

ENDURING TRIUMPHS: ANALYZING THE LONG-TERM IMPACT OF REPRESSED NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE CAMPAIGNS

ISA 2024 CONFERENCE

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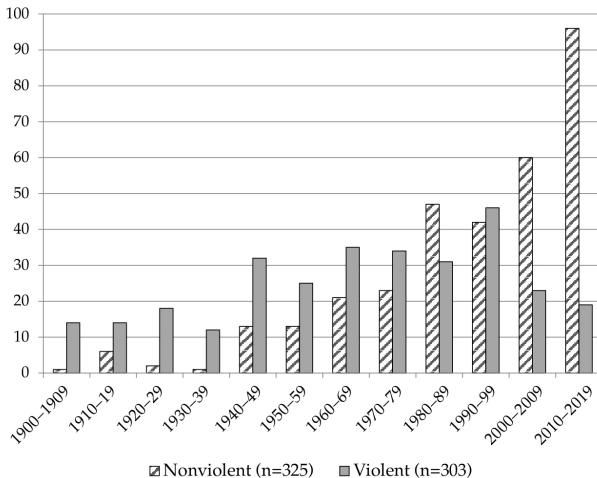
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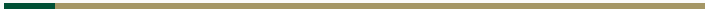
TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Background
2. Theoretical Framework
Hypothesis
3. Research Design and Methodology
4. Appendix

FIGURE 1—ONSETS OF NONVIOLENT AND VIOLENT MASS CAMPAIGNS, BY DECADE (1900–2019)



BACKGROUND



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“The massive growth of civil-resistance campaigns around the world is therefore both a sign of success and a sign of failure. The **success** is that so many people have come to believe that they can confront injustice using strategic nonviolent methods, while fewer are turning to armed action. The **failure** is that so many injustices remain—and so few institutions are equipped to address them—that the demand for civil resistance has increased.” (Chenoweth, 2020, p. 73)

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- This paper attempts to fill this empirical gap by exploring the [in]direct effect(s) of state-sponsored repression on NVRCs

RESEARCH QUESTION

Why do the successes of some nonviolent resistance campaigns (NVRCs) endure while others do not?

EXISTING LITERATURE - CIVIL RESISTANCE

- The growing literature and interest in the study of civil resistance provides major justification for why NVRCs are superior to their violent counterparts, and why the study of their persistence, are important ²

²Butcher, 2017; Chenoweth & Shay, 2022; Dahlum, 2019; Day et al., 2015; Karakaya, 2018; Schaftenaar, 2017; Schock, 2015

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- Scholarly contributions have shown that NVRCs and their outcomes are not uniform; but rather, have varied across place and time in terms of campaign goals, size, target, and method.
- Fundamentally, NVRCs have been shown to be prevalent, advantageous, and growing in frequency.

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Within resistance literature, the “success” of a campaign is often assessed through two main avenues:

1. The lack of change in the socio-political landscape of the mobilization-host state ³

³e.g., Cassegård, 2022; Colomé et al., 2018; Broadbent et al., 2011

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EXISTING LITERATURE - ENDURANCE

Within resistance literature, the “success” of a campaign is often assessed through two main avenues:

1. The lack of change in the socio-political landscape of the mobilization-host state ³
2. The increase in protest activity in the years following initial campaign mobilization(s) ⁴.

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- That is, the long-term success of NVRCs is the absence of grievance-resurgence at T_{+2}

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Structural Constraints Theory

Where a campaign's experience of **repression** and the presence of **legislative independence** is key when examining the *endurance* of NVRs' successes and grievance-resurgence mobilization in the years following the initial campaign success.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

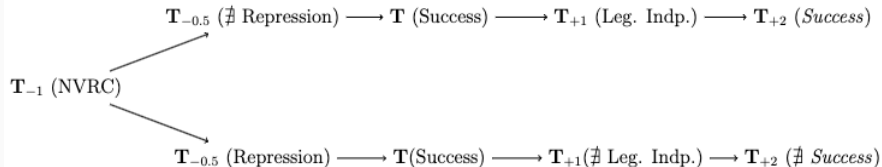


Figure 1: Time Series Explanation of Repressive Effect on NVRC Success Endurance

REPRESSION AT $T_{-0.5}$

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- When the ruling regime and its agents responds to dissent with repressive measures – such as arrests, censorship, or political violence,

It can galvanize external support for the campaign as well as foster a shared frustration within and across dissident participants and further unite them against regime.

REPRESSION AT $T_{-0.5}$

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- With the occurrence of repression, international attention can follow. *Particularly*, if the repressive measures involve human rights violations or abuses of institutional powers by the ruling regime and its agents.
- This form and instance of external scrutiny can exert pressure on the regime and drive it to address the grievances raised by the NVRC.

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- Consequently, repression in the initial stages of an NVRCs' mobilization can set the tone for broader dynamics between the campaign and the regime.
- While it can contribute to short-term mobilization and garner international support, sustained repression without mechanisms for accountability can challenge the long-term endurance of a campaign's success.

Legislative Independence

I operationalize this **mechanism of accountability** as legislative independence, where the absence of an independent legislature can limit the NVRCs' ability to seek redress for grievances, institutionalize its goals by way of policy change and implementation, and secure its success' durability over time.

NVRC SUCCESS AT T

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For a campaign to achieve short-term “success” (T), it must:

- Continue to or increase domestic mobilization following experiences of repression ($T_{-0.5}$)
- Achieve one hundred percent of its stated objectives within a year of its peak protest activities
- NVRCs can achieve success through a variety of avenues, such as, leveraging popular support, applying pressure on the ruling government, and creating disruptions.

LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE AT T_{+1}

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- If the legislative apparatus of a state is beholden to its executive leadership, then legislative elites will follow the cues of the leader
- Especially if prompted to not adopt legislation that [perceptually] threatens the survival of the leadership and the regime en masse.

LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE AT T_{+1}

Where the legislature is not independent of coercion, control, or influence by the ruling regime; matters of:

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Where the legislature is not independent of coercion, control, or influence by the ruling regime; matters of:

1. Legal vulnerability
2. Accountability and redress
3. Erosion of gains

Can jeopardize the *endurance* of an NVRCs' success.

LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE: (1) LEGAL VULNERABILITY

- Policies or reforms that are achieved through civil resistance – especially those mobilizing in autocratic settings – may lack legal protection and enforcement mechanisms.

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- Policies or reforms that are achieved through civil resistance – especially those mobilizing in autocratic settings – may lack legal protection and enforcement mechanisms.
- Without an independent legislature to uphold these protest-instigated changes, they remain vulnerable to reversal or undermining by the regime, its agents, and elites.

LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE: (2) ACCOUNTABILITY AND REDRESS

- Repressive tactics employed by the regime ⁵ often go unchecked in the absence of legislative independence.

⁵E.g., arbitrary arrests and detainment, violence against protesters

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- Repressive tactics employed by the regime ⁵ often go unchecked in the absence of legislative independence.
- Without a neutral legislature to hold perpetrators of repression accountable and provide avenues of redress, NVRCs' participants may continue to face persecution and harassment when they choose to partake in mobilization.

⁵E.g., arbitrary arrests and detainment, violence against protesters

LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE: (3) EROSION OF GAINS

- Over time, the lack of legislative independence can allow the regime to erode any and all gains made by the NVRC at T.

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- Over time, the lack of legislative independence can allow the regime to erode any and all gains made by the NVRC at T.
- The regime may exploit existing legal loopholes, manipulate the legislative system, or create new laws aimed at suppressing dissent, the specific policy area the campaign is targeting, and the campaigns' achievements en masse and thereby thwarting its success' endurance.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK - NVRC SUCCESS AT T_{+2}

- Long-term success, or the endurance (T_{+2}) of the initial NVRC's success at T , is conceptualized here as the institutionalization of the NVRC's objectives into specific policy or institutional change.

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- I.E: *legal* or *constitutional* changes that enshrine the rights or reforms the movement is seeking.
- Whether grievance-resurgence mobilization are observed at (T_{+2})

HYPOTHESIS

Successful NVRCs that mobilize in states with no legislative independence, and are repressed in the initial stages of mobilization, will result in the resurgence of grievance-related protest events

HYPOTHESIS - CONSIDERATIONS

Consideration 1

Repression is the rational cost of participation protest activity and engagement ⁶

Consideration 2

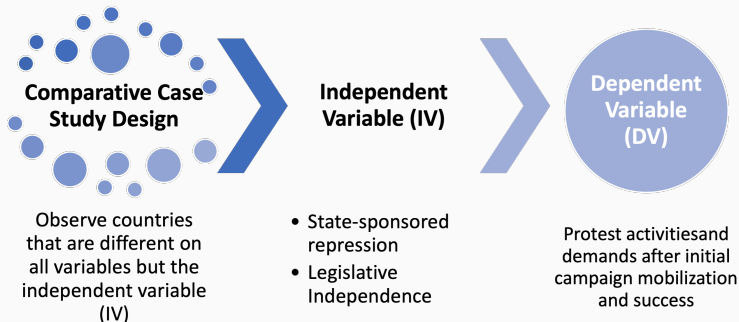
Existing literature has focused primarily on the dynamic relationship between violent protest and repression, with a focus on comparative democracies and non-democracies ⁷

⁶E.g., Aytaç & Stokes, 2019, pp. 80–81; Davenport, 2007; Opp & Roehl, 1990

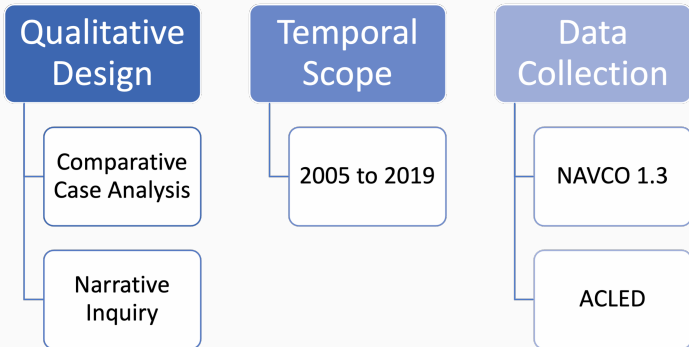
⁷Carey, 2006; Francisco, 2009

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

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CASE SELECTION

	Lebanon	Nepal
<i>Geographical Region</i>	Middle East	Southern Asia
<i>Regime</i>	Parliamentary Democratic Republic	Autocracy
<i>Conflict</i>	Independence Revolution	Civil War
<i>Campaign Goal</i>	Regime Change	Policy Change
<i>Goal Change</i>	No Change	Adaptive Change
<i>Repression</i>	Yes	Yes
<i>Protest Engagement</i>	Yes	Yes

THANK YOU

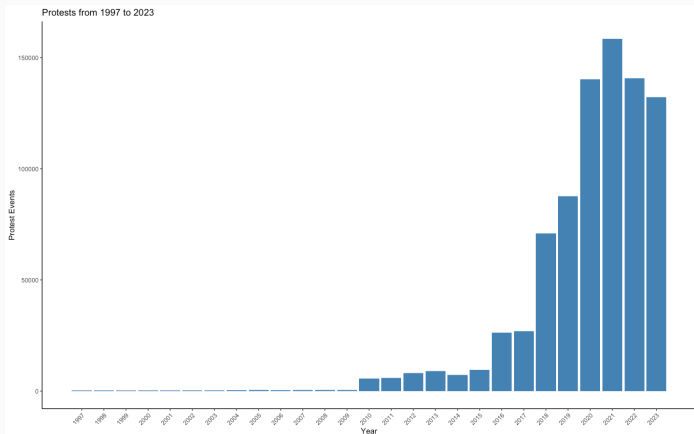
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APPENDIX

ACLED PROTEST 1997 TO 2023



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⁸Raleigh, Clionadh, Andrew Linke, Håvard Hegre and Joakim Karlsen. (2010). "Introducing ACLED-Armed Conflict Location and Event Data.