

# How do Political Opportunity Structures affect the success of social movements in China and the USA?

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## ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the effects political opportunity structures have on the mobilisation, organisation, and outcomes of civil rights movements in the USA and Hong Kong. The Civil Rights Movement between the 1950s-60s and the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement of 2019 are used as case studies in this research. The paper examines the various attributes of both regions' political input and output structures while examining how the movement was organised and strategised. It then considers whether either movement can be deemed successful. Through comparative analysis, it contrasts the assessments made in both case studies to determine which factor discussed had the most significant impact on the success of both campaigns. It finds that the initial hypothesis put forth can be disproved and that a fluid link between the movement and institutional elites plays the most critical role in the success of both movements.

## **Introduction**

How do political institutions interact with and influence social movements?

This paper explores the answer to this question by analysing the civil rights movement in the USA and the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement in Hong Kong. While also assessing the impact of both regions' political opportunity structures on the movement's demands, which will help elucidate how political institutions can shape the nature and success of a social movement.

By examining social movements in countries on opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of political systems, this paper investigates the hypothesis that the difference in governance was the most significant factor in aiding civil rights movements' success in America and Hong Kong.

The paper will begin by assessing the nature of the Political Opportunity Structures of the USA and Hong Kong and whether the movements can be considered successful or not. The paper will then delve into the similarities and differences between the two regions and the various factors influencing their respective movement's success. Comparative analysis will aid in determining which attribute of the nation's political opportunity structure had the most significant impact on the outcomes of the social movement.

Through this research, the paper attempts to add new information on which facet of a political opportunity structure has the most considerable impact on the success of a civil rights movement. It aims to explain the interaction between movement members and the establishment while discerning what works in favour of the protestors' demands and what does not. It will also evaluate whether the significance of a particular factor is subjective to the needs of the movement.

## Definitions

In the context of this paper, Political Opportunity Structures (POS) will be defined as structural factors that constrain or improve the ability of a social movement to mobilise and operate. When discussing the POS of Hong Kong and the USA, this paper will analyse the countries' political input and output structures.

Political input structures can be either 'open' or 'closed'. According to Kitschelt (1986), one can determine the nature of a country's input structure based on four factors, but only three will be considered in the context of this paper. (a) How many political parties, factions, and groups exist, and how representative are they of different demands in electoral politics? The larger the number, the more open the input structure. (b) How effectively do legislatures develop and control policies independent from the executive? A legislature is an electorally accountable agent. Hence, it is more susceptible to public pressure and demands, unlike the executive (except those in the highest positions). An input structure is open if legislatures develop without interference from the executive branch. (c) Finally, what is the nature of the interaction between the interest groups and the executive branch? Openness is characterised by a fluid link between interest groups and executive branch members, facilitating these groups' political decision-making access.

Similarly, Kitschelt (1986) notes that three operational dimensions establish whether a political output structure is 'weak' or 'strong'. (a) Is the state apparatus centralised? The convoluted divisions of jurisdiction between multiple semi-independent government agencies and the federal stratification of state authorities make policy implementation a complex process, resulting in a weak output structure. (b) What degree of control does the government have over market players and the finance sector? The amount of control exercised over economic interest groups can greatly influence policy implementation and the strength of a country's output structure. (c) How independent is the judiciary? The effectiveness of policy implementation relies on whether the courts act as forums of political arbitration removed from executive branch control.

While discussing the development and success of a social movement, in this paper, three factors will be considered: (1) Organisation: did the participants divide into factions, or was there a sense of solidarity amongst the protestors?; (2) Support from social elites: did the most influential members from the upper echelons of society express explicit support?; (3) Political system: how did the system of governance impact the other three factors and influence the nation's political output and input structures? When defining the success of a social movement, these four factors and their intersection with each country's POS will be considered.

## Methods and Data

This paper will use a mixed-method approach by combining qualitative and quantitative comparative analysis to study the effects of POS's on Hong Kong's Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement and the American Civil Rights Movement leading up to the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In investigating the effects of political opportunity structures on civil rights movements in two nations that operate on varying ends of the spectrum in terms of political systems, this paper will be using comparative research methods to compare and contrast the assessments of both case studies. Through the method of agreement, this paper will consider how POS's of Hong Kong and the USA have some attributes in common and some that differ. It will do the same when considering how both movements were organised and mobilised.

Comparing and contrasting the different variables in both case studies will help find which factors were the leading cause of the similarity in both movements' outcomes. It will also assist in affirming or falsifying the hypothesis—the varying degrees of democracy exercised in the USA and Hong Kong play a significant role in the success of the civil rights movements in both countries.

Qualitative comparative analysis will be the primary research method to analyse various forms of qualitative data, such as news and academic articles. Interviews and archival data will also be mentioned where pertinent but will

not be used extensively as evidence. Quantitative comparative analysis will be the secondary research method that will aid in analysing data collected from surveys at protest sites and online questionnaires.

Qualitative data will play a more critical role in this paper than quantitative data as it has proved to be more helpful in providing evidence that will help construct the foundation of the argument of this paper— the influence of POS 'on the success of social movements. The qualitative data being used will be from newspaper articles, television interviews, and academic articles that provide an in-depth account of the political atmosphere and environment, which will assist in constructing the nature of the POS at the time of both movements.

## Case Study 1: The Civil Rights Act of 1964

The civil rights movement was a mass protest against racial segregation and discrimination in the southern states of the USA that escalated to the national level in the mid-1950s. The movement was rooted in centuries of frustration, anger and the efforts of enslaved Africans and their descendants to withstand racial discrimination and abolish the institution of slavery. Although enslaved people were emancipated due to the Civil War and were then granted fundamental civil rights through the Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments to the U.S. Constitution, their standing in American society did not change with the laws. By the mid-20th century, Black Americans had dealt with prejudice and violence against them for long enough. Along with many white Americans, they mobilised and began an unprecedented fight for equality that spanned two decades.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed after over a decade of protests and prohibited discrimination based on race, colour, sex, national origin or religion. Provisions of this civil rights act prohibited discrimination based on sex, and race in hiring, promoting, firing, public accommodations, federally funded programs. It fortified the enforcement of voting rights and the desegregation of schools. Additionally, the passage of the Act ended the implementation of the Jim Crow laws, which were sustained by the Supreme Court in the 1896 case *Plessy v. Ferguson*. The Court maintained that racial segregation purported to be "separate but equal" was constitutional.

## Political Input Structure

The USA has the features of an open political input structure. Many scholars have pointed to numerous indicators of political openness during the civil rights movement— favourable court decisions and the congressional power of northern Democrats. The paper addresses three features: the number of political parties and the degree of their representativeness, judicial independence, and the interaction of the movement with regime elites.

The United States has two major political parties: the Democrats and the Republicans. There are also smaller parties that are not as well known. While these major parties have a duopoly, the other three largest political parties are the Constitution Party, the Libertarian Party, and the Green Party of the United States.

The Democratic party's philosophy of modern liberalism advocates social and economic equality. It seeks to provide government intervention and regulation in the economy. These interventions, such as anti-gun laws, support for labour unions, moves toward universal health care, equal opportunity, and environmental protection, form the core of the party's economic policy. The Republican party's philosophy centres around social and economic independence and a capitalist system. It is also known for its pro-gun laws, anti-abortion efforts, reduction of government intervention in the economy, and is in support of privatised health care. The party believes in lower taxes, fewer social programs, personal liberty and federalism.

Both major parties broadly represent the American population as they dominate elections and the country's political institutions. Most Americans tend to vote for and identify with the principles of either the Republicans or Democrats. This indicates that the USA has an open political input structure because it has multiple political parties that represent the American population.

Moreover, the judicial component of government is independent, insulating its members from retributive or coercive actions by the executive department of the government. The U.S. Constitution protects judicial independence in two ways— Article III says that federal judges may hold their positions "during good Behaviour." In effect, they have lifetime appointments as long as they satisfy their judicial office's ethical and legal standards. Second, Article III says that the legislative and executive branches may not combine to punish judges by decreasing payments for their services.

This signals that the judiciary enables the nation to have an open political input structure. It ensures that decisions made on policy changes demanded by social movements are insulated from the influence of the executive branch. The input structure remains open by giving social movements hope for change, even during an administration that does not agree with the changes demanded.

Additionally, the support and interaction from political and social figures like W.E.B Du Bois, Booker T Washington, and Martin Luther King, Jr. brought the movement's demands to the forefront of national conscience, making political institutions notice that changes needed to be made to the system. Furthermore, the efforts of groups like NAACP, CORE, and SNCC made sure the movement had support from governmental leaders with legal resources that sought concrete forms of justice and policy change. By swinging their weight around, organisations and public figures helped facilitate a fluid link between the movement demands and policy decision-making institutions, creating an open input structure.

The USA has all the features of a nation with an open input structure. The combination of representative political parties, a constitution that insulates the judiciary from executive influence, and the ability for the movement to establish a fluid link with political and social elites show that American political institutions are open to listening to demonstrators' demands. Therefore, this paper puts forth the argument that the USA has an open political input structure.

## Political Output Structure

The USA has the attributes of a weak political output structure. The American federal system is trying to balance aspects of centralisation and decentralisation by dividing power equally through vertical and horizontal separation of power. The federal design divides powers between several vertical levels of government— national, state, county, local, special district—allowing for multiple access points for citizens. The governments at each level check and balance and further divide the power horizontally by branches— legislative, executive, judicial. Decentralisation can be viewed when crossing state lines and encountering different taxation levels, welfare eligibility requirements, and voting regulations.

The decentralised state apparatus makes the policy implementation process more complex and convoluted as policies can vary across states or simply not exist in some states. This makes it difficult for social movements to get their demands translated into actual systemic change felt nationwide.

As discussed earlier, the American constitution has safeguards that allow the judiciary to be insulated from coercion by the other branches of government. The American courts are, in theory, protected from being controlled by the executive branch, which should strengthen its political output structure. However, the administrative and legislative can have a say in the way the Supreme court of the country is organised.

The President can nominate justices when a vacancy arises in the Supreme Court. The Senate then votes to confirm the nominee. If the President's party does have a Senate majority, the executive and legislative can come together to pack the Court in that party's favour. Such a circumstance occurred, recently and most notably, in October of 2020 with the contentious nomination and subsequent confirmation of Justice Amy Coney Barrett by President Donald Trump mere weeks before the 2020 presidential elections.

The American Supreme Court consists of only nine justices. Hence, there will always be a majority in the political ideology favoured by the Supreme Court justices, and most justices are likely to vote along ideological lines.

Thus, weakening the output structure as policy implementations could become hindered by a Supreme Court consisting of a majority whose political leaning is not compatible with the policy.

The combination of a partially decentralised federal system and a supreme court bench that the executive can influence will make policy implementation a tedious and convoluted process, suggesting that the USA does have the features of a weak political output structure.

## Nature and Success of the Movement

The Civil Rights movement was a vast protest movement that garnered support across the nation. As a result of the colossal number of supporters and the vastness of this movement, it was practically impossible for all the protestors to work as one unit. While they were all committed to the same goal— full inclusion of African Americans in the economic and political life of America, without discrimination based on race and colour— each group differed from the other in its conception of how they could best fulfil this commitment.

This led to the emergence of several prominent figures and factions that helped push the movement across the finish line. The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), the Black Panther Party, The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) were the prominent groups that emerged during the civil rights movement. These groups were arranged in a hierarchical structure with a recognised leader and spokesperson who members followed. Due to the variety of group philosophies that resulted in differing movement strategies, the civil rights movement consisted of an array of protest tactics— some disruptive and others peaceful.

The Black Panthers were led by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, and at its peak in 1968, the Black Panther Party had roughly 2,000 members. They were involved in numerous violent encounters with police. Eldridge Cleaver, editor of the Black Panther's newspaper, and 17-year-old Black Panther treasurer Bobby Hutton were engaged in a shootout with police in 1968 that left Hutton dead and two police officers wounded. Furthermore, Walter Bruce, former chair of the Holmes County Freedom Democratic Party, told the Center for Oral History that “fighting fire with fire” was the only way many blacks and their supporters could survive the fifties and sixties.

However, the disruptive tactics used by some protest groups were overshadowed by the philosophies of non-violence that characterised a majority of organisations part of the civil rights movement.

As the oldest and most recognised civil rights organisation in the United States, the NAACP used its influence to propel the civil rights movement through peaceful means and legal recourse. Which helped facilitate movement access to policy decision-making discussions, resulting in the USA's open input structure. The NAACP's appeal was to public and judicial conscience; they argued that America is intended to be a democratic nation with justice for all (B. Clark, 1966).

Rosa Parks, a secretary at one of NAACP's local chapters, known for refusing to give up her seat on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama, set off the Montgomery Bus Boycott. The boycott became a springboard for organisations like the NAACP and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to develop the national civil rights movement as we know it today. The SCLC, whose President was Martin Luther King Jr., followed non-violence and passive resistance principles and set a precedent for most of the movement. It has the distinction of being the first civil rights organisation to start in the South.

Although the movement was factionalised— divided by political philosophies and strategies that led to infighting, public disagreements, and at times animosity, between organisations— the diversity in protest tactics and ideologies helped the movement garner support in various areas of American society and from people of all walks of life. The rank and file of liberal or religious whites might have been more responsive to the seemingly non-threatening, Christian approach of Martin Luther King, Jr. More tough-minded and pragmatic business and governmental leaders might have found a more significant point of contact with the appeals and procedures of the NAACP and the Urban League. The more passionate African Americans and whites who sought immediate and concrete forms of justice would have probably gravitated towards CORE and SNCC. These figures and organisations opened a gateway for the

movement to interact with the public and the government institutions, which was possible only because of the USA's open political input structure.

Additionally, the USA being a democracy means that it does have constitutional rights set in place to protect its citizens' ability to dissent. The First Amendment of the American Constitution guarantees the right to dissent and is one of the most fundamental rights. This meant that the dissent expressed by African Americans and protest organisations across the USA could not legally be repressed. It meant there was room to consider the movement's demands by political elites like the President of America. In fact, in 1963, John F. Kennedy was the primary political figure who proposed the Civil Rights Act. This was enabled by the open political input structure, which created an environment in which the movement's demands could be taken seriously. It showed that people in high positions in the government were willing to look into the protesters' demands and that the constitution protected their right to dissent.

Was the movement successful? The civil rights movement is everlasting, and its demands are ever-changing. This means that as the movement runs its course, it can have multiple successes and failures. When discussing the demands of protestors during the 1950s-60s—the main one was banning segregation from American society in all its forms. Hence, this paper argues that the movement succeeded in ratifying The Civil Rights Act of 1964. This Act helped set the legal safeguards necessary to promote a culture that could not discriminate based on race. It took over a decade of protests for this Act to be passed and was a significant milestone in the history of the Civil Rights movement.

Furthermore, this paper has shown that the nature of the USA's political opportunity structures during the fifties - sixties engendered a political environment where the Civil Rights Movement's demands could be facilitated.

## **Case Study 2: Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement**

In the summer of 2019, millions of citizens from Hong Kong mobilised to protest the Fugitive Offenders amendment bill that would make it easier for the Chinese government to extradite Hong Kong nationals to mainland China. The proposed law identified that those who suspect serious crimes could be sent to China to face trials. With time the city-wide protests metamorphosed into something more significant—a movement against police brutality and demands for vast political reform. Through this case study, this paper will define the nature of Hong Kong's POS, how it influenced the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill (Anti-ELAB) movement, and whether the movement meets the criterion of success.

Many citizens saw the Fugitive Offenders Bill as a policy that could erode Hong Kong's autonomy and independence from mainland China. The bill would place a colossal amount of Hong Kong's judicial power in Chinese hands. Human Rights Watch's Sophie Richardson said in a statement in 2019, "The proposed changes to the extradition laws will put anyone in Hong Kong doing work related to the mainland at risk." Hence, when considering the nature of Hong Kong's input and output structures, it is essential to factor in the tightening grip of mainland China on the Hong Kong government.

### **Political Input Structure**

The evidence points to Hong Kong tending towards a closed input structure. As Hong Kong operates under the One Country, Two Systems model, its quasi-constitutional document allows political parties to exist. The country does have a multi-party system, and parties can gain seats in the Legislative Council (LegCo) based on the number of votes they receive in the election. Parties do not require significant votes to secure a single seat in the Legislative Council, so it is tough for a single party to gain a majority. As a result, there are several smaller parties.

However, it is worth mentioning that LegCo members are elected by functional constituencies composed of professional and special interest groups accountable to narrow corporate electorates and not the general public. The LegCo consists of 70 seats, and in every election, since 1998, the pro-democracy and anti-establishment parties have



won the popular vote. Nevertheless, these parties fill less than half of the 70 seats. This is because Hong Kong citizens can vote for only 40 of the 70 seats. Various industries of Hong Kong choose the rest. Those 30 seats are often Pro-establishment or pro-China because big businesses are incentivised to be friendly with the Chinese officials.

Additionally, the Communist Party of China (CPC) only allows citizens to vote for candidates who have been vetted and selected by Beijing, suggesting that the Chinese government does have a hand in the political workings of Hong Kong. These electoral arrangements have guaranteed a pro-establishment majority in the legislature since the transfer of sovereignty. Hence the regime is not fully representative of the population— one of the aims of the Anti-ELAB movement was dismantling the increasingly unrepresentative political system. Although Hong Kong has a multi-part system, it is clear that the electoral system was created to be unrepresentative, indicating that the country

Furthermore, in a Vox news report, pro-democracy legislator Claudia Mo argues that the extradition bill is an imminent threat to the human rights of Hong Kong's citizens as mainland China is "where there is no fair trial, there is no humane punishment" and most importantly, "completely no separation of powers." She also states in the same interview that Hong Kong's electoral system is structured "to make sure the executive branch can have easy control over it." This suggests that the judiciary does not exist separate from the executive in mainland China and increasingly in Hong Kong. This indicates that the room for Hong Kong's judicial independence is narrowing with time, pointing to a closing input structure.

Lastly, regarding the interaction between the social elites and the movement, several business elites feared that the bill would threaten their assets under Chinese jurisdiction and had already expressed dissenting voices through forms of passive resistance before the massive demonstrations began.

Hong Kong's business and social elites continued to express demurring sentiments and support for the bill's withdrawal despite increasing pressure from the central and local authorities. They urged for the introduction of an independent investigating commission while making ambiguous statements that contrasted the regime narratives that sought to brand the protestors as rioters or separatists. While the unwavering support from Hong Kong's powerful elite pressurised the Chinese and Hong Kong administrations and aided in the movement's demand being taken seriously, it did not facilitate interest groups' access to political decision-making. This indicates that Hong Kong's opportunity structure does have a feature that tends toward an open input structure but not entirely so.

Due to the one country, two systems model and its quasi-constitutional document, the city's POS deviate significantly from the POS of the nation it belongs to, which is a rare occurrence. Hong Kong does have the features necessary to support an open political input structure— multiple parties, independent judicial power, and social elites that interact with the Anti-ELAB protestors' demands. However, in politics, the reality may not always mirror the technicalities of a document. As discussed earlier, mainland China's influence over Hong Kong is consistently growing. The electoral system seems to be rigged against representativeness, resulting in the distortion and erosion of the values that Hong Kong's constitution attempts to uphold. Support for an establishment that reflects the Chinese government's values is flourishing in many parts of Hong Kong. Consequently, the city's political input structure is morphing into one that reflects its country's. Therefore, this paper argues that Hong Kong is beginning to lean toward a closed input structure.

## Political Output Structure

Similarly, Hong Kong has the features of a weak political output system due to China's influence over Hong Kong's administration.

Hong Kong comprises 18 districts, each represented by a district council that advises the government on local issues such as public facility provisioning, community programme maintenance, and environmental policy. In 2019, 452 seats from all directly elected constituencies were contested out of the 479 seats in total. Nearly three million people voted-- 71 per cent of registered voters-- an unprecedented turnout in the electoral history of Hong Kong. The election was widely viewed as a *de facto* referendum on the 2019–20 Hong Kong protests. The decentralisation and

complex electoral process surrounding the district councils and LegCo suggest that policy implementation in Hong Kong is made tedious by convoluted systems and red tape. Thus, making the region's output structure weak.

Moreover, with 30 seats in the LegCo being held by industrialists, it is arguable that Hong Kong's government, business and finance sectors are deeply intertwined. Many of these industrialists are pro-China as it is beneficial to be on good terms with the Chinese officials, which makes their dissent during the Anti-ELAB movement all the more critical.

However, it is essential to note that while many industrialists are LegCo members themselves, Hong Kong is considered the freest economy in the world. The government has very little control over the market players, even though many are part of the government themselves. This is partly because the industrialist members of LegCo tend to pass economic policy that benefits businesses and aids in profit maximisation—essentially, creating a Laissez-faire economy. Hence, this paper can argue that Hong Kong has a mixed output structure based on this factor.

Lastly, Hong Kong does not have an independent judiciary. As considered in detail earlier, while the region's constitution awards it the privilege of an independent judiciary, the reality varies greatly. Hong Kong's electoral system was designed in a manner that does not prevent the executive branch from exercising control over the Court. Policy development and implementation are severely impacted by the agenda of the members of the LegCo, which, as mentioned prior, is not representative of Hong Kong's population. Thus, it can be said that Hong Kong does have a weak political output structure.

Therefore, this paper concludes that the amalgamation of a decentralised state apparatus, a parliament made up of economic elites, and a judiciary that is not free from the influence of the executive creates a political atmosphere that is not favourable for the success of a social movement. This indicates that Hong Kong has a weak political output structure.

## Nature and success of the movement

After considering all these factors related to Hong Kong's political input and output structures, it is crucial to consider the nature of the Anti-ELAB movement, whether it was a success, and how the region's POS dictated its outcomes.

First, this paper will consider the organisation of the movement. The Anti-ELAB protests were carried out using multiple strategies, forms, and arrangements. Protestors carried out the demonstrations through sit-ins, marches, rallies, wildcat actions, flash mobs, strikes, class boycotts, and human chains, which were a mixture of both peaceful and confrontational tactics. The movement did not follow a fixed route. It was fluid and formless, moulding itself to fit the circumstance as it was occurring. This meant that the movement was leaderless and lacked detailed planning, which was not always detrimental. The benefit of following such a strategy, or lack thereof, was that the protestors were ever ready, signalling their commitment and solidarity to the cause.

Moreover, it meant that the movement was constantly morphing itself to fit the nature of Hong Kong's POS. The fluid nature of the movement indicated that it was consistently improving its ability to develop and mobilise within Hong Kong's political atmosphere and adjust to its closed input structure.

It should be noted that the impulsiveness of the protestors was not detrimental as digital technologies made it easy to mobilise people, coordinate collective action, and sustain the protests. While these digital platforms were crucial in facilitating self-mobilisation, rapid diffusion of information and, at times, collective deliberation and self-restraint among protestors, they were assisted by on-the-ground networks and facilitators that had emerged earlier. The unity of the protesters, the variety of methods through which citizens could express dissent, and the fluidity of the movement helped the cause gain traction in neighbourhoods that had never experienced any protest events before (L.F Lee et al., 2019). This further demonstrates how the protestors were working against the region's closed political input structure.

Beijing's swift crackdown on the protestors also explains the transformation of the protests from peaceful marches, rallies and sit-ins to violent flash mobs and clashes with the police. The confrontational protest techniques were supported by most of the public, who saw it as a justifiable reaction to the violent actions of the Hong Kong



police. In the onsite survey conducted by L.F Lee et al. (2019), 90.9 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that confrontational actions could be justified when the government does not listen to the people. Meanwhile, 85.2 per cent believed that demonstrators should combine peaceful and confrontational actions to yield the maximal impact. In terms of confrontational tactics, protesters targeted damage at government buildings and some public utilities that were considered to have played a role in suppressing the protests with the government. At least until the end of September, no innocent citizens were hurt by the protesters, nor were any shops damaged.

Although young and educated participants were the driving forces of the movement, mobilisation spanned generations, classes, genders and political orientations, which speaks to the unity that characterised the movement. Therefore, the prolonged protests were not a symptom of youth discontent but rather the beginnings of a popular movement against many social issues plaguing Hong Kong's society. The protests began to respond to the Fugitive offenders bill but continued even after the initial demand to withdraw the bill was met. The repressive environment fostered by the government as an attempt to stifle dissent brought to the forefront several other problems in need of addressing— increasing police brutality as a response to public discontent and vast political reform necessary to uphold Hong Kong's constitutional values.

The second factor to be considered is whether the movement gained support from the elite members of Hong Kong's society. This factor was discussed while defining the attributes of Hong Kong's input structure and acts as a crucial link between the region's POS and the success of the Anti-ELAB movement. The division within the ruling class in Hong Kong throughout the extradition bill controversy played a significant role in the movement's success. The business elites feared that the bill would threaten their assets under Chinese jurisdiction and expressed dissenting voices. They urged for the withdrawal of the bill, the creation of an independent investigation committee, and some even condemned the state-sponsored violence faced by the protestors. Hence, it is clear that the most potent members of Hong Kong society were interacting with the movement, to the point where the government felt pressured to give in to the protestors' demands.

Finally, this paper looks at how the political system influenced the success of the movement. Hong Kong's system of governance played a significant part in the region's POS and the success of the Anti-ELAB protests. According to Hong Kong's constitutional document-- the Basic Law-- Hong Kong is an autonomous Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. The Basic Law guarantees autonomy for 50 years and delegates a system of governance led by a Chief Executive and an Executive Council, with a two-tiered system of representative government and an independent judiciary.

Hong Kong can be considered a semi-democracy, but it is missing some of the basic tenets of democracy— universal suffrage. As discussed earlier, the LegCo acts as a pseudo-parliament, and only a third of the council is elected directly. A 20,000 strong functional constituency elects the remaining two-thirds made up of business people and professionals. Moreover, as discussed in the section on Hong Kong's output structure, the judiciary cannot be considered independent.

The public has been at loggerheads with the Chinese government for years, as it continues to undermine the democratic institutions of Hong Kong. Beijing influences the selection (and ultimately approves) of Hong Kong's Chief Executive, the head of the government. That means the Chief Executive, Carrie Lam, is answerable directly to Beijing. In a leaked audio recording of a closed-door meeting between Carrie Lam and a group of business elites, the Chief Executive admitted that she has to serve two masters— the central authorities and local citizens— and hence lacked the autonomy to make necessary concessions to the end the crisis. Therefore, Hong Kong cannot be considered a full democracy. The influences of the Chinese government on the LegCo, executive council, and judiciary played a significant role in the repressive tactics used against the protestors.

However, China's influence was not strong enough to stifle Hong Kong's frustration and passion for this movement. The protestors showed incredible resilience that eventually paid off. On 9 July, Carrie Lam said the controversial bill "is dead" but still refused to meet the protestors' demand to withdraw it. After months of undying protests, on 4 September, Carrie Lam announced that the government would officially withdraw the bill in October. Carrie Lam's government officially withdrew the bill on 23 October.

The protester's demands had transformed by the end of the movement, and their fight for civil rights had gone further than just the withdrawal of a bill. They insisted on mass political, structural and social reform, none of which the Hong Kong government agreed to. The region's closed input structure and its weak output structure indicate that the political environment in Hong Kong was not conducive to the success of a social movement. Still, the Anti-ELAB demonstrators managed to pressure the establishment to withdraw the Fugitive offenders bill by mobilising as a single unit, using various protest tactics, and facilitating a fluid link with regime elites. Hence, this paper argues that the movement can be considered relatively successful.

## Comparing both case studies: What do we learn?

In this section, the paper will examine the similarities and differences between both region's POS and their movements. Through comparative analysis, this section will consider the hypothesis presented by this paper— the difference in political systems plays a critical role in determining the POS of the region, hence, the movement's success. While analysing whether this hypothesis holds up and assessing other aspects of the movements and their region's POS, this section will show that the hypothesis can be disproved and provides an alternative answer to the most significant factor influencing the movement's success. It shows that the fluid link between societal elites and the social movement plays a more critical role than the impact of the political systems on the POS.

The first difference is that both regions have opposing political input structures, much like their political systems. The USA has an open political input structure. It is a democracy, while Hong Kong and its closed input structure are governed under the Two Systems, One Nation model. The region is held tightly under China's totalitarian grip. This indicates that political institutions in Hong Kong are less sensitive to the policy changes demanded by the Anti-ELAB movement compared to the USA's political administration with the demands of the Civil Rights Movement. However, this paper argues that both movements were largely successful— the Anti-ELAB protest achieved its initial demand of withdrawing the Fugitive Offenders Bill and the civil rights movement pushing for segregation to be banned through the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

While Hong Kong's POS created an environment where the region's political institutions would not be receptive to a mass protest movement, which was seen when Hong Kong police brutally cracked down on protestors under the orders of the establishment in the last-ditch effort to repress the protests, nevertheless, the people of Hong Kong continued to fight for their independence from China. As the movement and its demands metamorphosed under the establishment's pressure, their initial demand remained and was met. The bill was withdrawn despite the region's closed input structure.

The Anti-ELAB demonstrations suggest that the nature of a region's political input structure may not significantly impact the success of a movement. The USA's political input structure was compatible with the nature of the Civil Rights movement, which suggested that it could facilitate the movement's success. However, it is clear from the Hong Kong case that the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 cannot be solely chalked up to the openness of America's input structure. This discovery also partially debunks the idea that the difference between both region's political systems determined the movement's success. Although Hong Kong and the USA's political organisation varied greatly, resulting in varying input structures, both movements' outcomes were similar— largely successful.

Secondly, the organisation of both movements were worlds apart. Most research is inclined to show that successful groups tended to be more bureaucratised, centralised, and unfactionalised, which is not the case with the Civil Rights movement.

The Civil Rights Movement in the USA was spread across the entire nation and consisted of several organisations that coordinated protests using tactics based on their varying philosophies. However, they were all fighting towards the same goal. There was a lot of politics and disagreements within the groups and between the groups. Many different public figures led this movement by their own beliefs of how the movement demands should be met. Nevertheless, while the movement was divided by organisations, their aims were united. The factionalism of the Civil Rights Movement acted as a strength and weakness, as discussed earlier.

On the other hand, the Anti-ELAB movement was unique to the history of protest movements in Hong Kong because of the united front against relentless and robust opposition. The movement was fluid, organised, and managed to adjust and improvise based on circumstance. Each protestor stood in solidarity with their peers. With the help of digital platforms, they managed to mobilise almost spontaneously, which meant that no specific groups or organisations divided the movement. Most protests were individually and, at times, impulsively organised as a reaction to any attempts made by the establishment to stifle their dissent. The inclusive and uniting nature of the movement also meant that the movement was not constrained to a few areas within Hong Kong, which helped the movement gain more supporters (L.F Lee et al., 2019). Unlike the Civil Rights Movement, which, for the most part, was concentrated in the North or primarily black neighbourhoods and towns in the South.

However, both movements have been considered relatively successful by this paper. Hence, it can be argued that movement organisation may play a role in the success of a movement but not necessarily a significant one. Both movements were considered a success in achieving their main aims; however, the organisation of the movement was vastly different between both case studies.

While the movement organisation may have differed, protests in both regions used disruptive and peaceful tactics. It can be argued that the application of both forms of protest tactics was inevitable and both forms fed off of each other.

The use of disruptive tactics by social movements seems to increase a movement's potential to incite change when the violence is not so severe that it undermines public sympathy. This case was seen in both case studies, where the violent tactics of the protestors spurred feelings of sympathy and solidarity in Hong Kong citizens who saw such actions as justified as a reaction to police brutality.

While the public may have considered disruptive tactics justifiable in response to repression, peaceful tactics tended to appeal to governmental elites who held power to inspire actual legislative change. Sit-ins, marches, rallies, and boycotts tended to be favoured by members of political institutions in both case studies as they abided by protest laws and could not be negatively characterised. Most economic, social, and political elites found it easier to interact with and endorse more peaceful movements than disruptive ones.

However, it is clear from both case studies that each type of tactic has its strength and weakness, and a mixture of both worked best. Each satisfied the beliefs of both the public and institutional members and was justifiable based on the circumstances. Additionally, both tactics assisted the movements in gaining support from people from all walks of life and pushed them to interact with the movement's demands, contributing to its success. It is also another factor that disproves the hypothesis. The difference in the political system does not influence whether the protest tactics being used are effective.

Consequently, the interaction of elites with both protest movements seems to be the most significant factor in pushing the protestor's demands into the legislative territory. Economic, political, and social elites are the most prominent stakeholders of power in society. Hence, they can put the establishment under pressure and at times force their hand.

In the case of Hong Kong, the support for the movement and pressure from business elites to withdraw the bill put a significant amount of stress on the administration. It can be said that the stake they had in the withdrawal of the bill, and the fact that they were a considerable portion of the members of the LegCo, meant that they could force the government's hand. This paper is under the impression that the initial demand of the Anti-ELAB movement was met because the passage of the bill would have a significant impact on the practices of firms that worked out of Hong Kong. The rest of the demands were quickly dismissed, even though the movement coordination, tactics, and the region's POS remained the same. The only factor that fluctuated was the support from the business and political elites.

Similarly, with the support of senators, public figures, and massive organisations, the Civil Rights Movement's push to end segregation entered the legislative space. Presidential support from John F. Kennedy, who proposed the Civil Rights Act in 1963 and then Lyndon B. Johnson, who signed it into law a year later, is the main reason why the law even exists today. This is not to downplay the efforts of figures like Martin Luther King Jr., or W.E.B Du Bois and organisations like NAACP and CORE, who campaigned for decades for this Act to be passed.

Through comparative analysis, the paper shows that the initial hypothesis does not hold up through this section. It discusses how political input structures and movement organisation are not as significant in influencing a movement's success. Both movements are considered successful despite being in regions with different input structures and being organised in various ways. While both regions have opposing input structures at the time of each protest, they have similar political output structures, which suggest that their POS are not entirely different despite both regions being governed by different political systems. Thus, showing that the difference in the political organisation does not critically influence the success of social movements.

By looking at the similarities between the protest movements, the initial hypothesis begins to get further falsified. Both movements use disruptive and peaceful protest tactics, which shows that the region's political system does not influence the protest tactics used. The movements also take advantage of positive interactions with elites that facilitate movement access to policy-decision making where the changes demanded by the movement can be legitimised in legal terms.

Both case studies clearly show that it takes a push from influential people to get political institutions to notice movements and their demands. The only way that the needs of the protestors were translated into actual legislative change that altered both American and Hong Kong society was through the help of elites who chose to throw their weight behind each movement, using their connections and influence to inspire policy change. Therefore, this paper argues that a positive interaction between elites and social movements seems to have a more significant impact on the movement's success than the type of POS or political system in which the demonstrations occur.

By comparing the Civil Rights Movement leading up to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Anti-ELAB movement, this paper concludes that establishing a fluid link between the movement and the elites of society is the most significant factor that can impact the success of a social movement.

## Conclusion

This paper set out to draw a connection between political institutions and social movements. It attempted to determine political opportunity structures' influence on civil rights movements in regions with opposing political systems. The initial intention of the paper was to prove the hypothesis that the POS of the USA differed from the POS of Hong Kong because one was a democracy and the other was not. Therefore, the campaigns for civil rights in both regions would be impacted uniquely.

By researching these movements and the POS of the regions in which they took place, this paper gleaned an understanding that differed from the assumptions it was initially built upon. Though Hong Kong and the USA had opposite political input structures, their political output structures were similar, and both movements could be considered relatively successful. So, by using the method of agreement, this paper assessed the various factors that contributed to the movements environment and subsequent success. Through this examination, the paper found that the main facet that both movements had in common that helps push their campaigns beyond protests on the streets was support from regime elites who helped demonstrators demands translate into parliamentary discussions and policy changes.

The implications of this research may not be huge, its discoveries may seem obvious, but they can be helpful to those planning on organising protests and campaigns. This paper shows that demonstrations and rallies are necessary to capture the public's attention. However, to facilitate real policy change, the movement needs to interact with regime elites who have an in with the institutions that facilitate such change.

This paper also sets up a discussion for how this link can be established and whether it is a factor that is most significant to civil rights campaigns or all kinds of social movements. While this paper provides some explanation, it also leaves gaps for other scholars to explore why these movements were only successful in attaining their initial demands and why movements with only one long-term demand tended to be more successful. What do the discoveries this paper make say about the society we live in? Why do regime elites—often seen as the oppressors— get to have the most considerable influence on the success of a movement being carried out by the oppressed and downtrodden? Much is left to be explored within the realm of movement success and the role POS plays in this path to success.

In conclusion, the Civil Rights Movement and the Anti-ELAB protests are from vastly different eras and regions. These civil rights campaigns were carried out under immensely different political atmospheres and in exceptionally different ways. Still, they both managed to push back against the establishment and get what they wanted. Many factors contributed to this outcome, and it would have been impossible to explore every single one. Nevertheless, those examined helped paint a picture that could aid movement organisers and governments in years to come, providing a better understanding of the question posed at the beginning of this paper.

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