Democratic Activism – December 2022

This summary is prepared for the 2022 three-month trial of the Forward Project of the Social Change Lab - Susilo Wibisono & Winnifred R. Louis – details of the methodology and all summaries available here: http://www.socialchangelab.net/forward.html and via subscription/email at https://socialchangelab.substack.com/. Feedback welcome, to w.louis@psy.uq.edu.au .

Month/Year	December 2022
Key term	"democratic activism" and democratic activism
Database	Google Scholar
Link to database	https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/17p2fFHcyHQ0-hhlzNb2ZV-nzAUPxBPYs1fXsVC1_lRY/edit?usp=sharing

Overview

Overall, there were 96 publications for the keyword 'democratic activism' in the month of December on Google Scholar. Of these, 22% were relevant, 42% were partially relevant, and 36% were not relevant. Of the 61 relevant and partially relevant publications, there were 19 journal articles, 13 book chapters, two proceedings, 11 archived papers, four books, two research reports, five book reviews, and five miscellaneous publications, which included one conference paper, two policy briefs, one summary, and one bibliography. The following summary will solely discuss the relevant journal articles, of which there were five.

Approaches

Of the relevant journal articles categories, four were empirical and one was theoretical. The methodologies of these studies included two qualitative studies, two quantitative studies, two literature reviews, and one systematic review.

Participants and data

The locations covered in the publications included USA, Myanmar, Tunisia, Europe, Nigeria, and Thailand. This month's publications tended to discuss democratic activism in the context of young people and students. Both Russell and Jovanovic (2022) and Nakthongin et al. (2022) used students and took an interest in their political movements and factors influencing them. Dragan and Anja (2022) took more general approach and focused on young people and their relationship with political participation. Ryan and Van Tran (2022)

focused on a different group of participants entirely and used a random sample of Facebook posts regarding military media content. Finally, Zulkarnain et al. (2022) examined the intersection of democracy and Islam at a more societal level, thus did not directly recruit participants.

Themes and findings

Three out of five of the relevant journal articles focused on young people and their political participation. Social experiences in the school environment were found to be positively associated with institutional and non-institutional forms of participation (Dragan & Anja, 2022) and were found to inspire action and give students resources to be able to participate in movements (Russell & Jovanovic, 2022). Educational institutions were also found to provide opportunities such as community-based learning, where justice-oriented participation in protests, meetings, petitions, and public speaking is encouraged and fostered (Russell & Jovanovic, 2022). Factors that can influence young peoples and students' participation in activism included social media channels, encouragement from peers, access to information technology (Nakthongin et al., 2022), competing requirements (e.g., higher education, job market, etc.) and engagement with non-government organisations (Dragan & Anja, 2022). However, it should be noted that in the context of students and young people, financial and social resources, as well as their time availability, all can influence their political participation and democratic activism (Dragan & Anja, 2022).

Another scholar considered the relationship of democracy to Islam (Zulkarnain et al., 2022). More specifically, Rached Ghannouchi, a Tunisian activist, posed ideas to synthesise Western liberal democracy and Islamic politics successfully, which is what Zulkarnain et al. (2022) reviewed. From this perspective, to avoid future clashes and incorporate democracy into Islamic government, any efforts at democratisation of the Islamic politics should be made with the Islamic teachings of leadership, principle, and operation in mind. It should not be expected that the Islamic politics adopt the West's idea of democracy, but instead an Islamic pattern of democracy based on their cultures, values, principles, and desires.

Ryan and Van Tran (2022) investigated social media accounts of dissidents and political discourse in the context of post-coup Myanmar in 2021. Ryan and Van Tran found that the military's inability to curb public discourse away from widespread dissident activities made it necessary for military media to vilify activist leaders online while also justifying military oppression. This was championed as "disciplined democracy" by the military media both towards domestic and international audiences. Over time, there was a decline in

dissident rhetoric on public Facebook pages, which might reflect the public's increased risk perception as repression intensified (Ryan and Van Tran, 2022).

References

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Russell, V., & Jovanovic, J. (2022). Radical community-based learning: Tapping into students' sense of justice. *International Journal of Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement*, *10*(1). Published online. https://doi.org/10.37333/001c.66269

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Zulkarnain, F., Muhammad, A. Y., Sule, B., Sahid, A. A. (2022). When the East meets the West: Analysing Rached Ghannouci's synthesis of democracy in Islam. *Journal of Al-Tamaddun*, 17(2), 127-141. https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol17no2.10