

Review of: "Exploring factors explaining the scarcity of climate protests in East Asia"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This paper addresses a very interesting topic. Although I am not qualified to talk about the data analysis, I offer numerous suggestions for any revisions below.

Authors state:

More importantly, we cannot conclude that East Asian people are simply bad at collective action. East Asian people have been successfully combating the Covid-19 crisis through collective actions (e.g., wearing masks, following mobility restrictions, and keeping social distancing, Rappleye et al., 2021; Sachs, 2021; Silova et al., 2021).

I think this statement misses important distinctions between forms of collective action. Protests are vastly different in terms of what is being asked, opportunities to participate, etc, than covid restrictions.

It would be helpful if the authors would succinctly state their research question. I am a little concerned about whether this is a correlational study about E Asian countries and protest or if it is comparing E Asian countries with countries with greater protest involvement. IF the latter, age distribution of population might be important (I am assuming majority of protesters in other countries were young). Relatedly, the authors state "This study then identified factors that were systematically different between East Asian and Western countries" which would suggest that they are comparing East Asian with Western countries? Clarifying concise research questions would be helpful.

For personal resources, it seems as if many other factors could be considered, e.g., efficacy, protest culture (e.g., are people proud of a tradition or protests or is there a negative connotation about protests or perhaps limited history of protests). I understand that one cannot cover all factors, but a lit review covering the factors and why the ones chosen are the best (or perhaps only readily available) factors would be helpful. (Efficacy is somewhat addressed in instrumentality but the concepts differ to some degree [form of efficacy would be important here—e.g., self, participative, political]).

Given the use of existing measures the authors are fitting into the RMT, I would like to see some critical reflection on the advantages/disadvantages (or how closely the existing measures come to capturing the RMT constructs).

Authors used the number of climate protests reported in the Fridays For Future (2022) website. Note that in some protests, e.g., Women's March, one might expect a large age range but in Fridays for the Future protest, it would be good to state the age range usually participating in such protests (I imagine it's younger) and discuss what impact this might have on the study.

Authors talk about trust being a novel factor and perhaps one that differs between E and W countries. If so, are there any studies on other types of protests that could support the importance of trust? IF trust were important might one predict protests would be more common on E Asia than in the West?

Discussion—

Pls start the discussion with a strong statement/paragraph or two re the major contributions of this study.

Authors state that hrs working and not having to work with strangers explain why E Asians followed covid regulations and recycle. I would like to see further discussion of other alternatives if you are going to bring this issue up (not sure how relevant it is). Perhaps I have false impressions or stereotypes of Asian culture but I would think a culture of following norms might be additional or alternative explanations.

Authors speak about their "supplementary analysis" —it seems surveying re individualism is a fairly large study—is there a reason this (and other additional analyses) are not included in this study or are not referenced as unpublished report, in progress, or some other way?

If weak individualism (or working hrs, etc) is an explanation for lack of climate protests, it should explain other types of protests. I think putting results in broader context of what types of protest are more common in E Asia and when would be helpful. In other words, have protests been almost entirely limited to times of great social/economic upheaval?

Are there differences in democratic traditions or other factors that might explain differences in protest activity among E Asian countries?

Although in general the paper is clearly written, there are typos or usage errors throughout. The authors might want to consider an editor for any future submissions.