Crimes such as larceny, robbery, rape, and the like, get more difficult to be committed under such physical restraints.

Education is found to have no influence on the alteration of crime rates. It suggests that people tend to commit crime as a result of the transformation that occurred in other dimensions of the society. How well on average citizens are educated is not an issue. Coincidentally, unemployment rate is not found to have any impact on the dependent variable. Creating more employment opportunity may not necessarily reduce crime.

Economic condition is positively related to crime rates when other predictors are

Table 1  
Summaries of structure analysis results

<i>Equation I:</i>				
Population (endogenous variable; $N = 34$ )				
Predictor	b	S.E.	Beta	$p(t)$
(Constant)	446.90	11.74		0.00
Interaction	128.77	22.81	0.71	0.00
<i>Equation II:</i>				
Education (endogenous variable; $N = 34$ )				
Predictor	b	S.E.	Beta	$p(t)$
(Constant)	77.46	0.99		0.00
Interaction	19.34	1.93	0.87	0.00
<i>Equation III:</i>				
PCGNP (endogenous variable; $N = 34$ )				
Predictor	b	S.E.	Beta	$p(t)$
(Constant)	1514.32	332.18		0.00
Interaction	8402.46	645.65	0.92	0.00
<i>Equation IV:</i>				
Unemployment (endogenous variable; $N = 33$ )				
Predictor	b	S.E.	Beta	$p(t)$
(Constant)	2.10	0.14		0.00
Interaction	-0.40	0.27	-0.26	0.14
<i>Equation V:</i>				
Crime rates (dependent variable)				
Predictors	b	S.E.	Beta	$p(t)$
(Constant)	53.77	21.55		0.02
Interaction	-13.11	5.71	-0.34	0.03
Population	-0.13	0.03	-0.58	0.00
Education	0.24	0.28	0.14	0.40
PCGNP	6.9E-03	0.00	1.62	0.00
Unemployment	2.76	1.47	0.11	0.07
$R^2 = 0.93$				
$P(F) = 0.00$				
$N = 33$				

held constant. It seems inevitable that more people tend to commit crime when the society as a whole grows richer. It is the most important variable in predicting crime rates as well comparing with the other two.

The next issue of research interest, as the writer has argued being unique in the case of Taiwan, is whether or not political alteration indirectly influences the variations of crime rates. The structural analysis results serve such an attempt.

Equations I–IV in Table 1 indicate how the cross-Strait interaction variable causes the variations in population density, education, per capita GNP and unemployment rate. The precedent variable indirectly leads to the decrease of crime rates by going through population density. That means, the island becomes more populated as a result of the political change,<sup>1</sup> which in turn leads to less crime. However, the polit-

<sup>1</sup> The island becomes more populated because the government allows the relatives of the local residents who live in mainland to immigrate to Taiwan in a quota of 1080 persons per year. The quota is increasing every year.

ical alteration leads to higher economic prosperity, but exacerbates the already deteriorating public security. It accelerates the progress of higher education,<sup>2</sup> but does not cause any variation in crime thereafter. Additionally, since the variable does not have any impact on unemployment rate, and certainly will not influence crime rates by going through the indirect causal path that does not exist.

In summary, the interaction across the Taiwan Strait leads to the increase of population density, the advancement of higher education, and the prosperity of the society. It eventually brings two opposite indirect impacts on crime rates: a positive one by going through economy effect, and a negative one by going through population density. Crime rates in Taiwan can be partially attributed to the political alteration is therefore beyond scepticism.

As mentioned earlier, such a factor had never played a role in influencing crime before the democratization was set forth. In other words, crime rates had varied for causes other than the alteration of justice procedure in the past. What remains of concern, therefore, is the issue of how the public security of the society tends to evolve after experiencing such a dramatic political change. The following analyses suffice to forecast its future development.

## 7. Results of micro forecasting

Table 2 summarizes the ranking order of the crime and justice related scenarios that the subjects believe to be likely to occur in the future. It draws the picture of the foresight reflecting how the issue of crime tends to develop, how effective the justice system response may result, and the individual social life tends to change.

The most striking phenomena of crime that possibly evolve include the average age of offenders becoming younger and the level of juvenile crime rising. In regard to the type of crime committed, most respondents believe that white-collar offences, especially ones requiring high level of technology, tend to grow and subsequently play an important role among all crimes. There will be more robberies, illegal guns and drugs. Violence and indecent conduct crimes tend to increase, but they are less threatening than the aforementioned offences. As a result of the increase in crime, prisons grow more populated.

The government will undertake certain programs in response to the drastic change in crime. Most respondents believe that laws will turn more severe at the expense of limiting individual freedom. However, the government tends to lose the campaign against crime in the end, and the sub-Rosa society eventually wins its legitimacy and collaborates to work with the authorities to run the country. Criminal case clearance rate tends to decrease because police are ineffective. People no longer respect law enforcement no matter how they are empowered. Society decays and gradually

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<sup>2</sup> The college admission rate has been increasing over the years. In order to increase such opportunities, the Ministry of Education has been increasing the number of college and university.

Table 2  
Forecasting the future trend of crime and justice related scenarios in Taiwan

Total (/40, listed in order)	Scenarios
<i>I. Prospect of crime</i>	
5	The level of juvenile crime rises and the average age of offenders decreases
5	More collective white collar and hi-tech crimes
4	More robberies
4	More illegal guns and drugs
2	More violence and indecent conduct crimes
1	More prison population
<i>II. Government response and effectiveness</i>	
7	Laws become more severe and less individual freedom
6	Sub-Rosa society becomes legalized, and collaborates to work with the government to run the country
5	Government fails in the campaign against crime
4	Clearance rates decrease and police become less effective
2	Police power expands, but win less respect
2	Society appears a certain extent of destruction
1	More woman protection laws
1	Citizens lose their confidence in the government

appears a certain extent of destruction. More female protection laws are legislated for assuring the safety of women because they are most vulnerable.

Table 3 presents how individuals anticipate the prospect of their daily social life. Similar to what has been observed in Japan, the community-based social control loses its power because citizens no longer closely interact with their neighbours, and norms are absent. Society turns more materialistic, and people become more selfish. More juveniles learn deviant value systems, and high school students are found carrying guns. Bulletproof vest becomes a part of student uniform, and parents pick up their children at school everyday.

Business settings increase security measures, and most shops reduce their business hours. Individuals are always alert on their security, expanding individual measures such as no longer taking a walk in the street, attending self-defence classes, wearing a bulletproof vest, quitting outdoor activities, and utilizing credit cards instead of carrying cash. Women eventually learn how to protect themselves. The rich pretend to be poor, or immigrate to foreign countries.

More criminals with a hero image like the one in the case previously reviewed are likely to be generated by mass media. Private security business booms because citizens perceive that law enforcement is ineffective. On the other hand, citizens eventually organize themselves to form voluntary groups campaigning against crime. In order to render residents self-protection capability, the government eventually legalizes private gun ownership. Public security deteriorates in the beginning, and becomes improved after a certain period of time.

Table 3  
Forecasting prospect of individual daily social life

Total (/40; listed in order)	Scenarios
7	Less perception of norms and less interactions among people
6	Legalization of civilian gun ownership
5	Booms in private security business
5	Dangerous walking in the street
4	More criminal heroes are unintentionally generated by mass media
4	Public security condition gets worse in the beginning and becomes improved after a certain period of time
3	Business settings and households intensify security measures
3	Citizen voluntary crime campaigns prevail
2	Individuals increase independent security measures
2	Self-defence classes become popular
2	Women learn how to protect themselves
2	Bullet-proof vests are sold at 7-Eleven
2	Shops cut business hours
2	More juveniles learn deviant value systems
2	Less outdoor activities
1	Society becomes more materialistic
1	Citizens become more selfish
1	Bullet-proof vest becomes a part of student uniform
1	Self-protection equipment business booms
1	High school students carry guns to school
1	Parents pick up their children at school everyday
1	Credit card becomes popular
1	Citizens are always alert on their security
1	More citizen voluntary service groups
1	The rich pretend to be poor
1	The rich immigrate to foreign countries

## 8. Conclusion and policy implications

The macro analyses results suggest that cross-Strait interactions (the political alteration) benefit Taiwanese society when the sets of economical and societal variables are held constant. Crime rates increase when the nation as a whole gets richer. The opposite holds when population density gets high and conditions appealing for committing crime lose the room. However, education tends not to be at issue because crime does not discriminate against those potential offenders who are of different intellectual backgrounds. Creating more employment opportunity does not necessarily reduce crime either.

Cross-Strait interactions lead to the rise in population density of the island, which consequently reduces the rate of crime. Such activities bring a lot of fortune to the residents in general, but indirectly exacerbate the deteriorating public security in the end. It seems inevitable that societies all over the world always enjoy economic progress at the cost of the increase in crime, however.

Alteration in politics influences the safety of the society. If the causal structure concluded holds over time, the scenarios resulted from the micro analyses tend to emerge in the future. Residents of the island tend to face a curvilinear change in social order that a chaotic course is in sight, followed by civilian crime-campaign movements, and finally, the restoration of order.

Futurists generally employ a number of time-frame concepts—“...The ‘near-term’ future is the next one to five years” [23] (p. 2). Given that the respondents were required to forecast the conditions that tend to develop in the near-term future, the concluded series of scenarios are likely to appear within 5 years dating from the present time. The series of scenarios of the three topics can be sequenced altogether.

When chaos appears, more people commit crime. Juveniles begin their deviant career at very young age. More better-educated professionals joint criminal rows and conduct high-tech crime. Citizens generally feel unsafe because there are more guns and the related violence offences. More money of the taxpayers is spent on feeding convicts in over-populated prisons. Conditions get worse because people become more selfish and materialistic, and communities disorganize and decay as a result.

Punishment of crime becomes more severe at the cost of limiting individual freedom. Whatever programs the government undertakes tend to end up in vain and crime campaigns eventually lose. The government negotiates with the syndicate, and the sub-Rosa society wins its legitimacy. Citizens lose their faith in the government, and learn to protect themselves.

However, public awareness finally appears, and citizens organize themselves campaign against crime. They are empowered by legally owned guns that makes possible their vigilante actions. The public security restores in the end of the five-year turmoil, citizens regain their communities, and enjoy a safe daily life thereafter.

The purpose of this research is to forecast what scenarios are likely to occur in the society of Taiwan within the forthcoming five years. Let things develop the way they naturally go, and the series of scenarios tend to progress in a manner as depicted. However, what have been forecasted in the course of the development, particularly those specific scenarios that essentially bear a clear time-split essence, are likely to be the junctures where policy implications are revealed.

The Taiwanese government may be able to bypass the five-year turmoil as long as it can call for public awareness of the otherwise unavoidable disaster, and works with citizens to organize their communities to prevent the initiation of the occurrences in advance. If the authorities eventually fail to foresee the chaos, the decay of the social security tends to follow. There remains an action available for ending the catastrophic scenarios at an earlier moment. The government can manage to legalize private gun ownership and wait for the foreseeable success in campaign against crime as a result of citizen vigilante.

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