

# Preferred Reporting Items for A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (Prisma): The relationship between Social Media Use and Political Participation Behavior

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## Abstract

This systematic literature review describes the importance of social media for political participation. The widespread use of social media at the social level in China has promoted extensive academic research on this media. This study makes a systematic analysis of the existing research on the use of social media for political participation by Chinese youth (for college students). The goal of the current study is to evaluate and compare the existing research on political participation on social media. The first aspect of the study involved a search of the literature to determine the depth of study on social media and political participation. The second aspect of literature concentrated on categorizing works that discuss how social media has affected political engagement. How much of the research on social media has been devoted to studying political participation? How many of these research were conducted with Chinese college students as a focus? How many of these studies are conducted from China's perspective? Understanding the true views of college students on political participation and observing their political participation behaviors can better open political communication channels between the government and youth groups, establish a demand response feedback mechanism between youth and the government, improve youth political literacy, promote youth political socialization, and promote the development of socialist democracy in China.

**Keywords:** College Students, Social Media, Political Participation

**Introduction**

A comprehensive and focused literature review is the basis for carrying out practical research. The emergence of social media has significantly affected people's economy, politics, education, culture and human behavior. Social media comprises a set of internet applications based on Web 2.0 that allow users to create and exchange information (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). It is gradually changing traditional ways of life through its uses in communication and entertainment, and its influence is especially strong on younger people (Ainin et al., 2015; Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010; Sahharon et al., 2018; Vasalou et al., 2010). A number of studies have pointed out that social media has become an important medium for people from all over the world to obtain political information, pay attention to political leaders, release or forward political information, organize or participate in public welfare activities (Yiran Wang et al., 2017; Pang, 2018; Laurie et al., 2019).

Although democracy is not necessarily the best political form or the ultimate goal of human development, it is at least the best political form that can be created so far (Zhou, 2013). The scope of citizens' political participation is the biggest problem when comprehensively evaluating the democracy of the society (Dong, 2017). Kern also mentioned that "On which issues the people's opinions play a decisive role and the limits on the authority of the people's opinions can determine the scope of democracy in the society. The wider the scope (as long as it is a common issue), the more fully democracy will be achieved" (Kern, 2007).

China's college enrollment expansion policy has led to a large number of college students in China. Chinese University enrollment expansion, also known as college enrollment expansion or college enrollment expansion, is referred to as enrollment expansion, including graduate enrollment expansion, undergraduate enrollment expansion, and higher vocational enrollment expansion. It refers to the educational reform policy of expanding the enrollment of regular colleges and universities based on solving economic and employment problems since 1999 in the territory of the People's Republic of China (i.e. the Chinese Mainland). In short, Chinese University enrollment expansion it is the educational reform policy of expanding the enrollment of higher education (including undergraduate and graduate students) since 1999. The enrollment expansion originated from the Action Plan for Revitalizing Education in the 21st Century issued by the Ministry of Education in 1999. The document proposes that by 2010, the gross enrollment rate of higher education will reach 15% of the school-age youth. In 2013, the total number of all types of higher education in China reached 34.6 million, and the gross enrollment rate of higher education reached 34.5%. In 2019, the enrollment of higher vocational education increased by 1 million, and the gross enrollment rate of higher education in China exceeded 50%, entering the stage of popularization of higher education.

The data shows that the total number of students in higher education in China has exceeded 44.3 million, and the enrollment rate has increased from 30% in 2012 to 57.8% in 2021, an increase of 27.8 percentage points, realizing a historic leap. In 2010, there were 22.318 million students in China's ordinary colleges and universities, and in 2020, there will be 32.855 million students in China's ordinary colleges and universities (China Statistical Yearbook, 2021, China Statistical Publishing House, 2021, C21-08), with an increase of nearly 1.5 times. The college students are young and promising, active in thinking, and creative. They are playing an important role in national politics, economy, culture and other fields. Political participation is the first choice for college students to care about national political development and influence national policies (Zhang, 2020).

Social media comprises a set of internet applications based on Web 2.0 that allow users to create and exchange information (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). It is gradually changing traditional ways of life through its uses in communication and entertainment, and its influence is especially strong on younger people (Ainin et al., 2015; Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010; Sahharon et al., 2018; Vasalou et al., 2010).

Social media is an important medium for Chinese college student to search for political information, and its role is becoming more and more significant. According to the data in the 47th Statistical Report on the Development of China's Internet, as of December 2020, the number of Internet users in China is 989 million, and the Internet penetration rate is 70.4%. In terms of age structure, the proportion of Internet users aged 20-29, 30-39, and 40-49 is 17.8%, 20.5%, and 18.8% respectively, higher than that of other age groups; In terms of vocational structure, the proportion of student groups is 21%, ranking first. According to the latest report of China Network Information Center (CNNIC), the number of social media users nationwide increased by 2.6% in 2021, reaching 1.007 billion by the end of the year. Compared with 415 million in 2011, the number of social media users in China doubled in just over eight years. At present, about 70% of China's total population now regularly use social media, and China now has 21.6% of the global 4.65 billion social media users. Social media has penetrated into all aspects of Chinese citizens' lives, and people's food, clothing, housing and transportation can be solved through social media. Compared with other groups of young people in China, they are more dependent on social media, especially in obtaining various kinds of information and news information.

The new media political participation of college students has different behavior characteristics and dynamic mechanism from the actual political participation; Although the new media has expanded the channels and connotation of political participation to a certain extent, the social media political participation of Chinese college students still needs to be developed and cultivated (Zhang, 2019). The practice of college students' political participation is less. China has been in the pattern of "strong government weak society" for a long time, and government departments have always played a leading role in the field of administrative decision-making. Therefore, college students have fewer opportunities to participate in political practice activities in their daily life. The main political education comes from the indoctrination of ideological and political courses. The main political practice is also limited to election voting, obtaining political information, participating in league activities Simple political activities such as expressing political opinions on the Internet. This formed the contradiction between college students' "high awareness of participation" and "little opportunity for participation" (Ding, 2021).

Understanding the real views of the young group on political participation and observing their political participation behavior can better open the political communication channels between the government and the youth group, establish the appeal response feedback mechanism between youth and the government, improve the political literacy of young people, promote the political socialization of young people, and thus promote the development of socialist democracy in China (Dong, 2019).

### **The Purpose of The Study**

The purpose of this study is to analyze the impact of social media use on Chinese college students' political participation. The first step of this research is to search for relevant documents, so that we can determine the current research level of Chinese college students' social media political participation. The second step focuses on the literature classification of

social media on college students' political participation. Of all the studies on social media political participation, how many studies focus on college students? How many of these studies are conducted from the perspective of China? The emergence of social media has greatly changed the way people obtain information and exchange information and opened new channels for political participation. Social media has had an unprecedented impact on the political participation of Chinese citizens, even on the formulation of national policies. However, even so, the level of political participation of Chinese citizens, especially college students, through social media is still low. Social media has not been effectively used and has not yet become a channel for effective political participation. At present, the academic community lacks research to solve this problem. In scientific research, there are insufficient documents to solve this problem, because the level of political participation of a country plays an important role in many aspects of the country's political culture, economic development, and at the same time, it is also an important indicator to measure the level of democracy of a country,

In addition, the particularity of China's political system and national conditions is crucial to the study of college students' political participation in socialist countries represented by China.

### **Methodology**

The method used in this systematic literature review is Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA Framework). It is a standard method in reporting methodology in the systematic literature review (Moher et al., 2011). A systematic review can advance the scientific understanding of the impact of the social media on political participation accuracy. In order to control the current research level of social media political participation, the author has carried out a more rigorous design of search keywords, using similar or related([youth OR “young people” OR “young adult” OR “college student” OR “university student”] AND [“social media” OR “Tik Tok”OR “Weibo” OR “WeChat” OR “Internet” OR “Online”] AND [“political participation” OR “political expression” OR “political engagement” OR “public participation” OR “political affairs” OR “vote”] AND [China] OR [Chinese] ) keywords process Boolean search.

### **Prisma**

The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses reviews can compare the research topics scientifically and rigorously, and be able to compare the accuracy of Chinese social media research on college students' political participation, and how researchers rigorously study the relevance of social media to college students' political participation. The PRISMA Framework used in this review has four stages: Identification, Screening, Eligibility, and Inclusion. The literature search is limited to the Scopus database. Scopus database is one of the most used databases in research (Harzing & Alakangas, 2016)

### **Resource**

This literature review only focuses on Scopus. Scopus is a new navigation tool that covers abstracts, references and indexes of the most extensive scientific and medical literature in the world. The authors chose this database because it is the largest abstract and citation database in the world, covering 15000 scientific, technical and medical journals. Scopus not only provides users with the citation information of its articles, but also integrates the network and patent retrieval directly from a simple and clear interface.

### **Eligibility and Exclusion**

In this study, eligibility and exclusion were used as important criteria for screening and studying relevant literature. First of all, this study excluded those relatively short investigative articles, mainly selected journal articles, conference papers and book chapters. Secondly, in order to avoid difficulties in language translation, the search of this study is limited to English documents. Finally, regarding the time of the literature, the literature from 2012 to 2022 is selected. Because social media is the product of scientific and technological progress and is closely related to the development of the times, the literature in the past ten years has been the focus of research.

With the progress of the search process, the index articles of social sciences, computer sciences, engineering, psychology, multiplicity, art and humanity were selected as the research focus of social media political participation. Other studies, such as Medicine, Biochemistry, Genetics and Molecular Biology, Agricultural and Biological Sciences and Environmental Science were excluded due to insignificant research conducted on these subject areas regarding social media political participation. Lastly, in line with the objective of this SLR, Countries and regions did not conduct special screening, but only excluded the documents that could not be identified, with the aim of maximizing the access to documents related to the subject.

### **Systematic Review Process**

The review process was carried out in January 2023, and four stages were involved in this SLR. In the search of this literature review, the authors have created a search strategy to determine the relevant literature. This search strategy is a customized search strategy based on the science of Scopus database. On the shoulders of previous scholars' research, key words related to social media are as follows: ["social media" OR "Tik Tok" OR "Weibo" OR "WeChat" OR "Internet" OR "Online"] were adopted while pay attention to the concept of political participation (PP). At the same time, carefully check whether there are any duplicate documents at this stage. A total of 37 articles were finally identified.

The second stage is to screen the literature. At this stage, 37 selected articles will be reviewed, and a total of 7 articles will be removed, leaving a total of 30 articles. The third stage is reliability, which is conducted by reading the full text. After thorough examination, a total of 9 articles were excluded because some articles did not pay attention to social media and PP or did not take Chinese Mainland as the research object or did not meet other inclusion criteria. The last stage of the review resulted in a total of 21 articles used in this SLR.

### **Data Extraction**

In the data extraction stage, 21 articles were selected based on the characteristics below:

1. Articles included must be original review papers, conference papers.
2. The articles must be in the English language and from the field of social sciences, Computer sciences, Engineering, Psychology, Multidisciplinary Art and humanity. Medicine, Biochemistry, Genetics and Molecular Biology, agriculture and Biological Sciences, Environmental Science, were excluded.
3. Extracted articles published from 2012 to 2022.
4. The extracted papers were from Hong Kong, China, Macao, United States, Australia, Banglades, Germany, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway.
5. The search strategy was scientifically tailored and limited to the Scopus database only.

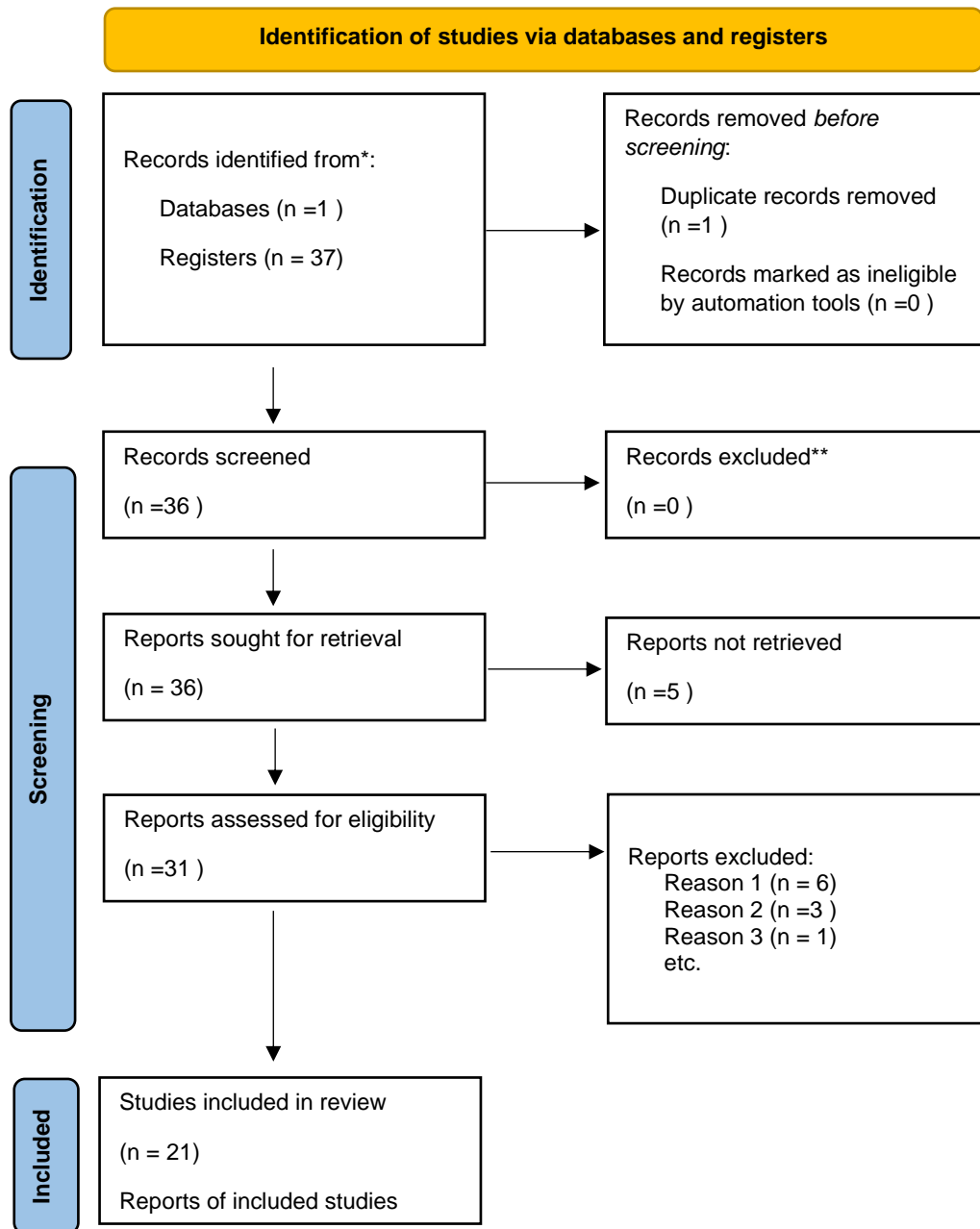
Table 1.0

*The inclusion and exclusion criteria*

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Eligibility</b>	<b>Exclusion</b>
<b>Literature type</b>	Journal articles, conference paper	Short survey, erratum, book chapter and others
<b>Language</b>	English language	Non-English language
<b>Indexes</b>	social sciences, Computer sciences, Engineering, Psychology, Multidisciplinary Art and humanity	Medicine, Biochemistry, Genetics and Molecular Biology, agriculture and Biological Sciences, Environmental Science
<b>Countries</b>	Hong Kong, China, Macao, United States, Australia, Banglades, Germany, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway	Others not included
<b>Timeline</b>	Articles from 2012-2022	Below 2012 & above 2022

The inclusion and exclusion criteria

The Preferred Reporting Items for A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (Prisma) Table of This Study



\*Consider, if feasible to do so, reporting the number of records identified from each database or register searched (rather than the total number across all databases/registers).

\*\*If automation tools were used, indicate how many records were excluded by a human and how many were excluded by automation tools.

Table 1.2

*Findings regarding articles on the past streams of coronavirus-related research and UR*

Concepts	Inclusion	Total research/Year
<b>Social media</b>	by subject areas, document types, and document source	252,579 document results. Spanned (1925- 2022)
<b>Political participation</b>	by subject areas, document types, and document source	41693 document results. Spanned (1987- 2022)

Findings regarding articles selected on the effect of social media on political participation

**Findings Regarding Articles Selected on The Effect of Social Media on Political Participation**

Previous research work is the basis for creating new knowledge. When researchers carry out literature review, they interpret, analyze, compare and critically evaluate the existing knowledge system. The process of SLR enables scholars to discover the pattern of previous results, absorb the depth and details of existing knowledge, and scientifically identify the gaps in future exploration.

Based on the selected articles, Chan (2013); Jin (2016); Pang (2018) examined the impact of political efficacy on political participation. Chan et al (2021); Chen et al (2016); Wang et al (2017); Wang & Shi (2017) examined the impact of social media use on online or offline political participation. Lu and Zhao (2018); Chan et al (2021); Chan et al (2017) conducted a cross-national analysis of the impact of social media on political participation. And studying the impact of different political backgrounds on social media political participation, the study found that the political system of China's one-party dictatorship is significantly different from the predicted results of social media political participation in other countries or regions, which shows that it is necessary to study the relationship between social media and political participation in China's autocratic government system.

Pang (2017); Chen (2016) examined the relationship between Gratifications and political participation, and two articles studied two different kinds of social media, Weibo and WeChat respectively. But on the Gratifications and political participation in social media entertainment, information search and other aspects, Pang's research result is that the use of Weibo positively predicts civil participation, but does not directly predict political participation, Chen's research result is that the use of WeChat is positively predicting political participation behavior, which shows that the research on the relationship between social media use and political participation behavior needs further verification. Most of the 21 selected articles did not focus on one or more specific social media, of which only 5 articles were about specific social media, namely Facebook, WeChat and Weibo, accounting for less than a quarter, and there is still a research gap in the research of China's rapidly developing short video social media.



Table 1.3

*Characteristics of the Articles Selected for Analysis*

Title of article	Authors/year	Social media type	Topic
The role of political efficacy on the relationship between Facebook use and participatory behaviors- A comparative study of young American and Chinese adults	Michael Chan(2013)	Facebook	political efficacy ; political participation
Digital Inclusion: The Way Forward for Equality in a Multiethnic Society	Samsudin A. Rahim (2011)	No specific social media	Economic and political participation
The Dual Impact of Social Media Under Networked Authoritarianism: social Media Use, Civic Attitudes, and System Support in China	Li et al. (2016)	No specific social media	public affairs communication, social media
Implicit and Explicit Control: Modeling the Effect of Internet Censorship on Political Protest in China	Lu and Zhao (2018)	No specific social media	Internet Censorship, Political Protest
Angry youth or realistic idealist? The formation of subjectivity in online political participation of young adults in urban China	Fu (2020)	Weibo	political subjectivity, online political participation
Can microblogs motivate involvement in civic and political life? Examining uses, gratifications and social outcomes among Chinese youth	Pang (2017)	microblogs	uses, gratifications and social outcomes
Comparing social media use, discussion, political trust and political engagement among university students in China and Hong Kong: an application of the O-S-R-O-R model	Xueqing Li & Michael Chan (2016)	No specific social media	social media use, discussion, political trust and political engagement, compare China and Hong Kong
Cross-Cutting Discussion on Social Media and Online Political Participation: A Cross-National Examination of Information Seeking and Social Accountability Explanations	Chan et al.(2021)	No specific social media	Cross-National Examination, Social Media and Online Political Participation
Examining the roles of mobile and social media in political participation: A cross-national analysis of three Asian societies using a communication mediation approach	Chan et al (2017)	No specific social media	cross-national analysis, mobile and social media in political participation
Examining the roles of social media use and connections to public actors on democratic engagement: An analysis of young adults in three Asian societies	Chan et al (2021)	No specific social media	social media use, democratic engagement

Internet Use and Political Efficacy among Chinese University Students	Jin (2016)	No specific social media	Internet Use, Political Efficacy
Is mobile app a new political discussion platform? An empirical study of the effect of WeChat use on college students' political discussion and political efficacy	Pang (2018)	WeChat	Political discussion, political efficacy
'Politically indifferent' nationalists? Chinese youth negotiating political identity in the internet age	Liu (2012)	No specific social media	Internet use, political identity
Cross-Media Usage Repertoires and Their Political Impacts: The Case of China	Gong (2020)	No specific social media	Social Media Usage, Political Involvement
Social media use and democratic engagement: a comparative study of Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China	Chen et al. (2016)	No specific social media	Social media use, democratic engagement
Social media use, political affect, and participation among university students in urban China	Chen et al. (2017)	No specific social media	Social media use, political affect, political participation
The Effects of Previous and Current Instrumental Involvement and Expressive Involvement on Online Political Participation among Chinese College Students	Wang et al. (2018)	No specific social media	Expressive Involvement, Online Political Participation
The influence of online forum and SNS use on online political discussion in China: Assessing "Spirals of Trust"	Mou et al. (2013)	No specific social media	online forum and SNS use, online political discussion
Traditional Resources, Internet Resources, and Youth Online Political Participation: The Resource Theory Revisited in the Chinese Context	Wang et al. (2017)	No specific social media	Traditional Resources, Internet Resources, Online Political Participation
WeChat use among Chinese college students: Exploring gratifications and political engagement in China	Chen (2016)	WeChat	Gratifications, political engagement
Weibo use and political participation: the mechanism explaining the positive effect of Weibo use on online political participation among college students in contemporary China	Hongyu Wang & Fayong Shi (2017)	Weibo	Weibo use, online political participation

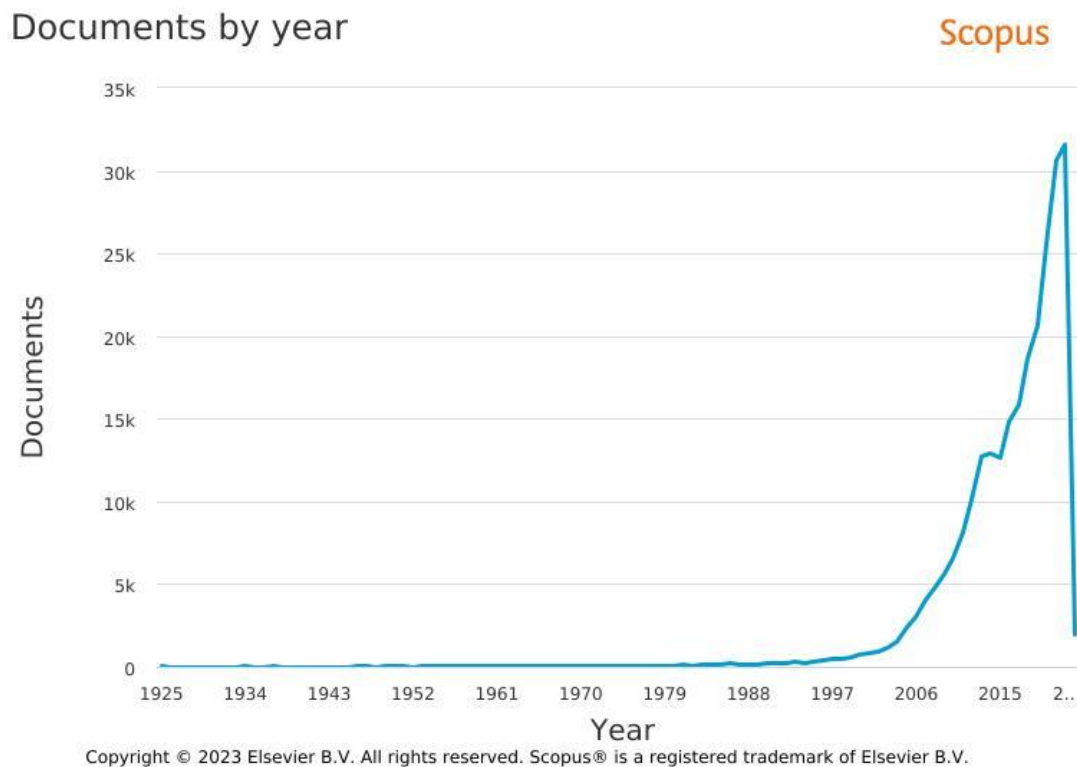
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Findings regarding articles selected on the effect of Social Media on PP

### SLR Findings in Details

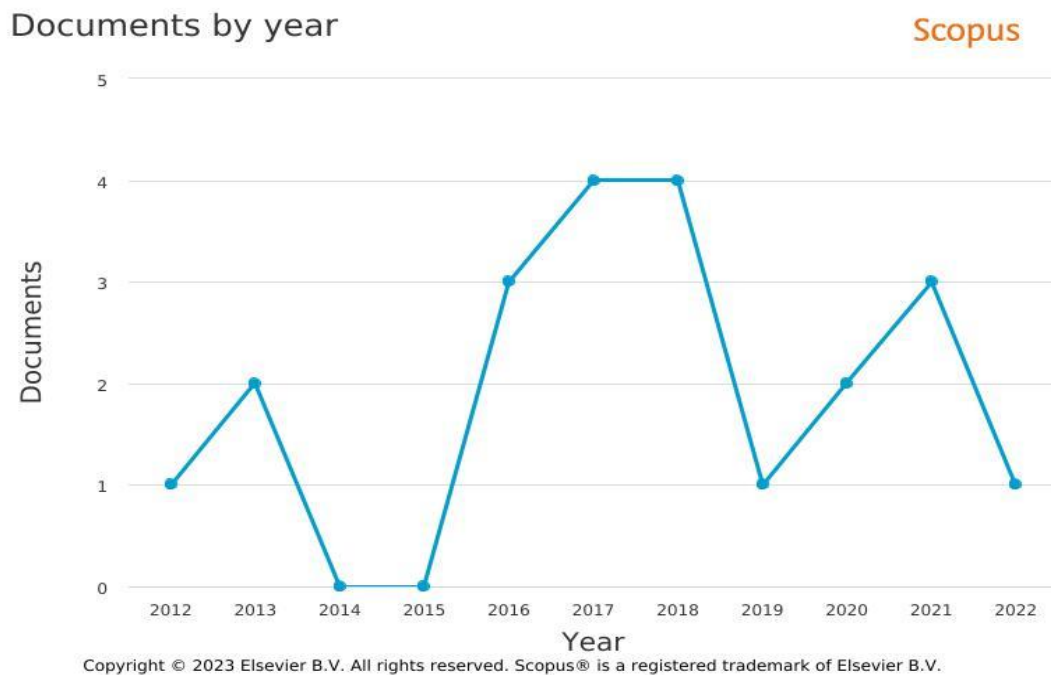
Before studying the research level of the impact of social media on political participation, the authors first investigated the concept of social media. Based on the current SLR the concept of social media began to receive attention around 1997, and the degree of attention continued to rise. Before 1997, there was little or no attention to social media. The reason is

that the first social network in the world came out in 1997. Since then, social media has gradually appeared in the public view and has had an increasingly important impact on people's lives, especially at present, social media has penetrated into all aspects of people's lives, and its impact on people's lives is very obvious, At the same time, the attention of theorists to social media has reached its peak. Only in the results of 252579 documents found in the Scopus database, many studies have spanned the period from 1997 to 2022 and reached the peak in 2021. It can be seen that the in-depth study of social media is crucial in today's highly developed network.



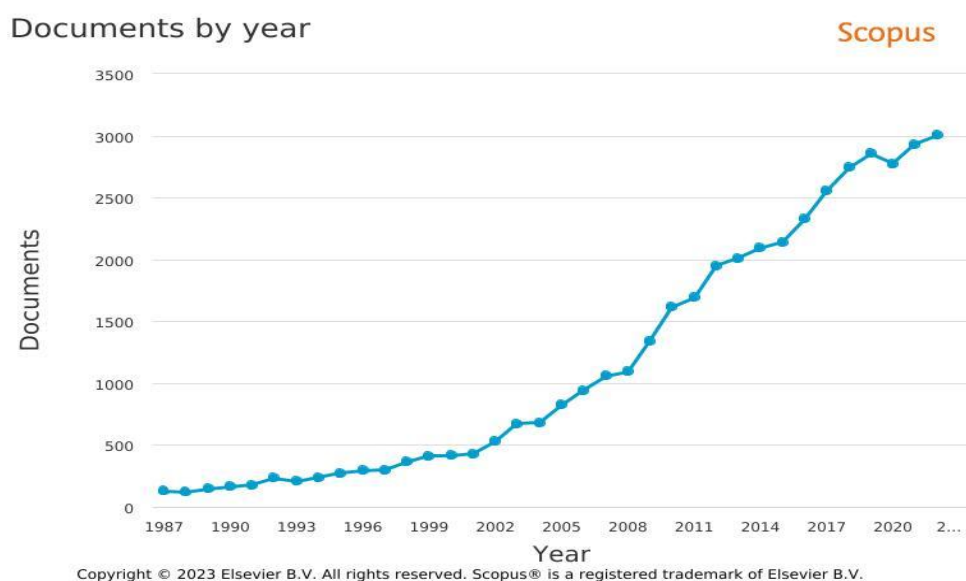
### Research on Social Media by Year

Since 1997, the research on social media has increased sharply year by year. However, there is a literature gap in the research on the impact of social media and political participation in Chinese Mainland. Only a limited number of studies have examined the impact of social media and political participation in the context of Chinese Mainland. Unexpectedly, having conducted a full search of literature keywords in this study ([youth OR “young people” OR “young adult” OR “college student” OR “university student”] AND [“social media” OR “Tik Tok” OR “Weibo” OR “WeChat” OR “Internet” OR “Online”] AND [“political participation” OR “political expression” OR “political engagement” OR “public participation” OR “political affairs” OR “vote”] AND [China] OR [Chinese] ), only 21 document results were extracted. Notably, the search results were found after the adoption of inclusion and exclusion criteria. As can be seen from the chart below, compared with the social media research, the research on political participation in social media with the background of Chinese Mainland is not ideal. The reality in the chart below is that 2016-2018 is the peak of the research on political participation in social media, which declined in 2019, and relevant research literature has appeared since the latest 2021, Wang & Shi mentioned that political participation, online or offline, is still a politically sensitive issue in contemporary China (Wang & Shi, 2017)



### Research on Chinese social media political participation by year

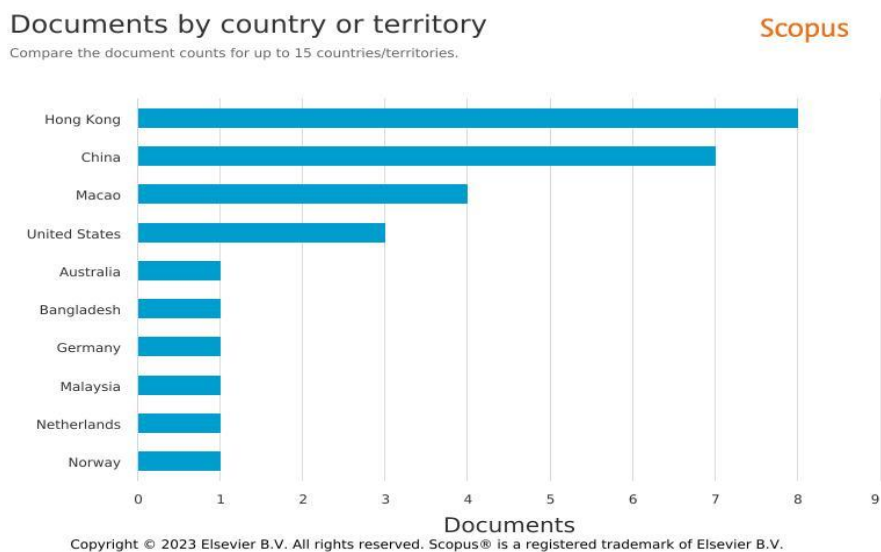
At the same time, the authors further studied the research level of political participation from 1986 to 2022. The purpose is to further determine the degree of attention paid by the academic community to political participation in the past few decades. From the search results, a total of 41693 documents have been extracted from the Scopus database. From 1986 to 2022, only all open access documents were included. From the results of the review, the research on political participation began to appear relatively influential documents around 1986, and showed a steady increase in the development trend from 1986 to 2022, which further shows that the academic community is paying more and more attention to the issues of political participation closely related to the public interest, and the degree and level of political participation also explains the level of democracy of a country or region to a certain extent.



**The concept of political participation by year**

**Literature Classification on social media and political participation**

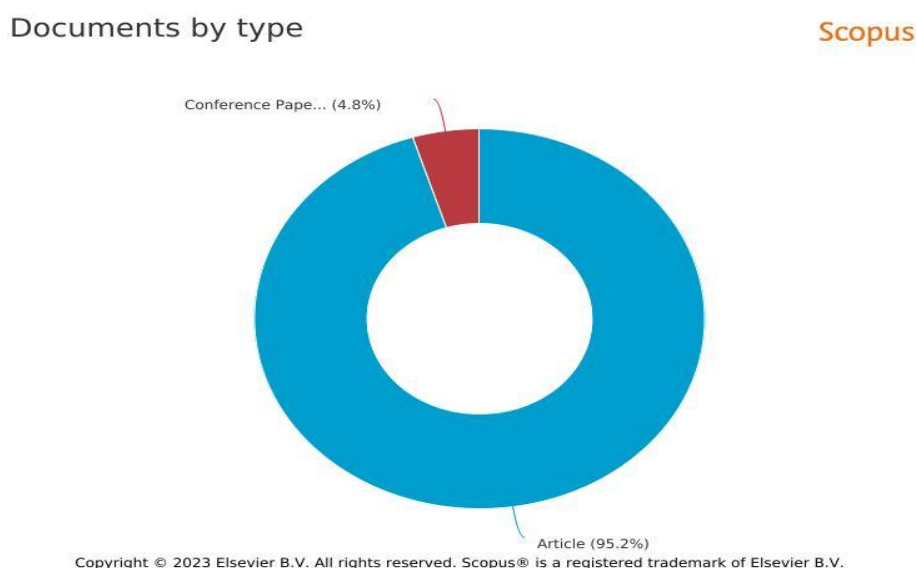
On the contribution of research literature on political participation of social media in Chinese Mainland, Hong Kong has the largest contribution, ranking first, followed by Chinese Mainland, Macao and the United States; Finally, Australia, Germany, Malaysia, Norway and other countries. The research on political participation in social media in Chinese Mainland is based on the Chinese Mainland as the research background and the special media political environment in Chinese Mainland. However, the literature of Hong Kong, China, is higher than that of Chinese Mainland in the research results on this topic, which to some extent indicates that the research on political participation in social media in Chinese Mainland is insufficient.



**Literature Classification by County or territory**

**Literature classification on covid-19 and university reputation**

From the results of this SLR search, the review articles were the most published in the Scopus database on social media and political participation by 95.2%, followed is conference papers by 4.8%. Other document types not found as shown below:



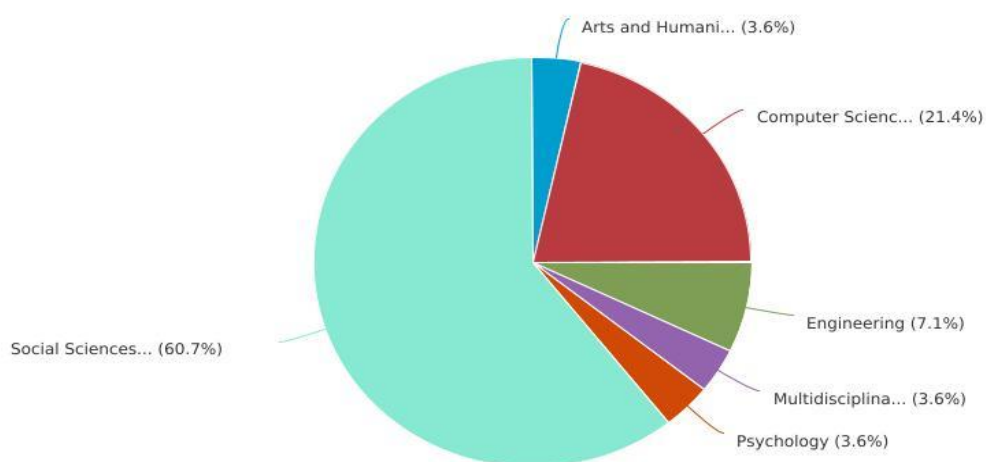
### Literature Classification by Document Type

#### Literature classification on social media and political participation

Looking at the classification of literature by different fields or subject areas, the field of social science contributed the most. Judging from the perspective of science and technology, social media is greatly affected by the development and progress of science and technology. Therefore, research results from the perspective of science and technology and engineering are also expected. From the perspective of the distribution of literature review disciplines, Computer science and engineering account for 21.4% and 7.1% respectively, while others have 3.6% each.

Documents by subject area

Scopus



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### Literature Classification by Subject Area

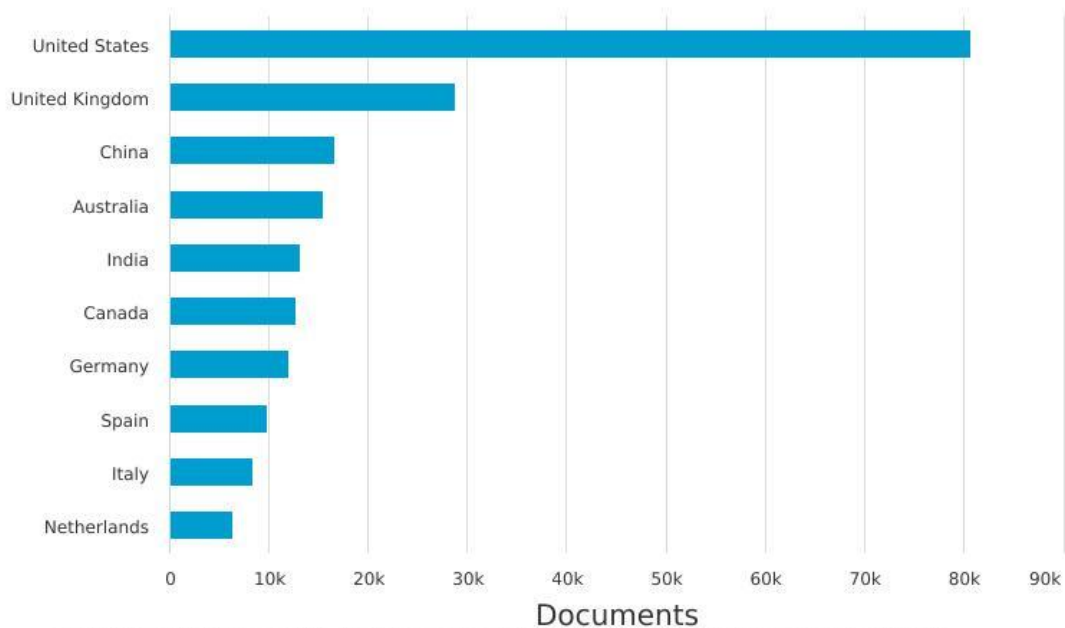
#### Literature Classification on Only Social Media

The United States contributed most to the research on the social media, followed by the United Kingdom respective. China took the next position while Australia and India followed. However, United States would have taken the lead in the research about social media because social media first appeared in United States and United States, United Kingdom, China, Australia and India, which have made outstanding contributions to the literature, are all major users of social media (Dixon, 2022).

## Documents by country or territory

Scopus

Compare the document counts for up to 15 countries/territories.



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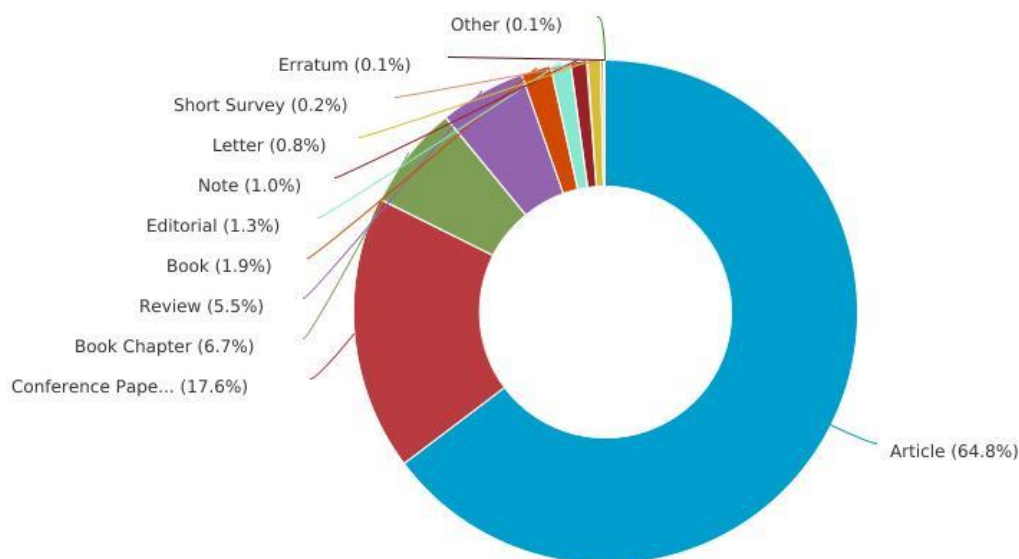
### Literature Classification by Country

#### Literature Classification on Only Social Media

Regarding document type on research concerning social media, articles paper contributed the most with 64.8% on the Scopus database, followed by conference papers at 17.6%, while short survey took the last position with 0.2% .

## Documents by type

Scopus



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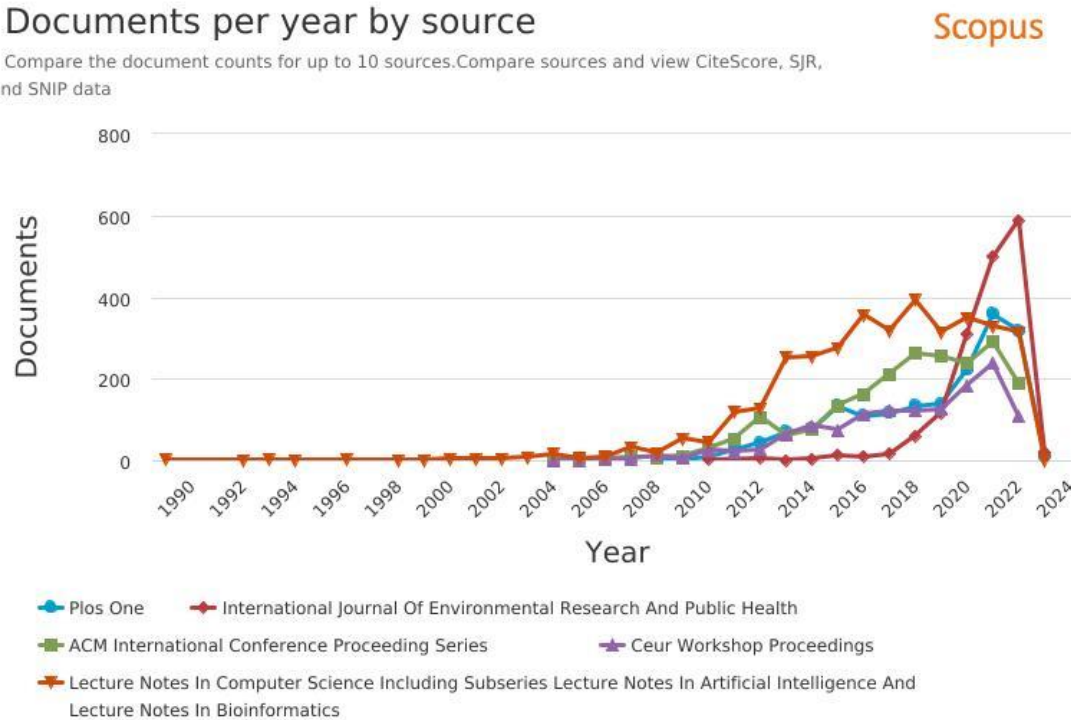
## Literature Classification by Document Type

### Literature Classification on Only Social Media

Based on the literature classification search by the different sources on social media, the Lecture Notes In Computer Science Including Subseries Lecture Notes In Artificial Intelligence And Lecture Notes In Bioinformatics contributed more to the literature from 1990 – 2023. Though ACM International Conference Proceeding Series started the research on social media on 1993, the Plos One joined in 2013. Again, International Journal Of Environmental Research And Public Health began in 2010, rapidly increased from 2010 and significantly climaxed in 2022. The Ceur Workshop Proceedings of the exploration of social media first on 2004, and the research process is stable.

### Documents per year by source

Compare the document counts for up to 10 sources. Compare sources and view CiteScore, SJR, and SNIP data



## Literature Classification by Document Source

### Literature Classification on Only Political Participation (PP)

The authors further advanced this SLR by considering research done regarding PP. From the finding, from the perspective of the countries and regions of political participation research literature, the United States made the largest contribution to political participation research literature, followed by the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia and other countries. It is noteworthy that China contributed less than 1000 papers on political participation research in the 36 years from 1986 to 2022. For a country with the largest population in the world (1.412 billion) and the third largest land area in the world (9.6 million square kilometers), the number of relevant research on political participation contradicts it. This also further validates the view that Wang expressed in 2017 that political participation, online or offline, is still a politically sensitive issue in contemporary China.

The United States and the United Kingdom first recognized the need and relevance of PP; hence they were the leading countries with the highest research on PP in the past. Thus, this justified the level of advanced and rapid development in those regions. The scope of citizens'

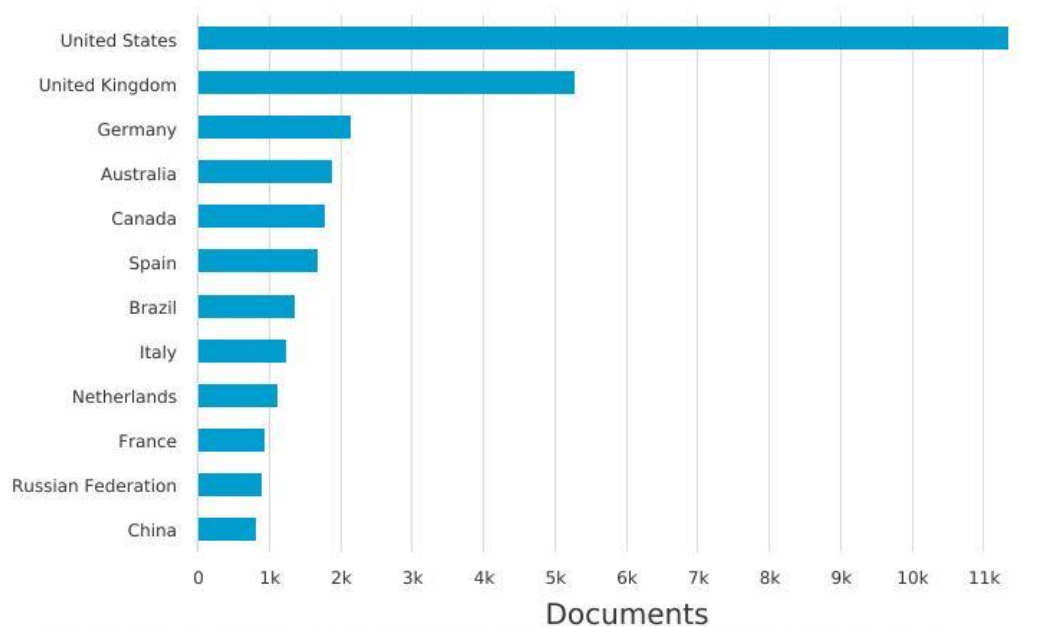


political participation is the biggest problem when comprehensively evaluating the democracy of the society (Dong, 2017).

### Documents by country or territory

Scopus

Compare the document counts for up to 15 countries/territories.



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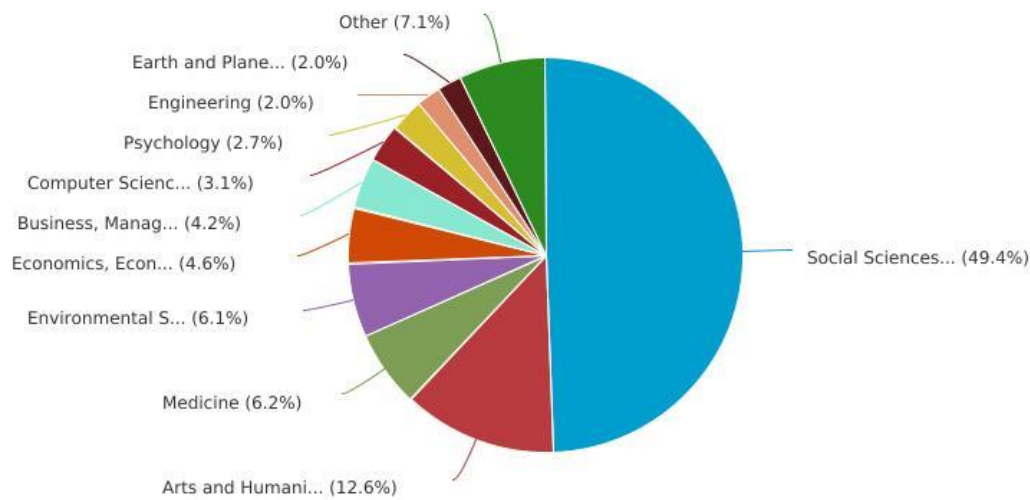
### Literature Classification by Country

#### Literature Classification on Only Political Participation (PP)

Looking at literature classification on the research regarding PP from the past years (1986 till 2022) by subject types, the field of social sciences contributed the most with 49.4%. Followed by Art and Humanity with 12.6%, and Medicine with 6.2% respectively. This finding justified that the field of social sciences recognized the relevance of reputation more than other subject areas. However, this search was limited to only the Scopus database.

## Documents by subject area

Scopus



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### Literature Classification by Subject Areas

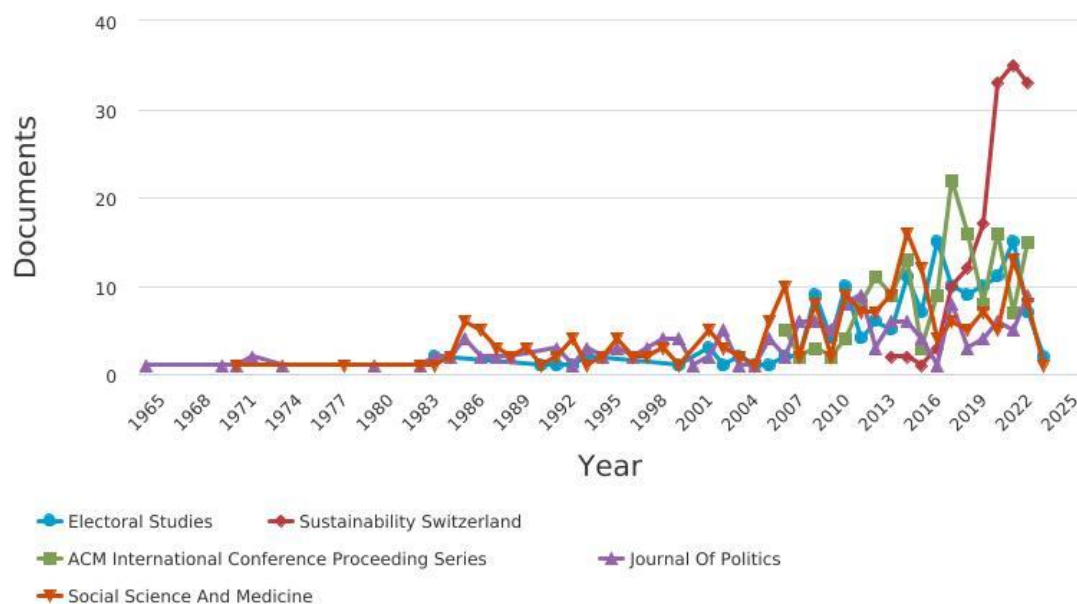
#### Literature classification on only political participation (PP)

On account of literature classification by source regarding political participation, the concept of political participation (PP) was first reported by The Journal of Politics in 1964. The Journal of Social Science And Medicine has made the greatest contribution to political participation and has made continuous contributions from 1970 to 2021. Sustainability Switzerland began to contribute to the topic of political participation in 2013, but, Sustainability Switzerland has the highest contribution regarding PP in 2021. From 1984 to 2022, the awareness and relevance of PP became more evident in scientific literature by different journals at different paces.

## Documents per year by source

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## Literature Classification by Source

### Discussing the Findings

The emergence of social media has had a certain impact on the political participation of countries and regions around the world. This current systematic literature review scientifically studies the impact of social media and political participation, as well as the important role of political participation in improving the level of national democracy.

Specifically, this study investigated the impact of social media on political participation. At the same time, the study investigated the countries and literature sources that contributed the most to social media and PP literature. As for Chinese Mainland, the survey results of systematic literature review show that the research on political participation of young college students in Chinese Mainland is not ideal, which leads to the low level of political participation, weak political related knowledge, and political apathy which contrary to their age (Ding, 2021).

In order to fill in the gaps of PP research in the literature, this systematic literature review concludes that the scientific research level of social media political participation is low. In the past years (1925- 2022), out of 252,579 document results on social media, only 41693 document results were on political participation from previous (1987-2022) years of studies. Focused on Chinese youth, out of 37 document results, only a total of 21 document results were found, and Hong Kong contributed the most, followed by China, Macao, and the United States. Although Chinese Mainland ranks second in the research on this subject, we should look at this result rationally. Because of the sensitivity of the topic and the scarcity of data, studies on social media use and political participation in China using survey methods are rare; rather, much of the existing research in China uses qualitative methods, such as case studies, content analysis, in-depth interviews, or field observations (Wang, Rees, & Andreosso-O'callaghan, 2004) , Therefore, there is still a big gap in the research methods and depth of

social media political participation under the political system of one party dictatorship in Chinese Mainland, and the academic community should conduct more scientific research on this topic.

In addition, from the past years (1986 to 2022), there were only 41693 documents on political participation worldwide in more than 30 years. Although these results come from the Scopus database and are limited to open access, more research is still needed to maximize the sustainability of political participation, comprehensively improve the level of political participation of citizens around the world, and thus improve the level of democracy around the world. From the finding, From the perspective of the countries and regions of political participation research literature, the United States made the largest contribution to political participation research literature, followed by the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia and other countries. The field of social sciences contributed the most, followed by Art and Humanity and Medicine respectively.

From the literature review of the system and its results, it can be seen that political participation is the main parameter and prerequisite to ensure the democratic level of a country or region. As in a large family, if the communication between family members is not smooth, it will seriously affect the communication between members. Especially for China, a multi-ethnic country with a huge land area and population base, and a country with a one-party dictatorship political system, if do not have a smooth and orderly political participation mechanism will be very difficult. Ignoring political participation will only be detrimental to human development and the improvement of national democracy. Therefore, political participation is considered as an important way to guarantee human rights, which can encourage citizens to care about national policies and human progress.

### **Conclusion and Suggestion**

This SLR tends to fill the gaps in the literature and answer the following questions: Does social media have any impact on political participation (PP)? The results show that compared with the relevance of political participation (PP) in national economic development, its concept has not been fully explored. Secondly, from the perspective of China, due to the special system of China's one-party dictatorship and the sensitivity of political topics in socialist countries, the current research on political participation (PP) is insufficient. Therefore, it is suggested that China should focus on the study of political participation in the Chinese context, promote the political participation of the Chinese public, and effectively improve the level of political democracy in China.

### **Implications**

This study has practical, contextual, academic, organizational, government and policy-making, and methodological significance. Regarding practical implications, This study provides high-quality information on the correlation between political participation and the level of national democratic development. It can also effectively promote the benign interaction between officials and citizens, and create a harmonious and orderly civil society environment. These findings also help to provide

methodological support for academic groups to explore civics' political participation cognition and social media political information behavior. Thirdly, this review has stimulated people's understanding of the research level of social media in the countries, subject, journals and document types that contribute the most to political participation research.

### Limitations

Methodologically, this SLR is limited to only the Scopus dataset and a scoping review. The application of systematic review helps to reduce bias that might arise from the identification and inclusion stages. Therefore, future researchers should use other or mixed databases to determine results consistency. Again, apart from SLR, it is recommended that other prospective scholars consider conducting qualitative and or quantitative studies towards exploring the relevance of political participation. Lastly, other scholars should also consider using the Advanced level of LR and Meta-Analysis, to determine results consistency. It would also be interesting for a study to be carried out using SLR to ascertain which organization was given much attention to a socialist country with one-party autocracy such as China, especially for a socialist country with a large land area, a large population and a multi-ethnic population.

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