# The Disenfranchised Grief:

# An Analysis of Participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement

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# ABSTRACT

*This paper examines the dynamics of participation in the 2019 Hong Kong Anti-ELAB Movement. In particular, this paper probes the factors which affect participants' decisions to engage in and disengage from the movement. Drawing upon social movement literature, four categories of factors are selected for analysis of their influence on movement participation: cost-risk factors, structural factors, social-psychological factors, and biographic factors. Coupled with qualitative interviews with social movement academics, existing survey data, and journalistic reports, the paper discovers that all four factors, though to varying extents, influence participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement.*

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## Introduction

As 2024 marked the fifth anniversary of the 2019 Hong Kong Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement (Anti-ELAB Movement hereafter), the once pivotal event in Hong Kong regained the focus of media outlets. Notably, Radio Free Asia's (2024) documentary of past movement participants in Hong Kong and abroad and Points Media's (2024) interviews with activists in exile revealed their motivations to participate in the movement and how they came to the difficult decision of leaving the city they once called home forever despite their ambitions for the movement unrealised.

The experiences of these interviewees were not eccentric. While the Anti-ELAB Movement was monumental in Hong Kong's democratisation progression, evidenced by some of the largest demonstrations in Hong Kong's social movement history, reaching 2 million participants at its peak (Lee et al., 2019b), it failed to realise most of its objectives aside from the withdrawal of the *Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019* (Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2019) (extradition bill hereafter). The logical explanation for its downfall would be that participants had withdrawn from the movement before its demands were met.[1]

Thus, in the monumental movement that sent shockwaves across Hong Kong, what factors propelled ordinary Hong Kong citizens to participate, and what factors prompted them to leave? While many studies exist regarding participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement owing to its historical significance (Ho, 2023), this paper provides a fresh perspective by analysing both engagement and disengagement (which is arguably less studied) with the movement through the same set of theoretical lenses. By doing so, it is able to probe how these factors have transformed throughout the movement (with the exception of biographic factors, which largely remain unchanged throughout), and how such shifts have continually affected movement turnout and participation.

In this paper, I argue that a multitude of factors, namely cost-risk factors, structural factors, social-psychological factors and biographic factors, contributed to participants' decisions to

[1] The Five Demands include: the withdrawal of the extradition bill, amnesty for arrested protesters, retracting the classification of protests as "riots," the establishment of an independent investigative authority into alleged police brutality, and the implementation of universal suffrage (BBC, 2019c).

engage in and disengage from the movement. Drawing upon the literature on movement participation, I propose a wide range of hypotheses illustrating potential factors determining participation. I then test the applicability of these hypotheses to the Anti-ELAB Movement through leveraging original interview data I collected via interviewing academics in the field of social movement studies who hold expertise in the study of the Anti-ELAB Movement, as well as existing survey data available in the public domain and journalistic reports. I conclude with an acknowledgement of this study's limitations and implications for future research.

## Literature Review

Existing literature has attributed movement participation to a wide array of factors. This paper will focus on four categories of factors: cost-risk weighting, structural factors, social-psychological factors, and biographic factors. General theories from the literature regarding factors motivating movement participation will be observed to generate hypotheses *vis-à-vis* the Anti-ELAB Movement, which will subsequently be tested for their applicability in the discussion section. Studies pertaining to the analysis of the Anti-ELAB Movement specifically are omitted from the literature review to avoid confirmation biases in articulating hypotheses.

### Cost-risk factors

The assessment of movement participation in terms of the associated costs and risks stems from the rational choice theory, which assumes movement participants to be rational individuals engaging in rational calculus by weighing the costs and risks of participation (Snow & Soule, 2010). While there are differing opinions on the extent to which costs and risks affect movement participation, especially across various levels of participation, there is a general consensus in the literature that higher costs and risks are correlated with lower movement participation (Ennis & Schreuer, 1987; Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; Passy & Giugni, 2001; Wiltfang & McAdam, 1991).

Costs and risks are often used interchangeably in a common lexicon. Nonetheless, Wiltfang & McAdam (1991) assert that they must be viewed separately to examine the distinct activist experiences of individuals involved in social movements. For this reason, this paper adopts McAdam's (1986) definition of cost as "expenditures of time, money, and energy that are required of a person engaged in any particular form of activism" (p. 67), and risk as

“anticipated dangers - whether legal, social, physical, financial, and so forth - of engaging in a particular type of activity” (p. 67). In other words, costs can be understood as a burden or negative consequence incurred upon participants before or during participation. In contrast, risks are negative occurrences, be it arrests, fines, or physical harm, perceived to happen in the future as a result of present participation (Wiltfang & McAdam, 1991). Precisely because of this differentiation in the timing, Wiltfang & McAdam (1991) comprehend risk as a form of “future cost”: while “[costs] are under the individual activist's control; risks, as future costs, depend not only on the activist's own actions, but on others' responses to the activist's actions” (p. 989). Indeed, while time and money spent on participation are up to the participants' jurisdiction, occasions such as legal prosecution or political violence are incurred externally and thus cannot be determined by participants.

The participation of movement events may incur a combination of different costs and risks. McAdam (1991) illustrates this with the examples of signing petitions and organising people experiencing homelessness. Signing a petition is low-cost as it involves very little time and no money; doing so in specific contexts, for example, at the height of McCarthyism, can be very risky. On the other hand, while volunteering to organise people experiencing homelessness devotes a lot of time and energy, it is relatively risk-free.

Due to the different possible combinations of costs and risks involved in participation, it is crucial to categorise sources of costs and risks. Snow & Soule (2010) have further classified costs and risks into direct costs/ risks and indirect costs/ risks. As they elucidate, direct costs are “incurred at the actual social movement activity” (p. 113), such as travel expenses and costs of purchasing protest materials; similarly, direct risks have the potential to “affect the participant at the moment of participation” (p. 113), with the most noteworthy example being police repression. On the other hand, the authors have denoted indirect costs as potential benefits forgone due to participation in movement activities chosen over other pursuits, such as lost wages as a result of not going to work or failing grades due to absence from school, and indirect risks as those “not specific to the site and moment” of the movement activities (p. 114). Undercover surveillance carried out by state agents at protest sites is a pertinent example, as the surveillance tapes and photographs obtained from such activities could potentially be used in future legal proceedings to prosecute participants (Snow & Soule, 2010).

Hence, protest activities can be classified into four categories: low-risk/low-cost, high-risk/low-cost, low-risk/high-cost, and high-risk/high-cost (Snow & Soule, 2010). Applied to the Anti-ELAB movement, these types of movement participation can be associated with various protest activities. For example, online petitions were a widely common form of participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement. Yuen & Tong (2021) noted that in early June, prior to the wave of protests, more than 400 petitions were already circulating on various social media platforms. Signing such petitions has a very low cost as it is free and involves very little time. Still, the context is also crucial here: there was relatively less governmental surveillance on online platforms then. Thus, the risk of signing online petitions was also low, placing this form of participation in the low-risk/low-cost category. On the other hand, other activities on social media platforms, such as posting, also have a low cost as they only require a few clicks; yet, doing so after the implementation of Article 23 of the Hong Kong Basic Law (Article 23 hereafter) could be extremely risky: six people, including prominent activist Tonyee Chow Hang-tung, were prosecuted on the basis of posting articles inciting hate towards Beijing online (BBC, 2024b). Thus, such online activities became risky despite low costs, placing them in the high-risk/low-cost category.

As for low-risk/high-cost participation, Snow & Soule (2010) provided the example of protesters travelling to Washington, D.C. or Texas, Austin for marches. In the case of Hong Kong, however, the small city made travelling a relatively small part of the cost calculus. Thus, high-cost participation took on other forms. As Anonymous (2021) noted, some participants took care of movement logistics by purchasing movement materials such as gas masks, shields and eye masks, or by picking up protesters near protest areas and giving them free rides to ensure their safety, as the police force could search suspected protesters public transport. These forms of participation, while having a lower risk than directly participating in demonstrations, incurred a relatively higher cost as they incurred a financial burden in the case of donating movement materials, or required a significant time commitment in the case of driving protesters away from protest zones. Last but not least, for high-risk/high-cost participation, the most straightforward example would be to engage in violent clashes with the police after the implementation of the NSL: it not only warranted high costs as protesters often had to purchase gear to protect themselves and craft weapons such as Molotov cocktails, crossbows, and airguns (BBC, 2019a), but also induced high-risks due to the harsh penalties of being prosecuted under the NSL once arrested.

These four genres of movement participation can be presented in table form, as shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1**

*Types of cost and risk associated with movement participation* [2]

| Type of Risk/ Type of Cost | Low Risk | High Risk |
|---|---|---|
| Low Cost | Low-Risk/Low-Cost Participation (e.g. signing an online petition) | High-Risk/Low-Cost Participation (e.g. posting dissenting material on social media after implementation of NSL) |
| High Cost | Low-Risk/High-Cost Participation (e.g. coordinating movement logistics) | High Risk/High-Cost Participation (e.g. violent clashes with police after implementation of NSL) |

As the risks and costs of protest activities increase, motivation to participate in such activities tends to decrease. On this premise, the following hypothesis can be generated.

*H1: If the costs and risks that participants associate with participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement are higher, participation is lower.*

While costs and risks play an instrumental role in conditioning movement participation, assessing a participant's level of commitment to the movement is also crucial, as the intensity of such commitment determines the level of costs and risks an individual is willing to undertake (Snow & Soule, 2010). For example, a highly committed individual may have a greater propensity to draw on personal funds to travel long distances to participate in protests, and they may be more inclined to risk injury and arrest while participating in such events (Snow & Soule, 2010). The level of commitment an individual has is influenced by an array of factors, which, according to Snow & Soule (2010), include structural factors, social-psychological factors, and biographic factors.

[2] *Note*. Adapted from *A Primer on Social Movements* (p. 115), by D. A. Snow & S. A. Soule, 2010, W. W. Norton. Copyright 2010 by W. W. Norton.

**Structural factors: social networks and organisational affiliation**

Many scholars have affirmed that direct invitation to participate strongly predicts movement participation (Isaac et al., 2020; Passy & Giugni, 2001; Schussman & Soule, 2005). However, as Snow & Soule (2010) question, what factors influence the likelihood of potential participants coming into contact with or being recruited by a social movement? They answer that individuals with links to existing movement members are most likely to be asked to attend and subsequently participate in the movement. This is because, as they contend, networks facilitate connections between individuals and organisations and proliferate the spread of information, allowing individuals to learn about the movement and making them more likely to be invited. Thus, the authors believe "the probability of initial participation in a movement is, in large part, a function of being linked to one or more movement members through a preexisting or emergent interpersonal or organisational tie" (p. 118). This view is seconded by Passy (2001), who maintains that "much social movement research stresses the crucial role of networks for movement emergence and development" due to its cruciality in "recruitment and participation of individuals" (p. 173).

As Snow & Soule (2010) recount, empirical studies of social movements worldwide have exemplified the instrumental role networks and organisations play in facilitating movement recruitment. This includes various religious/ cult movements in Venezuela (Smilde, 2005), the US (Snow et al., 1980; Snow & Phillips, 1980; Stark & Bainbridge, 1980), the Civil Rights Movement (McAdam, 1988; McAdam & Paulsen, 1993), women's movements in the 20th century (Freeman, 1973) and 19th century (Rosenthal et al., 1985), the Dutch peace movement (Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; Oegema & Klandermans, 1994), the environmental movement (Diani, 1995; Diani & Lodi, 1988) and terrorist movements (della Porta, 1988) in Italy, and the 1989 Beijing's student movement (Zhao, 2001).

With the consensus in the literature regarding the importance of networks and the mechanisms through which networks enhance movement recruitment in mind, it is vital to probe what kinds of settings may function as networks in facilitating participation. Aside from physical settings, such as colleges and churches (Morris, 1981) and other religious institutions (Snow & Marshall, 1984), social media stands out as a noteworthy form of network for contemporary movements like the Anti-ELAB Movement. The Arab Spring is regarded as one of the first movements in which social media played a pivotal role in driving

its expansion. Howard et al. (2011) discovered that during the Arab Spring, a spike in online conversations about liberty, democracy, and revolution often preceded major events on the ground, such as mass protests and public rallies, offering evidence for the correlation between the use of social media and movement participation. The interconnected networks created through social media facilitate the rapid dissemination of information, which consequently, as previously established, encourages individuals who learn about movement activities to participate. Similar patterns are found in the US, Spain, Turkey, and Ukraine: as Jost et al. (2018) maintain, social media platforms play a crucial role in facilitating the exchange of information essential for the coordination of protest activities; more specifically, the structural characteristics of online social networks heavily impact information exposure and the effectiveness of organisational efforts, two critical facets affecting movement participation.

Snow & Soule (2010) argue that network and organisational ties may not be a "necessary condition for movement participation," as deviant cases exist where initial participation occurs in the absence of prior network linkages (p. 119). An example is the Bo and Peep UFO movement that preceded the Heaven's Gate Cult, in which members sought the movement for their spiritual affirmations (Balch & Taylor, 1977). Nonetheless, with the theoretical backing demonstrated above, the significance of network affiliation in predicting movement participation cannot be overlooked. On this premise, the following hypothesis can be generated.

*H2: If participants have more network and organisational ties to the Anti-ELAB Movement, participation is higher.*

**Social-psychological factors: collective identity and political efficacy**

Snow & Soule (2010) have illustrated another case where structural factors may be less predictive in movement participation: when movements allow people to verify or realise their identities. This experience of identity resonance is rooted in a shared sense of unity based on shared attributes and experiences within a group (Snow, 2001), which scholars name "collective identity." In this scenario, the driving force behind participation is more social-psychological than structural, as the emotional connection and sense of belonging motivate individuals to engage in movements.

How exactly does a sense of collective identity propel movement participation? Kann et al. (2023) explain that since collective identity "requires that individuals accept status as part of a group and feel a loyalty to enhancing the status of the group as a whole" (p. 2), this sustained sense of belonging and loyalty encourages individuals to work toward the group's goal as it provides a private benefit to individuals for participating when they see themselves as part of the group that stands to benefit from the policy change the movement seeks. Thus, the likelihood of individuals free-riding the group's collective effort diminishes, and they are more likely to participate to advance the movement's objectives.

Many studies have exemplified the role collective identity plays in signifying movement participation, regardless of whether they are drawn on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, class, or religion. Examples include, as Snow & Soule (2010) summarise, gay men (Simon et al., 1998), Dutch farmers (Klandermans & de Weerd, 2000), young women engaging in feminist activism (Liss et al., 2004), striking workers (Dixon & Roscigno, 2003), women in hate movements such as the Ku Klux Klan (Blee, 2002), homeless movement participants (Corrigall-Brown et al., 2009), and even Jewish resistance fighters in the Nazi-occupied Warsaw Ghetto (Einwohner, 2003).

With concord in the literature regarding collective identities' role in shaping movement participation, the following hypothesis can be generated.

*H3a: If participants feel a stronger sense of collective identity, participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement is higher.*

In addition to collective identity, a sense of political efficacy experienced by participants is another instrumental factor affecting movement turnout. Political efficacy is "a sense that one has the capacity or ability to do what is necessary to produce a desired outcome" (Snow & Soule, 2010, p. 123). Snow & Soule (2010) further differentiate political efficacy as personal and collective efficacy. While personal efficacy "is the belief that one has the ability to make a difference, especially when it is coupled with little trust in existing authorities" (p. 123), collective efficacy goes beyond individual empowerment. It encompasses the belief that "it is possible to create change and realise their interests by working together collectively" (Snow & Soule, 2010, p. 124). As they maintain, it would make logical sense for the belief that one's actions can yield positive outcomes, "in terms of raising awareness of the issue at hand and

perhaps even improving the situation" (p. 124), to positively affect an individual's inclination to participate. Van Zomeren et al. (2008) further elucidate that a collective identity provides people with a sense of collective power, empowering them to believe in their capability to transform the situation and destiny of their group. This suggests that the stronger the subjective feeling of the group's efficacy, the more inclined people are to participate in collective action.

With the theoretical foundation in mind, a wealth of empirical examples in the literature demonstrate the significance of political efficacy. These include immigrant collective action in the Netherlands and New York (Klandermans et al., 2008), the Occupy Movement in the US (Morgan & Chan, 2016), ghetto riots in the US in the 1960s (Forward & Williams, 1970; Paige, 1971), ballot initiatives in Massachusetts, US (Ennis & Schreuer, 1987), high school student participation in activism (Paulsen, 1991), and civic activism in the US (Verba et al., 1995). Thus, with a substantial literature basis signifying the vital role political efficacy plays in propelling movement participation, the following hypothesis can be generated.

*H3b: If participants experience a higher sense of political efficacy, participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement is higher.*

**Biographic factors: prior politics/movement engagement and biographical availability**

Last, a group of factors that "encompass various aspects of one's past and present life situation and experiences that may affect the likelihood of participation" is termed biographic factors (Snow & Soule, 2010, p. 126). This paper focuses on two specific elements of this group: prior engagement in politics and movements and biographical availability.

As Snow & Soule (2010) differentiate, individuals who are politically disengaged and apathetic are unlikely to participate in any form of political engagement, particularly if it involves incurring costs and risks, such as in social movement activities. On the other hand, politically engaged individuals are more inclined to take part in different forms of political participation, including protests (Snow & Soule, 2010). This political engagement not only includes actual participation in such activities but also encompasses the level of political interest, political knowledge, and political orientation an individual possesses (Snow & Soule, 2010). The authors have noted that if individuals are politically uninterested or uninformed about politics, they are unlikely to participate in any political activity, including

social movements; conversely, if they are politically engaged, they are more likely to be involved in political participation, which includes protesting. This is evidenced by Schussman & Soule's (2005) survey of US adults in 1990, which found that an individual's political knowledge, interest in politics and political discussion, and self-identification as a liberal positively correlates with participation in protest events and political activity.

Additionally, political orientation also plays a part in influencing an individual's political activeness (Snow & Soule, 2010). As Dalton (2019) observed, protests are often used as a political tool by liberals and progressives to challenge political establishments when they feel the need to go the extra mile beyond conventional politics. While it does not hold that only liberals engage in protests, a correlation exists between political orientation and willingness to protest (Snow & Soule, 2010).

Such findings in the literature suggest that "one's prior experience with and engagement in politics or, by extension, other authority structures enhances the prospect of participation in movement activities challenging such structures," as these experiences better equip individuals to overcome the associated costs and risks of participating in social movements (Snow & Soule, 2010, p. 130). On this premise, the following hypothesis is generated.

*H4a: If participants have prior engagements in politics and social movements, participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement is higher.*

On the other hand, biographical availability, as defined by McAdam (1986), is the "absence of personal constraints that may increase the costs and risks of movement participation, such as full-time employment, marriage and family responsibilities" (p. 70). This biographical availability gives individuals the time and flexibility to participate in movements as they are free from the constraints that may hinder their participation (Goldstone & McAdam, 2012; McAdam, 1986; Wiltfang & McAdam, 1991). For example, a young person would be more available to participate than a married couple with children with one or both parents working full time (Snow & Soule, 2010). This can be attributed to a number of reasons. Younger individuals may have fewer career and family obligations and thus be more inclined to undertake risks associated with protests, as they are often unmarried, in education and less burdened by their careers.

However, there exists discord in the literature regarding the role of biographical availability *vis-à-vis* movement participation, as some studies have found that indicators of biographical availability, as demonstrated above, do not predict the odds of participation well (Barkan et al., 1995; Kitts, 1999; Passy & Giugni, 2001; Schussman & Soule, 2005; Wiltfang & McAdam, 1991). With this dissonance in mind, Beyerlein & Hipp (2006) postulate a two-stage movement participation process to pinpoint the role biographical availability plays: it affects participants' willingness to engage in protest and whether that willingness is transformed into actual participation. Through a nationally representative sample of 1,332 US adults, they demonstrate that biographical availability impacts the first stage but not the second one. Therefore, even though the conversion of willingness to actual participation is not impacted by biographical availability, it still plays a role in stimulating individuals' willingness to participate.

Given the debated effectiveness of biographical availability in influencing movement participation, it would be insightful to test its impact on participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement. On this premise, the following hypothesis is generated.

*H4b: If participants have a higher level of biographical availability, participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement is higher.*

## Methodology

The data presented in this paper is primarily collected through in-depth interviews, publicly available survey data, and journalistic reports. From July to August 2024, the author conducted semi-structured interviews with five academics with expertise in the study of the Anti-ELAB Movement, codenamed A to E, for they offer valuable insights on factors affecting alterations in movement participation drawing from their research of the movement. Contrary to other studies in this field, interviews with past movement participants were avoided, as it is uncertain whether they were liable to prosecution or wanted by the Hong Kong Police Force, and whether correspondence with such individuals could render the researcher liable to prosecution. Only interviewees not based in Hong Kong at the time of contact were selected due to safety concerns posed by laws, including the National Security Law (NSL) and Article 23. As these provisions have been considered to criminalise political criticism dissent (Ng, 2024; Lau, 2024; Amnesty International, 2024), expression of any

opinions that deviate from official classifications of the Anti-ELAB Movement as "black riots"[3] and "Hong Kong's colour revolution"[4] (Chief Secretary for Administration's Office, 2021; The Government of Hong Kong SAR, 2020; BBC, 2019b; Initium Media, 2024) may render interviewees liable to prosecution.

The interviewees were contacted strictly through email only, as UCL's institutional email account provides enhanced security features, ensuring information security and confidentiality in all correspondence with interviewees (UCL, 2024). Some interviewees were contacted directly by the author, having read their seminal research on the movement. In contrast, others were "snowballed" in the sense that the author reached out to them after a previous interviewee recommended them for this research.

In addition, preexisting survey data, particularly the *Onsite Survey Findings in Hong Kong's Anti-Extradition Bill Protests* (*Survey Findings* hereafter) by Lee et al. (2019a), is a crucial source for this paper as it contains on-site survey data collected in 12 protests during the Anti-ELAB Movement, encompassing aspects including participant demographics, political affiliation, motivation to participate in the movement, social movement experience, perceived next steps for the movement, views on radicalisation, and platforms obtaining information. As these are data collected directly from participants in the movement, it would be instrumental in comprehending factors leading to participants' decisions to engage in and disengage from the Anti-ELAB Movement.

Last but not least, journalistic reports from Hong Kong and international media outlets throughout the movement will be used to provide evidence of shifting participation and pivotal events. Articles that are no longer accessible online have been retrieved from web archives. For Hong Kong, articles from a broad range of outlets are sourced, including existing outlets such as HK01, The Epoch Times, Initium Media, and Ming Pao, as well as archived articles from discontinued outlets such as The Stand News and Apple Daily. As most reports from Hong Kong media outlets are in Chinese, the author has translated them into English for this paper's analysis. International media outlets, such as BBC and Amnesty International, are also referenced.

[3] Translated by the author.
[4] Translated by the author.

At the end of this paper's analysis, I collate the paper's findings in table form. Each hypothesis will be individually evaluated with the data collection results, as shown in Table 2 below. Hypotheses will be verified as either "yes", "yes, to some extent", "no", or "no, to some extent." A "yes" or a "no" means that the hypothesis can be/ cannot be applied to the movement entirely. A "yes/ no, to some extent" means that the hypothesis can be/ cannot be applied to the movement mostly, but not in all scenarios. The difference between the two is demonstrated when coding the interviewee responses and comparing them with secondary data. To clarify, if interviewees express strong confidence that an increase in the risks of participation posed by the implementation of the NSL, for example, leads to a decrease in participation, and this claim can be corroborated by survey data or journalistic reports, then the corresponding hypothesis, H1, will be labelled as "yes" *vis-à-vis* disengagement. Contrarily, if interviewees are not completely sure of this correlation or think it might not be universally applicable, but secondary data still supports this claim, then the verification is more cautious and would be labelled as "yes, to some extent." A "N/A" means the hypothesis is relevant only to either engagement or disengagement. Hence, the other is not covered in this paper's analysis, making the hypothesis inapplicable to it.

**Table 2**

*Hypothesis testing*

| **Hypothesis** | **Affect engagement?** | **Affect disengagement?** |
|---|---|---|
| **H1** (Cost-risk factors) | Yes/ Yes, to some extent/ No/ No, to some extent/ N/A | " |
| **H2** (Structural factors) | " | " |
| **H3a** (Social-psychological factors - collective identity) | " | " |
| **H3b** (Social-psychological factors - political efficacy) | " | " |
| **H4a** (Biographic factors - prior politics/ movement engagement) | " | " |
| **H4b** (Biographic factors - biographical availability) | " | " |

Nevertheless, the methodology this paper employs has several limitations. Firstly, due to the short timeframe of this paper's research, the author could only recruit a limited number of

interviewees, resulting in a small sample size of *n=5*. This small sample size raises concerns regarding generalisability. While all interviewees are experts in their respective fields and have conducted studies with a large number of movement participants, there exists concern about whether their observations can be extrapolated to the entire participant population. Furthermore, as movement participants are intentionally excluded from the study, the analysis of this paper relies on the secondary account of academics in describing what they believe participants may think and feel. This may reduce the accuracy of this paper's understanding of participants' motivations.

## Results and Discussion

### Cost-risk factors

To discuss whether costs and risks have a bearing in swaying movement participation, it is crucial to identify significant incidents that caused great changes in either or both of these indicators. Throughout the interviews, the interviewees generally agreed that the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and the introduction of the National Security Law (NSL) were two critical points in time that caused a remarkable increase in participation costs and risks.

It can be empirically observed that protest activities largely declined since the detection of the virus in Hong Kong, and remaining protests were mainly centred around border closure and temporary quarantine facilities, which were related to the pandemic but not so much to the movement's initial goals (Taylor & Xinqi, 2020). The responses from interviewees regarding the impact of COVID-19 on influencing movement participation can be categorised into two main groups: participants' health concerns and legitimate justifications for government regulations. Regarding the former, most interviewees have indicated that COVID-19 constituted a threat to participants' health, thereby demotivating them from participation as it could render them vulnerable to infection. As E elaborated, participating in protests meant that individuals had to be situated in crowded spaces, which constituted a high risk to participants as the virus was more likely to spread in populated areas.

So why do participants consider COVID-19 as a significant risk factor? D noted that given the city's grim history with the SARS pandemic in 2003 (Department of Health, The Government of Hong Kong SAR, 2003), the resurgence of a similar pandemic frightened Hongkongers, making them reluctant to go out and protest. B asserted that COVID-19 was

the main factor that led to the movement's demise, as participants were gravely concerned about their health owing to the virus's lethality; they were worried that participating in demonstrations would cause them to contract the virus and pass away. B believes this can be substantiated by the fact that on LIHKG, a prominent Reddit-like social media platform in Hong Kong, the virus was a more prevalent topic of discussion than the movement since early 2020, and that protest activity died down as the pandemic commenced.

As for the latter, C pointed out the contradictory nature of government regulations surrounding COVID-19 and protests. While the government cited the *Prohibition on Face Covering Regulation* to ban all forms of facial coverage (including masks) during unlawful, unauthorised assemblies and riots in October 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic (The Government of Hong Kong SAR, 2019), it mandated the use of masks indoors and outdoors in response to the pandemic in July 2020 (The Government of Hong Kong SAR, 2020) without lifting the previous ban on wearing masks in protest activities (Davidson, 2020), resulting in a legal conundrum for protesters (Newtalk, 2020). Regardless of whether they wear a mask during protests, they risk being prosecuted, as both scenarios could be considered unlawful. To C, this Catch-22 scenario illustrates that protesters could violate legal provisions regardless of whether they wore masks. This confusion between regulations for public gatherings and regulations specifically for protests demonstrates how the government opposes people from gathering without justification on political grounds.

Therefore, viewed from the perspective of costs and risks, the COVID-19 pandemic escalated the risk of participating in protests as individuals not only risked compromising their health but also being prosecuted by ambiguous legal provisions. The risk presented by the COVID-19 pandemic extends beyond traditional understandings of risks as external actors' unpredictable reactions toward an activist's participation (Wiltfang & McAdam, 1991). While the governmental provisions related to pandemic control can be understood in the traditional framework, the unprecedented intertwining of the pandemic and the movement presents an impersonal risk of participation. Anyone who participates in the movement during the pandemic risks contracting the virus, which, unlike human actors, does not discriminate among its victims.

The costs and risks of participating in the Anti-ELAB further intensified following the implementation of the NSL, owing to the fact that it was considered to criminalise political

dissent, as elaborated previously. All interviewees agreed that the implementation of the NSL was a turning point in the movement's trajectory, ceasing most, if not all, protest activity. C noted that the crimes outlined in the NSL, including but not limited to treason, subversion, and collusion with foreign forces, were vague.

Moreover, participants were unsure whether the NSL could be applied retrospectively in the future if they spoke out against the government. In addition, the law was imposed by the Chinese government quickly, not via the usual legislative process; the penalties were harsh in nature, with life imprisonment in most cases and even the possibility of being taken to China; and only "Designated National Security Law Judges" appointed by the Chief Executive, replacing the jury, could rule on NSL cases (Hong Kong e-Legislation, 2020). As E added, this legal ambiguity made Hongkongers lose confidence in the judicial system, as they did not believe they could receive a fair trial or be acquitted if arrested. Furthermore, B noted that the mass arrests of protesters on July 1st, 2020 (Davidson & Kuo, 2020) and later high-profile arrests of several leaders from political opposition who participated in the pro-democracy primaries (Riordan & Chan, 2022) deterred further protests onwards.

This, once again, can be explained by the cost-risk weighting theory. With the ambiguous provisions and proceedings, severe penalties incurred by the NSL, and widespread arrests of dissidents, the risk of participating in the Anti-ELAB Movement markedly increased, as participants now have a higher chance of being arrested if they attend protest events and face more serious consequences once charged. D indicated that with the severe hikes in costs and risks of participation presented by the NSL, it is difficult to expect an average citizen to continue protesting.

In addition to the pivotal events above, gradual escalation in the police's use of force also contributed to heightened costs and risks of participating in the movement. A observed that while the implementation of the NSL is a pivotal point in time when movement participation significantly declined, prior to that, the Hong Kong government was already clamping down on protest participants, as signified by intensifying political violence. As official figures indicate, the Hong Kong Police Force fired approximately 1,000 rounds of tear gas, 160 rubber bullets, and 150 sponge grenades in the period between June 9th and August 5th, 2019 (Hong Kong Watch, 2019). This intensification in force, as A noted, correlates with a decline in the number of discussion messages previously mentioned. A postulated that this could be

explained by the fact that as police brutality became more common and routinised, participants became more afraid since there is a significantly increased probability that it can happen to them. As they found in their research, contrarily, warnings about police brutality and the appearance of the police force increased, which could be a possible indicator that people were becoming more vigilant about the use of police force in protests. Hence, it can be inferred that this increase in discourse *vis-à-vis* police brutality corroborates protesters' clearer understanding of the risks, in terms of being physically harmed or arrested, of participating in the Anti-ELAB movement, which means they may associate more risks with participation.

Thus, in response to H1's proposition that participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement is lower if the costs and risks participants associate with participation are higher, the instances of the COVID-19 pandemic, the introduction of the NSL, and increases in police brutality not only posed a significant risk to participation but also made participants more aware of the risks present in participation, which, empirically, reflects in declining participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement.

But how does the cost-risk weighting predict participants' initial engagement in the movement? B posits that this can be explained by conceptualising the cause of the movement — the introduction of the extradition bill — as a "risk" of not participating. The bill has elicited significant apprehension among the Hong Kong populace as it would enable the extradition of prisoners to mainland China. This concern stems from the deep-seated distrust of the Chinese legal system among Hongkongers and concerns about the potential for political persecution (Lee et al., 2019b). Consequently, the bill has triggered fear among Hongkongers regarding the potential erosion of the barriers between the democratic-leaning Hong Kong and authoritarian China, thereby disrupting their accustomed relative autonomy from Chinese interference (Chernin, 2019). B maintained that it is this fear among Hongkongers that the bill will diminish the relative autonomy and freedom of Hong Kong and eliminate all democratic institutions and civil liberties Hongkongers have enjoyed over the past decade that coalesced into a "risk" of not participating in the movement: Hongkongers felt that they risk losing the democratic freedoms they were acquainted with if they do not protest against the extradition bill.

The *Survey Findings* exemplify the salience of the extradition bill with regard to movement participation. As Lee et al. (2019a) elaborate,

> "Calling for the withdrawal of the extradition bill" has always been one of the most important motivations for protesters to participate in the concerned protest. The percentage of respondents who saw it as "quite important" and "very important" remained at a high-level ranging from 97.0% to 98.8% in June and July. It only decreased to about 95% in August.

As per Figure 1 shown below, the percentage of protesters selecting "Calling for the withdrawal of the extradition bill" as a "most important" motivation remained consistently high throughout the protests, steadily fluctuating from 85.1% to 94.8%. This indicates that the extradition bill was a significant mobilising factor for participants throughout the movement.

**Figure 1**

*Motivation of protesters in the Anti-ELAB Movement (only shows the percentage of respondents who chose "most important")* [5]

| | 9/6 | 16/6 | 1/7 | 14/7 | 21/7 | 27/7 | 4/8 (TKO) | 4/8 (Saiwan) | 10/8 | 11/8 | 13/8 | 16/8 | 18/8 | 8/9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Call for the withdrawal of the extradition bill<br>要求政府撤銷「逃犯條例」修訂 | 92.6% | 94.8% | 89.4% | 88.0% | 87.1% | 85.1% | 87.3% | 85.9% | 94.1% | 91.8% | 89.7% | 85.1% | 88.3% | --- |
| Call for the resignation of major officials<br>要求主要官員下台 | --- | 63.5% | 47.4% | 46.8% | 54.8% | 54.8% | 51.0% | 49.4% | 50.8% | 48.1% | 51.5% | 41.0% | 49.4% | 40.4% |
| Raise international attention<br>增加國際社會對事件的關注 | 79.6% | 79.4% | 74.8% | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | 95.8% |
| Express dissatisfaction with police's handling of the protests<br>表達對警方處理示威手法的不滿 | --- | 88.9% | 84.6% | 90.4% | 90.9% | 98.3% | 95.4% | 95.1% | 95.3% | 94.2% | 95.5% | 91.6% | 95.1% | 85.5% |
| Call for the withdrawal of the "riot" characterization of the June 12 protest<br>表達對警方以暴動罪檢控示威人士的不滿 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | 90.7% | 89.5% | 88.7% | 88.4% | --- | --- |
| Strive for Hong Kong's democracy<br>爭取香港民主發展 | --- | --- | 82.5% | --- | 87.2% | 88.1% | 85.0% | 88.2% | 89.9% | 87.3% | 87.0% | 91.1% | 86.3% | 91.4% |
| Call for the establishment of an independent commission of inquiry<br>要求成立獨立調查委員會 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | 94.9% | 92.8% | 91.1% | 94.7% | 92.0% | 90.5% | 87.5% | 92.7% | 81.0% |
| Sample size 樣本量 | 285 | 875 | 1169 | 546 | 680 | 235 | 717 | 555 | 2,309 | 636 | 485 | 632 | 806 | 337 |

[5] *Note*. From *Onsite Survey Findings in Hong Kong's Anti-Extradition Bill Protests*, by F. L. F. Lee, G. Tang, S. Yuen, and E. W. Cheng, 2019 (https://sites.google.com/view/antielabsurvey-eng/data-updated-until-oct-2019?authuser=0). Copyright 2019 by Centre for Communication and Public Opinion Survey, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Furthermore, C drew parallels to the 2014 Umbrella Movement and pointed out that the Anti-ELAB Movement adopted a relatively low-cost method of participation. In 2014, protesters occupied and camped out streets overnight for a long period of time (Steger & Ho, 2014), which, they believe, annoyed the public due to the inconvenience it brought and increased the cost of participation due to the significant time commitment involved. However, in the Anti-ELAB Movement, as part of the hit-and-run tactic titled "Be Water" protesters employed (Lai & Zhao, 2019), people could dip in and dip out of the movement flexibly, which lowered the commitment and costs involved in participation as it became more flexible.

C's view is complemented by the *Survey Findings*. Within a two-month timeframe at the initial stages of the movement, Lee et al. (2019a) have found that when asked the question about what next steps the movement should take, around one-third to half of the protesters at these initial demonstrations have indicated that they wish to "sustain current form and [mobilise] from time to time," as demonstrated in Figure 2 below. This signifies that a notable portion of participants find it most comfortable to participate in the movement intermittently without having to make any long-term commitments or escalations to the movement. As such, the survey data aligns with C's findings that the occasional form of participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement lowered the cost of protest to many, thereby increasing their inclination to participate.

**Figure 2**

*Protesters' perceived next steps in the Anti-ELAB Movement* [6]

| | 21/6 | 26/6 | 1/7 | 14/7 | 21/7 | 27/7 | 4/8 (TKO) | 4/8 (Saiwan) | 10/8 | 11/8 | 13/8 | 16/8 | 18/8 | 25/8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Escalate the protest<br>進一步把抗爭升級 | 46.1% | 48.8% | 39.1% | 50.9% | 44.8% | 49.4% | 50.7% | 54.1% | 48.9% | 53.8% | 55.5% | 56.0% | 44.4% | 61.3% |
| Sustain current form and mobilize from time to time<br>以現時的抗爭形式及規模，定期動員示威 | 43.5% | 41.1% | 45.1% | 43.0% | 48.9% | 44.3% | 41.0% | 38.7% | 45.6% | 38.1% | 39.4% | 40.7% | 50.5% | 34.9% |
| Suspend the movement and leave time for society to recover<br>暫停運動，讓社會恢復元氣 | 2.2% | 1.4% | 5.1% | 0.3% | 1.0% | 1.3% | 0.7% | 1.9% | 1.0% | 1.7% | 1.0% | 0.9% | 1.0% | 1.1% |
| Unknown/ Refuse to answer<br>不知道 / 拒答 | 8.2% | 8.6% | 10.7% | 5.8% | 5.3% | 5.1% | 7.6% | 5.3% | 4.5% | 6.4% | 4.1% | 2.4% | 4.1% | 2.7% |
| Sample size 樣本量 | 316 | 418 | 1,169 | 546 | 680 | 235 | 717 | 555 | 2,309 | 636 | 485 | 632 | 806 | 372 |

[6] *Note*. From *Onsite Survey Findings in Hong Kong's Anti-Extradition Bill Protests*, by F. L. F. Lee, G. Tang, S. Yuen, and E. W. Cheng, 2019 (https://sites.google.com/view/antielabsurvey-eng/data-updated-until-oct-2019?authuser=0). Copyright 2019 by Centre for Communication and Public Opinion Survey, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

As such, the initial engagement with movement participation can also be explained by the internal cost-risk weighting participants employ, namely in calculating the risk of not participating in the movement and relatively low initial costs of participation. Thus, aligning with H1's proposition that lower perceived costs and risks warrant increased participation, it can be speculated that the perceived low initial costs and risks of participating in the movement gave the Hong Kong populace a reason to take to the streets.

**Structural factors**

Regarding structural factors, as indicated in the literature review, this paper will focus specifically on social media, for it offers a differing perspective on how networks and organisations can take form in contrast to conventional understandings of networks and organisations as physical settings.

Interviewees agreed on the galvanising effect of social media, mainly in its role of disseminating movement information. A, through observing discussions on Telegram, found substantial evidence of the platform being used for coordination purposes in terms of where to go for protests. E professed that the importance of social media lies in replacing formal organisations' role in connecting individuals with an inclination to protest, disseminating protest information such as location, time, etc., and sharing images of police violence amongst protesters. C believed that participants of the Anti-ELAB Movement utilised the full power of social media to mobilise and disseminate movement-related information as protesters took to a wide variety of platforms, including conventional Western platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, as well as local forums such as LIHKG.

Indeed, multiple scholars have noted the efficacy of social media in the Anti-ELAB Movement. Urman et al. (2021), having conducted network and computational text analysis on Telegram API data, discovered the "Telegram-based network was cohesive ensuring [the] efficient spread of protest-related information" (p. 1) in the Anti-ELAB Movement. Moreover, as noted by Wong (2020), "[Anti-ELAB] protesters have taken to technology to publicise, lead the conversation, and legitimise the movement domestically and internationally" (p. 4). This was achieved through the creation of movement-specific hashtags aimed at disseminating protest-related news across platforms such as Twitter, as well as the sharing of "arts of resistance" that portrayed conventional elements of the Anti-ELAB Movement via anonymous Twitter accounts. Furthermore, shed highlighted that protesters

utilised Telegram to coordinate safe transportation for individuals leaving demonstration sites when public transport was unavailable. Additionally, Liang & Lee (2021) identified LIHKG as "the central communication platform for movement participants and supporters" (p. 672), which crucially facilitated the consolidation of "feelings of solidarity, agreement with emerging movement discourses and tactics, and support for radical actions among protesters" (p. 672), aside from serving as an essential source of information.

Complementing findings in the literature, the *Survey Findings* evidence social media platforms and forums' critical role in facilitating information dissemination in the Anti-ELAB Movement. As per Figure 3 shown below, the percentage of protesters selecting "Online Media" and "Online Forum" as platforms they "always" use to obtain information remained high throughout the protests and increased as the movement progressed, going from 55.7% to 79.4% and 38.6% to 57.4%, respectively. This indicates that a significant portion of protesters relied on these platforms to receive movement information, thus exemplifying the vital role they play in facilitating information dissemination.

**Figure 3**

*Platforms protesters use to obtain information in the Anti-ELAB Movement (only shows the percentage of respondents who chose "always")* [7]

| | 1/7 | 14/7 | 21/7 | 27/7 | 4/8 | 10/8 | 11/8 | 13/8 | 16/8 | 18/8 | 25/8 | 8/9 | 15/9 | 28/9 | 1/10 | 14/10 | 20/10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Traditional media (newspaper, television) 報紙電視等傳統媒介 | 34.9% | 34.5% | 34.7% | 37.9% | 39.8% | 34.7% | 35.7% | 40.8% | 29.1% | 35.7% | 37.4% | 32.0% | 37.1% | 37.5% | 40.9% | 34.9% | 34.1% |
| Online Media 網絡媒體 | 55.7% | 62.3% | 64.5% | 80.0% | 81.9% | 81.2% | 78.6% | 81.9% | 83.4% | 76.8% | 75.5% | 76.3% | 78.4% | 82.0% | 78.8% | 81.4% | 79.7% |
| Facebook | 56.9% | 57.0% | 58.5% | 75.7% | 73.3% | 73.5% | 71.2% | 67.8% | 69.0% | 67.9% | 71.0% | 70.3% | 69.2% | 71.1% | 72.5% | 75.1% | 69.5% |
| Instagram | 32.8% | 29.0% | 33.3% | 39.6% | 42.0% | 45.0% | 39.3% | 59.0% | 43.5% | 41.7% | 40.1% | 36.5% | 42.8% | 31.9% | 29.2% | 41.2% | 37.9% |
| Whatsapp | 30.7% | 34.9% | 30.9% | 53.6% | 44.7% | 43.0% | 42.3% | 49.1% | 40.0% | 42.9% | 44.4% | 40.1% | 40.9% | 38.8% | 48.1% | 50.9% | 43.0% |
| Telegram | 19.4% | 29.7% | 30.0% | 45.1% | 44.4% | 49.1% | 53.6% | 57.3% | 61.9% | 41.8% | 48.7% | 52.8% | 55.5% | 50.1% | 45.6% | 61.9% | 51.6% |
| Online Forum 網上論壇 | 38.6% | 47.7% | 49.1% | 59.1% | 59.7% | 67.1% | 67.3% | 72.2% | 72.3% | 57.3% | 55.6% | 61.4% | 62.5% | 56.0% | 50.5% | 58.2% | 57.4% |
| Sample size 樣本量 | 1,169 | 546 | 680 | 235 | 1,272 | 2,309 | 636 | 485 | 632 | 806 | 372 | 337 | 911 | 405 | 640 | 662 | 921 |

Furthermore, D stated that social media not only spread information about protests taking place but information about incidents occurring during protests as well, such as police teargas

[7] *Note*. From *Onsite Survey Findings in Hong Kong's Anti-Extradition Bill Protests*, by F. L. F. Lee, G. Tang, S. Yuen, and E. W. Cheng, 2019 (https://sites.google.com/view/antielabsurvey-eng/data-updated-until-oct-2019?authuser=0). Copyright 2019 by Centre for Communication and Public Opinion Survey, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

firing. According to D, the publicisation of these instances of political violence translated into Hongkongers taking to the streets as they felt aggrieved.

The role of perceived police brutality in motivating participation, once again, can be evidenced by the *Survey Findings*. As Lee et al. (2019a) discover,

> "Expressing dissatisfaction with the police's handling of the protesters" was another key reason of why the participants joined the protests. The percentage of respondents who regarded it as "important" or "very important" ranged from 97.2% to 99.1%. Since mid-July, it had actually become the most important motivation for people to participate in the protests. Over time the survey also included options related to more specific actions of the police. Proportions of respondents who chose "important" and "very important" in the following options were: "protesting against arbitrary arrest by the police" (June 16, 97.8%) and "expressing the dissatisfaction with the riot charges imposed by the police against the 7.28 protesters" (August 4 TKO, 97.1%; SW, 96.5%). The high percentages reflected the concerns of respondents over police abuse of power.

As per Figure 1, throughout the protests, a high percentage of protesters consistently selected "expressing dissatisfaction with the police's handling of the protesters" as a "most important" motivation, fluctuating from 84.6% to 98.3%. This indicates that police brutality was a significant driving force for protesters throughout the movement.

However, as the movement steered towards its end, particularly after the implementation of the NSL, the use of social media in publicly communicating movement ideology also declined. A maintained that the NSL caused individuals to become afraid of repercussions that communicating anti-government opinions can bring, evidenced by their research on social media platforms, where they noticed changes in the type of messages sent. As discussion messages reduced drastically, people were more inclined towards posting general information, such as locations where police have been spotted. This can be explained by the increased risks of voicing anti-government opinions posed by the NSL, which demotivated participants from doing so. As such, the role of social media in communicating protest information and ideas faded.

Therefore, in response to H2's proposition that participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement is higher if participants have more network and organisational ties to the movement, it is clear that social media, as a network and organisational apparatus, played an influential role in disseminating movement information and mobilising participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement, as it was not only a much relied upon source for many participants to acquire movement information and details of protest events, but also catalysed participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement, as the survey data suggests, due to the widespread documentation of distressing instances of police violence on these platforms. On the other hand, as the government tightened its grip on the movement, the mediating role social media platforms played seemed to diminish in tandem with movement participation, as communications about anti-government opinion nearly ceased. Nevertheless, it remains uncertain whether participants still used these platforms to maintain covert connections with each other. Thus, the network effect social media induces cannot be wholly disregarded even after the imposition of the NSL.

**Social-psychological factors**

Most interviewees indicated the importance of collective identity in steering participation. D maintained that participants protested as they felt their Hongkonger identity was under pressure because of the introduction of the extradition bill. As B articulated, the possibility of being extradited to mainland China and subject to unfair trials was perceived to undermine Hong Kong's autonomy, provoking participants' fear of losing their accustomed democratic institutions and freedoms in the early stages of the movement. However, the perceived loss of autonomy, according to D, also provoked feelings of the Hong Kong identity being threatened. Thus, they were more willing to protest as it enabled them to strengthen their Hong Kong identity by identifying with a common cause as Hongkongers, joined by other participants who shared similar views. Similarly, E elucidated that protesters chose to take part in the movement as a demonstration of their commitment to their community and a reflection of their concern for the fate of Hong Kong.

Furthermore, A and D argued that younger generations in Hong Kong are less likely to see themselves or identify as Chinese than Hongkongers. This form of identity resistance propels them to distinguish themselves from everything associated with a Chinese identity, such as the authoritarian tendencies of the Chinese regime, to demonstrate their uniqueness from

China, and to covet democracy and freedom as they believe they should be able to decide on their future and do not want it to be decided in Beijing.

These observations above align with the *Opinion Survey on the "Extradition Bill" Survey Results* (Chung, 2019). In sampling 1,007 Hongkongers through telephone interviews amid the Anti-ELAB Movement, Chung discovered that an overwhelming majority of Hongkongers believed that "distrust and the pursuit of democracy and freedom are the major reasons for youngsters' dissatisfaction," as shown in Figure 4 below. Importantly, "Distrust of the Central Government" was believed by the largest number of participants to be driving youth dissatisfaction (81%). This belief is especially strong in the youngest age group (91%) and protest participants (93%). It is also worth noting that amongst respondents who are protest participants, factors relating to distrust of the Chinese and Hong Kong government and pursuit of democracy and freedom are far more believed to drive dissatisfaction compared to materialistic issues such as housing problems and the economic environment.

**Figure 4**

*Major reasons for youngsters' dissatisfaction* [8]

**Distrust and the pursuit of democracy and freedom are the major reasons for youngsters' dissatisfaction**

| | Overall sample (1,005) | Age | | | | Educational attainment | | | Anti-extradition bill protests | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 14 - 29 (251) | 30 - 49 (333) | 50 - 64 (223) | 65 or above (191) | Primary education or below (82) | Secondary education (411) | Tertiary education or above (509) | Participant (415) | Non-participant (577) |
| **Distrust of the Central Government** | 81% | 91% | 86% | 81% | 67% | 67% | 81% | 90% | 93% | 75% |
| **Distrust of One Country, Two Systems** | 75% | 86% | 74% | 77% | 67% | 69% | 73% | 83% | 88% | 68% |
| **Distrust of the CE** | 75% | 84% | 81% | 75% | 59% | 61% | 74% | 86% | 90% | 67% |
| **Pursuit of democracy** | 71% | 87% | 72% | 72% | 53% | 62% | 68% | 80% | 88% | 61% |
| **Pursuit of freedom** | 66% | 80% | 67% | 65% | 52% | 54% | 67% | 70% | 81% | 57% |
| **Troubled by housing problems** | 58% | 58% | 60% | 56% | 57% | 58% | 56% | 59% | 60% | 56% |
| **Troubled by the economic environment** | 48% | 44% | 52% | 48% | 47% | 45% | 49% | 49% | 48% | 49% |

[Q20] Which of the following do you think are the major reasons for youngsters' dissatisfaction?
(Read out options 1-7, order to be randomized by computer, multiple answers are allowed)

[8] *Note*. From *Opinion Survey on the "Extradition Bill" Survey Results*, by R. Chung, 2019 (https://www.pori.hk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/pcf_anti_extradition_ppt_english_v2_pori.pdf). Copyright 2019 by Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute.

While this data does not directly evidence the correlation between having a Hongkonger identity and movement participation, it offers valuable insights on how the *outcomes* of aligning with a Hongkonger identity, as A elucidated, create dissatisfaction within younger generations in Hong Kong. This, coupled with evidence in the subsequent section that demonstrates youngsters make up a significant portion of the movement's participants, may suggest that a strong identification with a Hongkonger identity motivates movement participation.

As such, in response to H3a's proposition that participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement is higher if participants feel a stronger sense of collective identity, regrettably, there is no existing survey data that directly demonstrates a strong correlation between an affirmation of a Hongkonger identity or a rejection of Chinese identity and movement participation. However, through interviewee accounts on the effect of a Hongkonger identity in precipitating fear towards loss of autonomy, disdain for the Chinese regime, and yearning for democracy, as well as survey data illustrating a strong concern for these factors amongst Hong Kong's youth population, the most significant driving force in the movement, it can be logically inferred that the alignment with a collective Hongkonger identity played a role in propelling participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement.

In a similar vein, most interviewees agreed that a sense of political efficacy correlated with increased participation, and vice versa. D stated that protests increase participants' sense of political efficacy, as these acts of civil disobedience signalled to them that political change may be feasible. C seconds this claim: the examples of protests successful in pushing back government proposals, pressurising the government to change its rhetoric on the bill from "suspended" in June 2019 (Graham, 2019) to "dead" in July (Rosenfeld, 2019) to "formally withdrawn" in September (Kuo, 2019), build on each other and galvanise subsequent protests to attract more participants.

This is reflected in initial movement participation statistics: on June 9, 2019, an estimated one million people participated in a peaceful march against the bill, according to official estimates (Creery, 2019). The subsequent demonstration on June 16 drew even larger crowds, with organisers claiming that nearly two million people joined the protests, making it one of the largest protests ever seen in Hong Kong (Amnesty International, 2019). D asserts that the

sense of political efficacy created through participation, in turn, becomes a motivating factor for more protesters to take to the streets, as new participants are more likely to engage with protests if they believe they can make a change, thereby creating a positive feedback loop. Similarly, C suggests that the high turnout numbers in protests may create an impression that the movement is supported by large sections of society.

Furthermore, B contended that social media played a role in increasing participants' sense of political efficacy, giving them motivation to sustain participation. B observed that participants often shared stories or took photos of demonstrations they participated in and shared them with friends on social media platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, and Instagram, getting views and likes from followers in the process. Borrowing Olsen's (1971) notion of expressive benefit, where the benefit of participation is derived from conducting the action itself rather than the outcome, B believed the trend of sharing about participation that social media brought about encouraged people to participate in protests rather than freeriding the fruits of others' participation, as it allowed them to derive expressive benefit from the traction they gain on social media, regardless of the outcome of their protesting. Social media also allowed protesters to widely publicise their participation, which made them feel that they were amidst the great tides of history. According to B, this increased protesters' confidence in the effectiveness of their actions and, consequently, their perceived political efficacy.

On the other hand, A believed that protesters' sense of political efficacy declined over time and effectively extinguished after the implementation of the NSL, as police brutality escalated in tandem with the movement's progression. As previously established, the Hong Kong Police Force extensively used crowd-control weapons, including tear gas, rubber bullets, and sponge grenades, in the first few months of the protests (Hong Kong Watch, 2019). A postulated that the escalating violence created a dilemma for participants: if they react towards escalating police violence with violent tactics, the government tends to respond with more violence, which creates a vicious cycle of perpetuating violence; however, if they protest peacefully, they feel they cannot do much against the police with full armour. As such, there is an omnipresent feeling among protesters that they stand powerless against the routinised police brutality, thereby decreasing their sense of political efficacy and demotivating them from participation.

Moreover, as the Chinese government became involved in implementing the NSL (BBC, 2024a), D argued that the geographical distance between Hong Kong and Beijing decreased protesters' political efficacy. In cases where protesters and the regime exist in the same location, protests cost the regime more as they cannot ignore the effects of such activities. In the case of the Anti-ELAB Movement, as the initial objectives, including the call for the withdrawal of the extradition bill, were directed towards the Hong Kong government, there were more opportunities for protesters to signal their dissatisfaction and engage in civil disobedience to pressurise the government to cave into their demands. However, once the Chinese government was involved, as Beijing was geographically distant, there were limited options in terms of what protesters could do to influence the regime, resulting in them being unable to pressurise the Chinese government into accepting their demands. The physical distance between Beijing and Hong Kong resulted in protesters feeling decreased effectiveness of their protest actions and hopelessness about reversing the Chinese government's ruling, thus contributing to a decline in perceived political efficacy.

In addition, D noted that protesters were disappointed that no political outcome was achieved even though they secured a landslide victory in the 2019 District Council Elections held in November. The lack of political outcome is evident in Carrie Lam refusing to agree to any of the protest's demands (aside from withdrawing the extradition bill), including the establishment of an independent commission of inquiry, after the election, despite the election results clearly reflecting Hong Kong citizens' disappointment in the government (Cheng, 2019; Lianhe Zaobao, 2019). D contended that the government's intransigence stirred up feelings among protesters that their political action could not create actual political impact, thus leading to a decline in perceived political efficacy that contributed to disengagement from the movement.

Hence, in response to H3b's proposition that participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement is higher if participants experience a higher sense of political efficacy, interviewee accounts and journalistic data of movement turnout have demonstrated instances where heightened senses of political efficacy propelled participation, and vice versa where feelings of political inefficacy led to declining participation, thus evidencing the positive relationship between political efficacy and participation as H3b posits.

**Biographic factors**

For biographic factors, it must be noted that they are best suited to explain engagement in, but not disengagement from, the movement, as these factors largely remain unchanged throughout, which means that no effective change in these factors can be induced during the movement. One straightforward example would be age - given the movement's rather short duration, the age of protesters will mostly differ by a year or two, if not stay constant, between the start and the end of the movement.

Regarding the influence of prior engagement in politics and movements *vis-à-vis* movement participation, one powerful indicator is whether participants have participated in the 2014 Umbrella Movement. This is because it is the second-most recent large-scale protest in Hong Kong that shared a similar motive with the Anti-ELAB movement to seek democracy in Hong Kong. A noted that some young participants of the Anti-ELAB Movement participated in the 2014 Umbrella Movement. Nonetheless, a significant number of them did not participate in the Umbrella Movement because they were too young to do so.

A's findings can perhaps be best portrayed by the *Survey Findings*. As demonstrated in Figure 5 below, while the number of protesters who participated in the 2014 Umbrella Movement consistently exceeded those who did not, in the June 16 protest, where participation peaked at 2 million people, this was not the case: protesters who did not participate in the Umbrella Movement (55.7%) exceeded those who did (44.3%) by around a quarter.

**Figure 5**

*Protesters' past participation in the Umbrella Movement* [9]

| | 9/6 | 12/6 | 16/6 | 17/6 | 21/6 | 26/6 | 1/7 | 14/7 | 21/7 | 27/7 | 4/8 (TKO) | 4/8 (Saiwan) | 10/8 | 11/8 | 13/8 | 16/8 | 18/8 | 25/8 | 28/9 | 1/10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes 有 | 61.8% | 76.6% | 44.3% | 72.5% | 64.0% | 72.7% | 55.3% | 59.3% | 52.9% | 67.2% | 57.8% | 60.2% | 61.9% | 62.3% | 57.5% | 70.9% | 59.3% | 64.8% | 70.4% | 63.1% |
| No/Don't know/Refuse to answer 無 / 不知道 / 拒答 | 38.2% | 23.4% | 55.7% | 27.5% | 36.0% | 27.3% | 44.7% | 40.7% | 47.1% | 32.8% | 42.2% | 39.8% | 38.1% | 37.7% | 42.5% | 29.1% | 40.7% | 35.2% | 29.6% | 36.9% |
| Sample size 樣本量 | 285 | 175 | 875 | 717 | 316 | 418 | 1169 | 546 | 680 | 235 | 717 | 555 | 2,309 | 636 | 485 | 632 | 806 | 372 | 405 | 640 |

[9] *Note*. From *Onsite Survey Findings in Hong Kong's Anti-Extradition Bill Protests*, by F. L. F. Lee, G. Tang, S. Yuen, and E. W. Cheng, 2019 (https://sites.google.com/view/antielabsurvey-eng/data-updated-until-oct-2019?authuser=0). Copyright 2019 by Centre for Communication and Public Opinion Survey, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Therefore, in response to H4a's proposition that participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement is higher if participants have prior engagements in politics and social movements, survey data exhibit higher participation rates among past participants of the Umbrella Movement, which corroborates H4a. However, it is essential to consider that many protesters did not participate in the past movement because they were too young. Hence, while H4a holds to a great extent, the participation of individuals who may have no prior engagement in politics and social movements because of their age (as evidenced by their absence from the Umbrella Movement) warrants analysis through the lens of alternative influencing factors.

Similarly, regarding the role of biographical availability in influencing movement participation, all interviewees have indicated that although the youth population constitutes the biggest driving force, participation by other demographic groups cannot be overlooked. With reference to Figure 6 below, the *Survey Findings* show that protester turnout peaks in younger age groups and declines as age increases. The 20-24 and 25-29 age groups have taken the greatest percentages of protester share in all protests, illustrating the significance of youth participation. Nonetheless, they take up less than half of the total number of protesters overall, demonstrating the need to consider the involvement of other age groups as well.

**Figure 6**

*Age of protesters* [10]

| | 9/6 | 12/6 | 16/6 | 17/6 | 21/6 | 26/6 | 1/7 | 14/7 | 21/7 | 27/7 | 4/8 (TKO) | 4/8 (Saiwan) | 10/8 | 11/8 | 13/8 | 16/8 | 18/8 | 25/8 | 8/9 | 15/9 | 28/9 | 1/10 | 14/10 | 20/10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Age 年齡** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <=19 | 10.5% | 6.3% | 15.6% | 15.5% | 14.6% | 11.2% | 12.9% | 7.3% | 11.9% | 6.0% | 8.6% | 6.8% | 11.1% | 14.0% | 22.5% | 10.1% | 8.2% | 11.0% | 3.3% | 10.1% | 5.2% | 3.3% | 6.5% | 7.3% |
| 20-24 | 20.7% | 27.9% | 16.3% | 33.0% | 54.2% | 40.9% | 18.6% | 23.9% | 23.3% | 26.0% | 27.9% | 28.7% | 25.7% | 23.4% | 34.5% | 36.3% | 25.5% | 25.3% | 29.3% | 26.6% | 17.3% | 9.4% | 21.6% | 18.3% |
| 25-29 | 11.6% | 34.2% | 18.3% | 25.8% | 16.4% | 23.7% | 18.3% | 18.5% | 17.5% | 19.6% | 20.5% | 21.4% | 26.5% | 23.0% | 18.6% | 25.0% | 27.9% | 22.0% | 21.3% | 19.8% | 16.0% | 14.7% | 19.5% | 16.6% |
| 30-34 | 8.4% | 19.0% | 12.9% | 11.4% | 8.6% | 12.7% | 11.0% | 12.3% | 10.6% | 18.3% | 10.5% | 11.4% | 14.3% | 16.0% | 9.6% | 14.0% | 13.1% | 14.2% | 12.0% | 12.4% | 13.8% | 14.2% | 15.6% | 15.1% |
| 35-39 | 5.6% | 5.1% | 9.0% | 4.1% | 4.6% | 4.1% | 6.1% | 8.5% | 5.6% | 8.1% | 8.0% | 6.6% | 7.9% | 7.5% | 6.5% | 5.9% | 6.6% | 6.0% | 9.0% | 7.7% | 10.9% | 13.4% | 10.7% | 9.6% |
| 40-44 | 6.3% | 2.5% | 5.4% | 2.1% | 0.0% | 1.7% | 7.8% | 6.2% | 5.3% | 8.1% | 7.5% | 5.3% | 4.7% | 5.0% | 3.0% | 1.8% | 4.9% | 5.6% | 5.4% | 5.6% | 7.9% | 10.6% | 6.5% | 9.3% |
| 45-49 | 4.6% | 1.3% | 4.2% | 2.1% | 0.6% | 2.6% | 4.5% | 4.2% | 3.4% | 6.0% | 3.8% | 4.0% | 3.1% | 3.1% | 2.4% | 1.9% | 0.8% | 2.5% | 4.8% | 4.1% | 10.1% | 9.8% | 7.3% | 7.6% |
| 50-54 | 8.4% | 0.8% | 6.6% | 2.1% | 0.0% | 0.2% | 4.9% | 5.8% | 5.8% | 2.6% | 6.2% | 7.0% | 2.6% | 2.7% | 0.8% | 2.0% | 4.1% | 5.0% | 4.8% | 5.6% | 6.7% | 9.2% | 5.4% | 6.4% |
| 55-59 | 6.0% | 1.7% | 4.2% | 1.0% | 0.0% | 1.2% | 6.1% | 4.2% | 5.6% | 2.6% | 3.0% | 4.1% | 1.8% | 2.5% | 1.2% | 1.4% | 7.4% | 5.8% | 4.8% | 2.9% | 7.4% | 8.8% | 4.1% | 5.9% |
| 60-64 | 6.7% | 0.0% | 2.7% | 1.4% | 0.0% | 0.5% | 4.9% | 4.1% | 4.7% | 0.9% | 2.8% | 3.7% | 1.3% | 1.8% | 0.4% | 0.8% | 0.8% | 1.1% | 1.2% | 5.4% | 3.5% | 4.5% | 1.2% | 2.8% |
| >=65 | 7.4% | 0.0% | 4.7% | 0.7% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 3.6% | 3.6% | 3.8% | 1.3% | 1.3% | 0.9% | 0.5% | 0.5% | 0.0% | 0.4% | 0.2% | 1.3% | 1.8% | 0.0% | 1.2% | 2.0% | 1.7% | 1.1% |
| Unknown/ Unanswered 不知道/拒答 | 3.9% | 1.1% | 0.1% | 0.9% | 1.0% | 1.2% | 1.3% | 1.4% | 2.6% | 0.9% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.3% | 0.5% | 0.0% | 0.8% | 0.6% | 0.0% | 2.7% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Sample size 樣本量 | 285 | 175 | 875 | 717 | 316 | 418 | 1,169 | 546 | 680 | 235 | 717 | 555 | 2,309 | 636 | 485 | 632 | 806 | 372 | 337 | 911 | 405 | 640 | 662 | 921 |

[10] *Note*. From *Onsite Survey Findings in Hong Kong's Anti-Extradition Bill Protests*, by F. L. F. Lee, G. Tang, S. Yuen, and E. W. Cheng, 2019 (https://sites.google.com/view/antielabsurvey-eng/data-updated-until-oct-2019?authuser=0). Copyright 2019 by Centre for Communication and Public Opinion Survey, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

In answering the reasons behind youth participation, while all interviewees agree with traditional viewpoints about younger participants having more time to spare and fewer responsibilities, they have given additional explanations. A noted that on top of the point made in the previous section about young people having a stronger sense of a Hongkonger identity, younger generations are increasingly worried about their futures, especially whether they will be able to continue enjoying Hong Kong's democratic freedoms. E noted that young people are more alarmed by the uncertainty of Hong Kong's fate after the year 2047 when the "previous capitalist system and way of life" Hongkongers are accustomed to will no longer guarantee to "remain unchanged" (The Government of Hong Kong SAR, 2021), as they are more likely to live past that year compared to older generations. To A, their concerns are understandable, as the younger population will be affected by the consequences for longer.

Contrarily, B and D attributed youth participation in the movement to the post-materialistic values such as democracy and freedom they hold, as contrasted with older generations who are more concerned about materialistic factors. B contended that young protesters tend to be more post-materialist-orientated, more educated, and have more robust support for democratic values, which led them to participate in the movement that is perceived to fight for Hong Kong's democratic freedom. D compared older generations, who are more insecure about economic performance, with younger generations, who are more engaged with post-materialist values such as democracy and freedom, and concluded that the latter is more likely to participate as the movement was more aligned with the younger generation's concerns.

On the other hand, interviewees expressed that the participation of other demographic groups cannot be overlooked. D compared the Anti-ELAB Movement to the Umbrella Movement and suggested that while younger generations and students dominated both movements, the former captured a wider demographic. B referred to the Anti-ELAB Movement as a "society-wide movement" because participants came from all walks of life instead of being confined to a particular demographic group (in this case, the younger generation). C agreed with this claim, stating that given the movement peaked at 2 million participants, it is hard to imagine how the movement would not have captured most of the demographic in Hong Kong. C also mentioned that prior to the proliferation of street protests, the Bar Association and business community expressed concern over the bill (HK01, 2019; Stevenson, 2019),

which illustrates how the movement was not just led by activists and protesters, but also professional associations, who are seen as politically neutral, opposing the bill.

Thus, in response to H4b's proposition that participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement is higher if participants have a higher level of biographical availability, while participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement aligns with predictions in the literature that younger generations have a higher affinity to participation, interviewee responses revealed more nuances. First, aside from factors traditionally considered to propel youth participation, two extra factors, including worrying about Hong Kong's democratic future and adherence to post-materialist values, were also at play. The former, especially, can be considered unique to the case of the Anti-ELAB Movement, as the uncertainty of whether Hong Kong's way of life can be sustained after 2047 was concerning, particularly among Hong Kong's youth. Second, differing from past movements, such as the Umbrella Movement, the Anti-ELAB Movement successfully captured wider demographic participation, particularly due to concerns about the extradition bill. Therefore, while H4b holds true to a great extent, other factors, as previously discussed, must also be considered to construct a holistic understanding of participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement.

## Conclusion

This paper has advanced our understanding of participants' motivations to engage in and disengage from the Anti-ELAB Movement by utilising original interview data with social movement academics, publicly available survey data, and journalistic reports. Specifically, it outlines the extent to which the factors considered to sway movement participation in the literature achieved the same effect in the case of Hong Kong.

This paper makes several important contributions. First, it notes how political efficacy and cost-risk factors, not only costs and risks associated with participation but also perceived risks of non-participation, evolve over time, continually shape participants' mental calculus of participation, and consequently affect their participation. It also extends the understanding of risks beyond how external actors respond towards participation, but in a broader sense including impersonal factors such as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Second, it analyses social media through the lenses of network and organisational ties and concludes that social media plays a significant role in disseminating movement information and

spreading movement ideas. Third, it dissects the relationship between collective identity and participation: a strong shared Hong Kong identity induces aversion toward the Chinese regime, which in turn warrants greater hostility towards the extradition bill and greater pursuit of democratic values, thereby motivating participation.

Nevertheless, the impact of biographic factors and the collective identity factor on disengagement have been omitted in this paper for several reasons. First, biographic factors largely remain constant throughout the movement. Thus, while they may predict movement participation, they fall short in predicting disengagement. Second, there is no existing survey dataset for collective identity that collects information on movement participants' perceived identity, nor are there any that illustrate shifts in identity among protesters who decide to disengage from the movement. There are a few possible reasons for this: identities are constantly shifting and subjective, and thus, coming up with rigid categories would be difficult. Moreover, collecting data on protesters' perceived identity when they disengage from the movement would be rather difficult as this requires identifying the exact moment they choose to disengage. Should future research conduct interviews with individual participants and note how their use of social media and identity shifts, it would illustrate a better picture of how their collective identity and social media use change over time.

Furthermore, this paper concludes that social media's effect on disengagement and biographic factors' effect on engagement cannot be wholly affirmed. First, while existing findings predict correlations between declining public discussions of movement ideology on social media and movement abeyance after the NSL was implemented, it is unclear whether participants still maintained covert networks privately. This is because it is very difficult to have a holistic view of how participants engage with social media as a network apparatus, as they might not be willing to share their private conversations, and such sharing could also violate their privacy. Second, despite classic predictions correlating movement participation with factors such as biographical availability and prior political and movement engagement holding importance in explaining participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement, it lacks nuance as it does not encapsulate the participation of first-time protesters or professional associations. Therefore, this paper concludes that a comprehensive evaluation of all factors above is required to construct a comprehensive view of participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement.

With all the above considered, this paper's findings can be summarised in Table 3 below.

**Table 3**

*Hypothesis testing - results*

| **Hypothesis** | **Affect engagement?** | **Affect disengagement?** |
|---|---|---|
| **H1** (Cost-risk factors) | Yes | Yes |
| **H2** (Structural factors) | Yes | Yes, to some extent |
| **H3a** (Social-psychological factors - collective identity) | Yes | N/A |
| **H3b** (Social-psychological factors - political efficacy) | Yes | Yes |
| **H4a** (Biographic factors - prior politics/ movement engagement) | Yes, to some extent | N/A |
| **H4b** (Biographic factors - biographical availability) | Yes, to some extent | N/A |

As indicated in the methodology section, there are several limitations to this paper's research. First, this paper ruled out interviews with past movement participants due to safeguarding concerns. However, should interviewing individuals with direct experience in the movement be possible, it would provide first-hand participation accounts, allowing for a more accurate understanding of the intricacies behind their motivations to participate. Although this approach was not employed in the current study, future research may offer improved insights into the reasons for individuals' involvement in the movement by potentially conducting direct interviews with past participants.

Additionally, due to the short timeframe of the research (six weeks), more interviews could not have been conducted, resulting in a small sample size of $n=5$. Although this has been compensated by referencing various secondary sources, future research could gain a more holistic and nuanced understanding of the topic by conducting more interviews with diverse participants.

In closing, this paper offers a fresh perspective on analysing the trajectory of the Anti-ELAB Movement by focusing on participants' engagement and disengagement simultaneously. The interplay between cost-risk, structural, social-psychological, and biographic factors creates a

complex landscape for understanding participation in the Anti-ELAB Movement. By analysing these factors through original interview data, existing survey databases, and journalistic articles, this study contributes to a nuanced understanding of the motivations behind participation and the reasons for disengagement. Ultimately, recognising the varying influences can inform future research on social movements and their evolving nature, providing insights into how collective actions navigate impending adversity.

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