

Miscalculated Tailwind? An Analysis of Public Opinion Backlash in the 726 Recall Case from PTT Discourse

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Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received: 11 Oct 2025; Received in revised form: 08 Nov 2025; Accepted: 11 Nov 2025; Available online: 16 Nov 2025</p> <p>©2025 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).</p> <p>Keywords – Great Recall, PTT, Emotional Polarization, Computational Social Science, Topic Modeling, Sentiment Analysis, entity Volume analysis.</p>	<p><i>On July 26, 2025, a huge recall movement led by citizen organizations claiming to speak for the public was ultimately defeated by a devastating 25:0 margin. In addition to seriously harming the ruling party that worked to advance it, this case posed a serious challenge to the widely held political belief that "citizen groups represent public opinion." What causes a significant disparity between the actual vote results and a seemingly seamless political mobilization in the media and ground warfare? This study focuses on the PTT forum, a significant political and public opinion gathering spot in Taiwan, in order to address this central topic. It gathers important data from the two weeks prior to and following the recall vote in order to perform a thorough public opinion analysis. We investigate at three levels using techniques including topic modeling, sentiment analysis, and entity Volume analysis, and: (1) Narrative core: analyzing public opinion's discussion focus on the recall; (2) Emotional Flow: describing a community's collective emotional curve during the course of an event; and (3) Political shock: assessing the event's predicted influence on Taiwan's political landscape going forward. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that online public opinion operations or traditional political mobilization may not be sufficient to fully penetrate the complex structure of public opinion in today's quickly changing information environment. The key to comprehending the outcome of this recall case and possibly even getting insight into the political climate of modern-day Taiwan region may lie in the underappreciated wisdom of the public, democratic literacy, intense social emotions, and the possible spiral effect of silence.</i></p>

I. INTRODUCTION

A citizen organization backed by the ruling party initiated a vote on the "Great Recall" lawsuit against twenty-five elected officials and opposition representatives on July 26, 2025. The expelled party views this move as a political effort to alter the

parliament's structure, and it is the result of the political impasse of the post-election era. But in the end, this political gamble – which was perceived as a vote of confidence in the new parliament – led to a complete collapse: "dissenting votes" over

"affirmative votes" decisively defeated all 25 recall cases, creating a 25-0 margin.

This outcome stands in sharp contrast to the "tailwind illusion" that the recall party was able to generate prior to the vote. The joint signature stage of the recall case can be characterized as unstoppable due to the powerful mobilization of citizen groups and the ruling party. A powerful momentum of "usable public air" and victory in sight has been established by the line of people enthusiastically reported by major media outlets, as well as the setting of air battle issues. The outside world used to consider the recall case's successful passage for granted, but the recall party not only swiftly surpassed the threshold of joint signatures in every constituency but also won a total triumph of "25:0" in terms of momentum. Nevertheless, dissecting this delusion of favorable winds reveals a potent "backlash" that has been simmering in the virtual realm for some time. Public opinion typically views the recall as a "political pursuit that cannot afford to lose" and a "waste of social resources," and criticism of the ruling authorities during the recall campaign has never ceased on PTT, Taiwan's most powerful anonymous forum. In the end, this fierce opposition created an astounding resonance with the vote box's outcome. This raises the central point of this study: why is that seemingly flawless "tailwind" only a delusion? What was the impact of this response on PTT's shape and how did it relate to the actual vote outcomes? Did anonymous online communities act as a catalyst, actively gathering possible dissatisfaction into a countercurrent of public opinion that could reverse the situation and ultimately lead to the disintegration of this mobilization for the ruling party, or did they merely reflect the silent public opinion in this incident?

This study uses quantitative text analysis to investigate the recall incidence in detail [3]. First, we gathered all of the PTT Bagua Board's and Political Blackboard's textual resources over the course of 15 days, from July 19 to August 2, 2025. This time frame is adequate to capture important public opinion dynamics since it accurately captures the peak of public opinion one week prior to the recall vote, the day of the July 26th vote, and the stage of public opinion fermentation and reflection one week following the election. This study used "Potential

Dirichlet Allocation" (LDA) Topic Modeling [1] to investigate the possible topic structure of public opinion in order to conduct a thorough analysis. In order to precisely measure the emotional polarity and intensity of public opinion, as well as to identify important figures and their volume fluctuations in the sphere of public opinion, the "dictionary method" was also employed for character volume and sentiment analysis. This essay makes the case that PTT was the recall incident's "political immune system." It is a field that not only demonstrates the "internet disinhibition effect" and "emotional polarization," but more significantly, PTT "identifies" the political calculations behind the recall action and swiftly produces a powerful "public opinion antibody" by drawing on the collective wisdom of the villagers. Recall cases, Taiwan-US tariff discussions, the Typhoon Danas disaster, and legal issues are all effectively linked by this mechanism into a narrative of "composite governance failure" aimed at the ruling party. Ultimately, this strong response not only reversed the recall's initial momentum but also backfired on the government party that spearheaded it.

This article's structure is set up as follows: The political context, complicated situations, and literature evaluation will be covered in the second section; The study's data collecting, processing, and analysis techniques are further upon in the third section. Empirical findings from Topic Modeling, Sentiment Analysis, and Entity Volume Analysis are presented in the fourth part. The functioning of PTT as a political immune system will be examined in the fifth section. The research findings are summarized and their theoretical and practical implications for comprehending Taiwan's digital democracy are suggested in the sixth section, which also acts as the conclusion.

II. POLITICAL CONTEXT, COMPLEX CRISES, AND LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Political context: the causes of the 2025 recall

The January 2024 election results are where the Great Recall of 2025 originated. Since the independence of administrations, this election resulted in the first "three party less than half" parliament. The ruling Democratic Progressive Party

lost its majority in the Legislative Yuan despite winning the presidency. The People's Party was a significant minority in parliament, while the Kuomintang grew to be the major party. The ruling party and citizen organizations launched the "Bluebird Action" in an attempt to stop it after the opposition blue and white parties banded together to push for the amendment of parliamentary powers. They felt that the amendment's procedures and content were unconstitutional. But in the end, Congress enacted the bill, and the conflict between the opposition and the ruling peaked. In this regard, pro-green civic organizations have started preparing for the recall of regional lawmakers from the blue camp, turning the recall vote into a political contest.

2. Compound crisis: tariffs, wind disasters, and judicial disputes

Taiwanese society experienced several crises at the same time in the two weeks leading up to and following the recall vote. These crises unpredictably became the main source of support for PTT in the public opinion arena and merged with the recall issue to produce a "composite crisis". Despite their independence, these incidents happened one after the other in a very short period of time, giving the ruling authorities a "perfect storm" of bad news. The ruling party and citizen organizations launched the "Bluebird Action" in an attempt to stop it after the opposition blue and white parties banded together to push for the amendment of parliamentary powers. They felt that the amendment's procedures and content were unconstitutional. But in the end, Congress enacted the bill, and the conflict between the opposition and the ruling peaked. In this regard, pro-green civic organizations have started preparing for the recall of regional lawmakers from the blue camp, turning the recall vote into a political contest.

Typhoon Danas and the floods in the south represent the second pressure. Typhoon Danas and its southwest wind produced persistent, intense rains to the central and southern regions in mid- to late July, resulting in significant damage. The government's approach to disaster relief, however, has generated debate. President Lai Ching Te's statement, "We cannot rely solely on the National Army for everything," was perceived on PTT as the government's lack of concern and evasion of

accountability to the victims of the disaster, creating a strong negative impression of "prioritizing elections over people's livelihoods."

Judicial disputes are the third source of pressure. A number of court cases involving opposition political figures, including the detention or prosecution of former Taipei Mayor Ko Wen Je and Hsinchu Mayor Gao Hung, caused a great deal of debate on PTT during the recall period. Many users perceive these legal processes as "political persecution" by the ruling party via legal means because of how closely they coincide with recall actions.

3. Literature review: Online public opinion, political participation, and emotional polarization

In the end, the complicated crisis and political background of this recall case became entwined and fermented on PTT, a historic online forum in Taiwan, and developed into a wave of public opinion. Examining how the internet, particularly anonymous forums, has altered modern patterns of political engagement and emotional mobilization is essential to comprehending the source of this power.

First off, political engagement has greatly increased thanks to online platforms. Because the internet gives people a way to acquire information, voice their ideas, and even organize events, prior research has shown a favorable association between internet usage behavior and political participation. PTT has historically been influential in determining political issues in Taiwan. But we witnessed much more in the 726 recall case: it became into a "narrative furnace" that could turn external difficulties (tariffs, windstorms) into fodder for internal political assaults. Second, the anonymity of the internet is directly linked to this furnace's efficiency. The "Online disinhibition effect" was postulated by psychologist John Suler. It describes how people feel less constrained online and are more inclined to say hurtful and hostile things that they wouldn't otherwise dare to utter. This result creates an ideal psychological setting for the development of acerbic, mocking, and even hostile "speech antibodies" on PTT. Lastly, "Emotional Polarization," a fundamental aspect of modern politics, gives this public opinion storm focus and vigor. This idea highlights how political disagreements have developed into intense

mistrust and animosity toward opposing groups and their supporters rather than merely being differences in policy stances. Through the prism of emotional polarization, the recall case's public grievances are precisely concentrated and directed towards the ruling party, attributing all displeasure to "governing incompetence" and "political pursuit."

In conclusion, this study holds that the network's emotional polarization and disinhibition effect are essential preconditions for comprehending its functioning as a "political immune system" in addition to being objective descriptions of the PTT public opinion environment. While the disinhibition effect eliminates the limitations of conventional communication, allowing counterarguments to be swiftly and brutally formed and spread, emotional polarization offers fuel for differentiating friend from adversary and solidifying identification.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

1. Scope of data collection and data preprocessing

This study uses PTT's Gossiping and HatePolitics as its data source. In Taiwan, these two billboards are the most widely used and emblematic venues for online political debates. Data collection will take place between July 19 and August 2, 2025, for a total of 15 days. This time frame is adequate to capture important public opinion dynamics since it includes the peak phase of public opinion one week prior to the recall vote, the day of the July 26th vote, and the stage of public opinion fermentation and reflection one week following the election. Because there is a lot of noise in the original text data that was obtained, thorough preprocessing is required to guarantee the accuracy of further analysis. The following is the processing method: 1. Cleaning the format 2. To segment Chinese words, load the "jieba" package into a custom dictionary; 3. Eliminate stop words with no real significance.

2. Analytical method

(1). Topic Modeling Analysis

This study employed Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA), an unsupervised machine learning technique, to investigate the possible issue structure in PTT public opinion. The LDA model was implemented in this work using Python's gensim suite, and the

"Coherence Score" was utilized as the evaluation metric to choose the ideal number of topics in an objective manner.

(2). Sentiment Analysis

This study used a "Dictionary based approach" for sentiment analysis in order to measure the emotional inclination and intensity of PTT public opinion. A unique sentiment lexicon with common positive and negative words was created for this investigation. For every article, the SentimentScore is defined as

$$\frac{(\text{Number of positive words} - \text{Number of negative words})}{(\text{Number of positive words} + \text{Number of negative words})}$$

Its value range is between -1 (extremely negative) and +1 (extremely positive).

(3). Entity Volume Analysis

This study uses Entity Volume Analysis to investigate micro actors from a macro perspective of public opinion structure. This study created a comparative chart of entities and aliases that includes dismissed people, relevant opinion leaders, and political officials from both the government and opposition parties. Determine how many times each character and all of its aliases are mentioned in the text data by analyzing the script. This study uses 4:30 p.m. on July 26, 2025 as the cut-off point and computes each person's voice volume during the two time periods prior to and following the recall vote in order to track the shift in public opinion focus.

IV. EMPIRICAL RESULTS

1. Theme analysis results:

This study employed Topic Modeling analysis to establish five key themes from the data of Gossiping, HatePolitics, and their combined versions in order to investigate the primary debate directions of the PTT public opinion field in this recall case. The "recall core" is a common political focus, but analysis reveals that the two billboards have very different characteristics: the political black version is a highly focused and politically charged debate field, while the gossip version depicts a public square where everyday topics and political events are intertwined. Five major topics emerged from PTT's talks during

this time based on the combined data from the two versions:

- (1). Recall core (37.24%): With keywords including "Democratic Progressive Party," "Recall," "Blue and White," "Blue Bird," and so on, it is the most discussed issue. This suggests that party mobilization and recall actions itself are the main topics of debate.
- (2). Internet culture and everyday life (28.86%): second in percentage, containing terms like "gossip," "is it," "work," "feelings," etc., indicating that PTT is still a social platform with a significant amount of daily conversation and sharing of personal experiences.
- (3). Public complaints about wind disasters (14.20%): The essential terms "southern," "loyal," "disaster relief," and "flooding" demonstrate how the recall incident has been linked in public opinion to the wind disaster scenario and local government concerns in the south.
- (4). Tariff issue (12.90%): The terms "China," "the United States," "tariffs," "Trump," and so forth suggest that global trade and economic concerns are also significant subjects for online users.
- (5). Although judicial disputes (6.80%) make up a very modest percentage, the use of keywords like "judiciary," "judges," "高虹安," "柯文哲," etc. indicates that certain judicial issues continue to receive some attention in the realm of public opinion. The two platforms differ significantly when the kanban is further divided for comparison:

- (1). Gossiping: Daily Conversations with a Political Focus. Gossiping's theme distribution mirrors its all-encompassing forum features. "Internet culture and

daily life" (39.30%) is the theme with the largest proportion, significantly surpassing other political issues. Even while "core dismissal" is the second most popular theme (26.42%), its percentage indicates that political conversations are merely a significant subset of the various subjects covered in this issue, not all of them. This suggests that significant political events are discussed within the framework of social life in the gossip version of popular opinion.

- (2). HatePolitics: A very focused political weaponry. HatePolitics looks very different. With 41.74% of the total, "dismissing the core" is the primary topic of discussion. Other significant themes that are also quite political include "judicial disputes" (20.70%), "resisting China and protecting Taiwan" (20.78%), and "tariff issues" (16.41%). The political black version is a specialized and intense political debate environment, as evidenced by data showing that the debates are extremely concentrated, with nearly every issue supporting the fundamental political offense and defense. It is important to note that this version's theme of "Internet Culture and Daily Life" only makes up 0.36% of the total, and the material is also connected to Buddhism, which may be interpreted as noise in the statistics and emphasizes how pure its political conversations are.

In general, the political black version represents the viewpoint of the political core circle, and the formation and collision of public opinion are closely linked to particular political agendas; the gossip version, as a microcosm of public opinion, reflects how political issues permeate into the everyday concerns of the public.

Table 1. Topic Modeling Analysis Results

Discussion board	Topic Number	Topic Name	Top 15 keywords within the theme	Topic proportion (%)
Gossiping Version	1	Recall the core	Democratic Progressive Party, Recall, Bluebird, Grand Recall, Garbage, Democracy, Continuation, Voting, Green Communist Party, Success, Support, Consent, Legislator, Kuomintang, 賴清德	26.42
	2	Internet Culture and Daily Life	Gossip, yes/no, problem, direct, seeming, fundamental, past, work, past, friend, discovery, no need, feeling, actually, video	39.3
	3	Tariff issues	China, the United States, customs, Japan, Trump, the Communist Party of China, the state, the government, the curator, the Gulf people, the negotiation, the Republic of	18.31

			China, the people, the Gulf people, the Democratic Progressive Party	
	4	Wind disaster and public grievances	Southern, loyal, flooded, disaster relief, typhoon, reverse, government, watermelon, local, mayor, recall, Kaohsiung, northern, rumor mongering, holiday	9.31
	5	Judicial disputes	Complete, media, journalists, statements, judiciary, judges, reports, sources, links, indications, content, website, authorship, detention LINE	6.65
Political Black Version	1	Recall the core	Democratic Progressive Party, Bluebird, Recall, Grand Recall, Continuation, Blue and White, Kuomintang, This Time, 賴清德, Support, Consent, Legislator, President, Success, Fundamentally	41.74
	2	Judicial disputes	Xiao Cao, Voting, Blue and White, Ko Wen je, People's Party MVPGGYY、kerry、XD、Garbage Berotec、Is it, Justice, Abi, Inability, 黃國昌	20.7
	3	Internet Culture and Daily Life	Buddhism, Mahayana, Disciples, Theravada, Classics, True, Voice, Muni Buddha, and even, Becoming Buddha, New Taipei, Taoyuan, All Buddhas, World, Arhat	0.36
	4	Tariff issues	United States, customs, Trump, government, money, blue and white MVPGGYY、Local, Democratic Progressive Party, Rumors, Bluebird, Central dandes、CavendishJr、Negotiation	16.41
	5	Anti central protection platform	China, Recall, Kuomintang, Grand Recall, Democratic Progressive Party, Legislator, Curator, Support, Voting, Chinese Communist Party, Democracy, Success, Taiwanese, People, Blue and White	20.78
Combine	1	Judicial disputes	Judiciary, Judges, Integrity, Voting, 高虹安, Representation, Detention, 柯文哲, Issues, Government, Law, Plagiarism, Journalists, Hsinchu, Evidence	6.8
	2	Internet Culture and Daily Life	Gossip, isn't it TheoEpstein、Previously, it seems, work, problem, direct, video, discovery, company, today, fundamental, unnecessary, feeling	28.86
	3	Recall the core	Democratic Progressive Party, Recall, Blue and White, Kuomintang, Grand Recall, Blue Bird, Legislator, Support, Agree, Vote, Xiao Cao, 賴清德, People's Party, Continue, This Time	37.24
	4	Tariff issues	China, the United States, customs, Trump, Buddhism, Japan, the Communist Party of China, the government, negotiations, the country, Mahayana, Gulf people, the world, investment, the Republic of China	12.9
	5	Wind disaster and public grievances	Democratic Progressive Party, Bluebird, Recall, Southern Region, Continuation, Garbage, Green Communist Party, Loyal Loyalty, Disaster Relief, Success, Rumors, Flooding, Still Here, Government, Hehe	14.2

Data source: From July 19 to August 2, 2025, public articles and comments from PTT Gossiping and HatePolitics were gathered and examined for this study. The issue is titled according to the researcher's opinion based on keywords; the largest percentage of values is shown in bold.

2. Sentiment analysis results:

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From July 19 to August 2, 2025, this study used sentiment analysis to examine online public opinion regarding PTT gossip and hate politics. The total findings demonstrated that, notwithstanding variations in the general sentiment trend over this time, the average value remained favorable. When two pages are combined, the average sentiment score is 0.17. Three stages can be used to roughly categorize the overall trend:

- (1). Early high point (7/19-7/25): The combined sentiment score was primarily above the average line of 0.17 during this time, peaking on July 22 at 0.210. The initial public opinion is largely good.
- (2). Midterm low point (7/26-7-29): The total emotional score fell below the average of 0.17 for four days in a row beginning on July 26 and hit its lowest point of 0.087 on July 27. During the observation time, this is the most significant stage of overall unpleasant emotions.
- (3). Later comeback (7/30-8/2): Emotional ratings improved and largely went back to the average line after July 30.

The two portions' emotional scoring performance differs significantly from one another:

- (1). Gossiping: The primary factor raising the total average score during the observation period was the gossip version's emotional score, which stayed higher than the political black version's. Its emotional score reached its peak point on July 20th (0.304) and its lowest position, which coincided with the consolidation trend, on July 27th (0.136).
- (2). Hatepolitics: This variant exhibits more dramatic swings and far lower emotional scores. Despite reaching its peak score of 0.126 on July 31st, it fell precipitously to the lowest point of 0.012 on August 1st over the course of the observation period.

Overall, the data indicates that while the political and black versions' emotional performance was comparatively negative and unstable during this time, the gossip version was a comparatively favorable public opinion field. Around July 26-27, both the combined ratings and the gossip version scores hit their lowest points, marking a turning point in the general sentiment of the public.

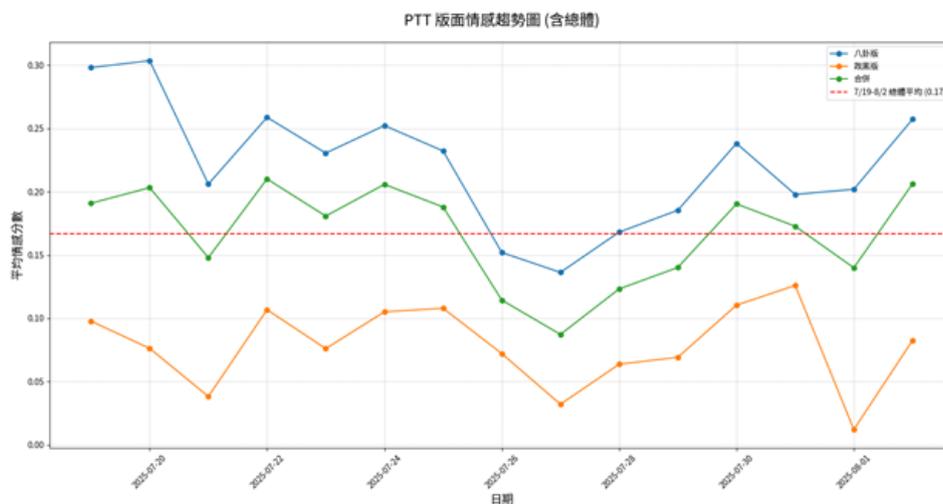


Fig.1 PTT Emotion Trend Chart (July 19-2025/08/02)

Data source: From July 19 to August 2, 2025, public articles and comments from PTT Gossiping and HatePolitics were gathered and examined for this study.

Explanation: The emotional score ranges from -1 (extremely negative) to +1 (extremely positive).

3. Entity Volume Analysis: Who is the focus of the public opinion field?

This study compared the online voice volume of prominent political actors before and after July 26,

2025 at 4:30 pm in order to provide light on the main points of discussion surrounding the recall case in the PTT public opinion sector. According to the data, the recall case's outcome is akin to a massive stone thrown into the middle of the public opinion lake,

drastically altering the initial discussion pattern and causing the focus of public opinion to rapidly converge and polarize from the dual core structure of confrontation between the ruling and opposition parties to President 賴清德 alone. 賴清德 and 黃國昌 were the two primary cores of the PTT debate before 16:30 on July 26.

(1). Overall volume: 賴清德 has a tiny advantage with 9264 mentions after combining the data from the political black version and the gossip version, but 黃國昌 is not far behind with 8299 mentions. This demonstrates that these two people were the focus of the public's attack and defense before to the recall vote's conclusion.

(2). Layout differences: 賴清德 voice (5470 times) is much louder than 黃國昌 (2975 times) in the gossip section, which focuses more on the ruling party. 黃國昌 voice (5324 times) is much louder than 賴清德 (3794 times) in the hate politics version, which focuses more on the opposition's supervisory authority.

(3). Other important roles: At this point, opposition party representatives like 朱立倫 (3478 times), 傅崐萁 (2994 times), and 徐巧芯 (2363 times) also play significant public opinion roles, creating a multi-point discussion situation. The total voice of pro People's Party opinion leader 陳之漢 (5557 times) ranks third. As the incident's consequences worsened after 4:30 p.m. on July 26, public opinion fundamentally changed, with conversations quickly turning to influential people, including President 賴清德.

(4). 賴清德 voice has become much louder: the combined analysis shows that the total number of mentions of Lai Qingde has climbed from 9264 in the previous stage to 27888, with a volume change rate

(i.e., volume increase) as high as 201.04%. In the realm of public opinion, he has emerged as the unquestionable absolute core, and he is the focus of nearly all conversations and obligations.

(5). Summary of important figures: 黃國昌 voice has increased to 11200 times, but the change rate is only 34.96%, much lower than 賴清德 increase, and the difference between the two is growing quickly. Some characters have become a new topic of conversation due to their dramatic rise in popularity. The most remarkable of these is 高虹安 volume change rate of 385.81%. Furthermore, 柯建銘 (260.10%), 沈伯洋 (283.24%), and 葉元之 (256.23%) volume change rates have all dramatically increased, suggesting that they have emerged as important players in later attack and defense or event commentary. In contrast, some important figures from the preceding stage have seen a sharp fall in popularity. For instance, 趙少康 voice significantly decreased by 66.32% following the cases of 陳之漢 (-18.20%) and 徐巧芯 (-5.67%); however, 羅智強, 羅廷瑋, and others did not make it to the list prior to invoicing, indicating a significant shift in the focus of attention. The focus of public opinion has moved from frontline opinion leaders and legislators to higher-level political cores, as evidenced by this trajectory of growth and decline. In contrast, some important figures from the preceding stage have seen a sharp fall in popularity. For instance, Zhao Shaokang's voice significantly decreased by 66.32% following the cases of Chen Zhihan (-18.20%) and Xu Qiaoxin (-5.67%); however, Luo Zhiqiang, Luo Tingwei, and others did not make it to the list prior to invoicing, indicating a significant shift in the focus of attention. The focus of public opinion has moved from frontline opinion leaders and legislators to higher-level political cores, as evidenced by this trajectory of growth and decline.

Table 2: PTT Key Figures' Ranking and Voice Volume Changes

Analysis category	Volume ranking	Before invoicing	Volume before invoicing	After invoicing	Volume after invoicing	Change rate of voice volume of characters (%)
Gossiping Version	1	賴清德	5470	賴清德	14586	166.65%
	2	黃國昌	2975	黃國昌	4635	55.80%
	3	陳之漢	2564	高虹安	4153	374.63%
	4	朱立倫	1453	陳之漢	2927	14.16%
	5	傅崐萁	1361	柯建銘	2384	200.63%

	6	高虹安	875	朱立倫	1937	33.31%
	7	韓國瑜	803	傅崐萁	1691	24.25%
	8	柯建銘	793	葉元之	1660	187.19%
	9	徐巧芯	786	曹興誠	1481	104.28%
	10	曹興誠	725	韓國瑜	1130	40.72%
Political Black Version	1	黃國昌	5324	賴清德	13302	250.61%
	2	賴清德	3794	黃國昌	6565	23.31%
	3	陳之漢	2993	高虹安	3858	398.45%
	4	朱立倫	2025	柯建銘	2715	335.80%
	5	傅崐萁	1633	葉元之	2255	332.82%
	6	徐巧芯	1577	朱立倫	2254	11.31%
	7	韓國瑜	999	傅崐萁	1931	18.25%
	8	趙少康	915	陳之漢	1619	-45.91%
	9	高虹安	774	徐巧芯	1284	-18.58%
	10	王鴻薇	663	韓國瑜	1029	3.00%
Combine	1	賴清德	9264	賴清德	27888	201.04%
	2	黃國昌	8299	黃國昌	11200	34.96%
	3	陳之漢	5557	高虹安	8011	385.81%
	4	朱立倫	3478	柯建銘	5099	260.10%
	5	傅崐萁	2994	陳之漢	4546	-18.20%
	6	徐巧芯	2363	朱立倫	4191	20.50%
	7	韓國瑜	1802	葉元之	3915	256.23%
	8	高虹安	1649	傅崐萁	3622	21.00%
	9	柯建銘	1416	曹興誠	2504	107.97%
	10	趙少康	1354	徐巧芯	2229	-5.67%

Data source: From July 19 to August 2, 2025, public articles and comments from PTT Gossiping and HatePolitics were gathered and examined for this study.

Definition: Volume is the total number of times a character and all of its aliases are mentioned. speech volume change rate, which is mostly determined by the ranking order following voting, is equal to post-voting speech volume minus pre-voting voice volume divided by pre-voting voice volume.

4. In depth discussion: PTT as the operational mechanism of the political immune system

The phenomenon of "public opinion backlash" underlying the 2025 recall case will be thoroughly examined in this chapter using the empirical findings previously discussed. The data presents a clear picture: a recall case spearheaded by the ruling party, which appeared to be going well, finally lost badly on PTT as a result of a public opinion tsunami fueled by several problems. The purpose of this section is to show how PTT functions as a "political immune

system" that operates autonomously without a central command during this process. It does this by analyzing the following three stages, explaining how this system recognizes threats, produces antibodies, eventually catalyzes reverse mobilization, and talks about potential political shocks.

(1). PTT as the political immune system's operational mechanism

Finding the "threat" of invasion: The so-called "political immune system" starts with determining what the "threat" of invasion is. Instead of

purposefully differentiating between the three separate government crises in this recall incident, the PTT villagers used the community's collective wisdom to organize these events into a more deadly cohesive narrative that gave the impression that "the government has failed in all aspects" (compound governance failure). Data analysis can support this claim. Rural inhabitants are talking about "core recall" (37.24%), but they are also talking about "tariff issues" (12.90%), "wind disaster grievances" (14.20%), and "judicial disputes" (6.80%), according to the Topic Modeling data (Table 1). This demonstrates how PTT functions as a melting pot, combining many seemingly unconnected incidents into coherent charges against the ruling party. For instance, under articles about dismissal, users might comment on the government's poor disaster relief efforts; in the discussion of tariff complaints, they might wonder why the ruling party is trying to impeach. The particular method of narrative synthesis is this cross-thematic intertextuality. The aforementioned intertextual activity is strongly stimulated by the anonymity and popularity of the PTT platform. Public opinion is formed far more swiftly than with traditional media by enabling consumers to quickly and easily layer several thoughts without worry. As a result, PTT acts as a "story generator," turning a number of separately occurring external problems (such as tariffs, windstorms, court cases, etc.) into methodical charges against the entire government. The entire process is similar to the body's immune system in that it first detects alien "viruses" (ruling disputes), then marks them and gets ready to fight back.

(2). The generation of "discourse antibodies": Once the grand narrative of "composite governance failure" is established, the immune system begins to generate specific "discourse antibodies" aimed at directly attacking the recall action itself, depriving it of the legitimacy of exercising its rights as a citizen, and redefining it as a symptom of the ruling party's incompetence and despair. Emotional motivation for this approach is demonstrated by the Sentiment Analysis results (Figure 1). The general public opinion sentiment reached its lowest point during the observation period (0.087), particularly during the "mid-term trough" before and after the July 26 vote, while the highly politicized political haters

stayed in a comparatively negative and unstable emotional spectrum for a longer period of time. These violent disputes were constantly fueled by the negative emotions that surfaced at pivotal times. Words like "political pursuit that cannot afford to lose" and "waste of social resources" refer to the particular "antibodies" that the immune system uses. Recall is no longer a democratic process for evaluating the suitability of public opinion representatives in the PTT's public opinion arena. Instead, it has been skillfully transformed into a low-cost political tactic used by the ruling party to divert attention and target dissidents at a time when both domestic and foreign affairs are completely disabled. This narrative reconstruction has enormous strategic significance. It makes it possible for the opposition to take the moral high ground. Casting a "disagree" vote has much greater significance for a voter: in addition to supporting an opposition party representative, the voter is protesting the government's failure in tariff negotiations, showing sympathy for flood victims, and rejecting political infighting that consumes social costs. A "disagree" vote has strong implications of turning into a multi-issue protest vote. A broader and more emotionally powerful narrative framework surrounds, neutralizes, and ultimately renders ineffective the initial argument of the side involved in the recall incident ("these legislators deviate from public opinion") rather than immediately refuting it as a "pathogen."

(3). Reverse Mobilization: In addition to persuading middle-class voters, PTT's potent counter-narrative serves as a potent trigger for "reverse mobilization." When opposition party supporters believe that their political leaders are being unfairly pursued by the ruling party on PTT, this sense of crisis and injustice actually motivates them to cast a "disagree" vote, which results in "defensive voting" behavior. The vote data has verified this effect. In certain recall seats, including 張智倫 from New Taipei City and 黃建賓 from Taitung County, the final number of "disagree" votes cast even surpassed the number of elected votes for the representative in the 2024 election, according to the report. This demonstrates unequivocally that the recall action aroused opposition voters more successfully in addition to failing to convince them.

5. Political impact assessment: Changes in power landscape after recall cases

In addition to being a one-time political event, the recall case's failure and the resulting public opinion response are like a high-resolution X-ray that shows the profound structural shifts in Taiwan's political landscape. For this, the Entity Volume Analysis data (Table 2) offers a number of crucial observation entry points. First, a qualitative alteration in the competitive landscape of political parties may be indicated by the movement in the major axis of the public opinion battlefield. Data reveals that People's Party member 黃國昌 and pro-People's Party online personality 陳之漢 had far more voices on PTT than Kuomintang Chairman 朱立倫, both before and after the recall. This indicates that the People's Party has taken the role of the traditional Kuomintang as the primary adversary in online public opinion when it comes to opposing and supporting the ruling Democratic Progressive Party. This indicates that the People's Party has taken the role of the traditional Kuomintang as the primary adversary in online public opinion when it comes to opposing and supporting the ruling Democratic Progressive Party. The Kuomintang may receive a long-term warning if this trend of "white green confrontation" taking the place of "blue-green confrontation" persists, and its capacity for online mobilization and discourse power may be threatened with marginalization. The second is the serious harm done to the leadership core's accountability and governing authority. The immune system's last step following the vote is to track down and prosecute the war criminals. First, the volume of President 賴清德 talks increased dramatically by +201.04%. In addition, the ruling party's legislative caucus whip, 柯建銘, saw an even greater surge in media exposure at +260.10%, while 曹興誠 visibility also rose sharply by +107.97%. These figures show that targets of accountability—from the head of state and parliamentary leaders to influential public figures—have not been spared in the slightest. Originally designed to weaken the opposing party's momentum, this recall eventually worked against the ruling party. In addition to failing to undermine the "small government, big opposition" parliamentary system, it might also prematurely cause a crisis of confidence in the 賴清德 administration.

Additionally, the opposition camp's possible beneficiaries and the development of the narrative of "judicial persecution." Public opinion of Hsinchu Mayor 高虹安 increased by 385.81% following the election. In the backdrop of his dismissal, the ruling party successfully turned his legal fight into a political endeavor. In addition to failing to ruin its political life, this interpretation can create the perception of "political victims," strengthening the unity of its supporters. Over time, this undermines the judiciary's legitimacy and gives the opposition forces fuel to build up political capital.

V. CONCLUSION : WARNING AND RETHINKING OF DIGITAL DEMOCRACY IN TAIWAN

1. Summary of research findings: A complete analysis of a public opinion backlash

This study examines PTT public opinion around the 2025 726 recall case and shows how public opinion strongly opposed a political mobilization. The study's main finding is that PTT acts spontaneously as a "political immune system" in this process; it doesn't need a central command and instead uses a certain pattern to recognize, neutralize, and retaliate against political threats. Three phases can be used to describe this system's operation path:

(1).Threat identification and narrative synthesis:

The study's topic modeling analysis demonstrates that PTT users did not consider the recall case in a vacuum; rather, they closely associated it with topics like "wind disasters and public grievances" (14.20%), "tariff issues" (12.90%), and "judicial disputes" (6.80%) over the same time frame. The recall case is seen as the main "threat" by the villagers' collective wisdom, which incorporates these separate external issues into a grand narrative of "composite governance failure" aimed at the ruling party.

(2).Antibody generation and discourse neutralization:

The system has produced important "linguistic antibodies" like "waste of social resources" and "political pursuit that cannot afford to lose" in reaction to this challenge. The motivation behind it is shown by sentiment analysis data: around July 26th, public opinion sentiment dramatically dropped to its lowest point (0.087), which fueled combative talk.

Recall actions have been successfully stripped of their legitimacy by these "antibodies," which have transformed them from civil rights exercises to political manipulation under incompetent government.

(3). Reverse mobilization and accountability:

The "reverse mobilization" and "defensive voting" of opposition supporters were eventually sparked by this counter narrative. The last phase of the immune system, accountability, is amply illustrated by the data from Entity Volume Analysis. Public opinion swiftly shifted from the "dual core confrontation" between Lai Ching Te and Huang Kuo Chang to the "single core accountability" against President Lai Ching Te following the recall case. His own voice surged by 201.04%, while the voice of Ko Chien Ming, the convener of the ruling party caucus, rose even further by 260.10%, suggesting that public opinion will eventually find its way to the core of power.

2. Theoretical implications: From emotional polarization to "systemic immune response" in the digital field

This study's "political immune system" metaphor aims to describe a more dynamic process than the "stratosphere" or "echo chamber." While the "immune system" describes a decentralized online community that actively detects, defines, and eventually neutralizes the risks it recognizes, the latter frequently alludes to a static environment of passive information filtering. This example shows that public opinion can display emergent collective defense behavior akin to biological systems in a setting where emotional polarization and network disinhibition effects are necessary. In addition to reflecting offline reality, online public opinion is a dynamic force that has the power to actively influence, influence, and even reverse political decisions.

3. Realistic implications: A warning to political practitioners

The findings of this study offer a number of grave cautions for political practitioners:

(1). Do not undervalue the actual public opinion and be cautious of the "tailwind illusion" in the stratosphere. Because of their over-reliance on their own camp and friendly media to produce a "favorable wind," the recall party is likely to have

underestimated the already created counter public opinion on platforms like PTT, leading to a tragic misjudgment of the true foundation of public opinion in society. Political workers should be aware that it is difficult to equate the views of any one community with those of the entire public.

(2). The "narrative countermeasures" of the internet have outpaced traditional political mobilization. When it comes to cyberattacks that are bottom-up and focused on "stories," the conventional top-down land warfare and propaganda seem incredibly vulnerable. More contagious "verbal antibodies" (such "political pursuit that cannot afford to lose") can quickly erode the legitimacy of mobilization and make conventional mobilization ineffectual, according to research.

(3). Public opinion might quickly react negatively when political attacks are launched against the wind. This case shows that any political action intended to disparage opponents can be readily construed as proof of "prioritizing elections over people's livelihoods" when the government's ruling authority is weak owing to numerous crises. In addition to failing to change the subject, this type of activity serves as a catalyst for public complaints. The anticipated harm to the initiate will be greatly outweighed by the public opinion backlash that follows.

4. Research limitations and future research directions

The political chalkboard and gossip board on PTT are the only sources of data used in this study. Nonetheless, Taiwan's online public opinion spectrum is incredibly varied, with many social media sites (including Facebook, Threads, and Dcard) having unique communication cultures and user structures. Future studies will be able to more accurately portray Taiwan's digital democracy's public opinion landscape and determine whether the idea of a "political immune system" applies to other community domains if they can combine data from various platforms and perform cross-platform comparative analysis.

Please refer to the author's GitHub repository for relevant code, data sources, custom dictionaries, and word breaks (<https://github.com/wisdomnet/726>).

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