

## GEN Z REVOLUTIONS IN SOUTH ASIA: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF YOUTH MOBILISATION AND DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY

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### **Abstract:**

*South Asia has entered a new political era in which youth-led mobilizations are directly reshaping state power. From Sri Lanka's Aragalaya in July 2022 that forced President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee, to Pakistan where Imran Khan was removed on 10 April 2022 through a no-confidence motion that brought the PDM coalition to power, to Bangladesh where Sheikh Hasina resigned on 5 August 2024 after student-led uprisings, and most recently Nepal where Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli stepped down on 9 September 2025 following Gen Z-driven demonstrations, the region has witnessed successive upheavals. These episodes reveal not only widespread disillusionment with entrenched elites and stagnant democratic structures, but also a generational demand for more accountable, responsive, and inclusive governance.*

*Theoretically, this study draws on social movement theory and political opportunity structures, demonstrating how youthful demographics, digital literacy, and corruption-driven grievances create openings for disruptive collective action. Critical Discourse Analysis is employed to examine the slogans, metaphors, and digital narratives of fairness, anti-nepotism, and future justice that circulated across platforms, showing how protest language itself constructed solidarity and legitimacy. From a political science perspective, these movements represent a departure from older coup-driven crises toward decentralised, networked forms of activism where legitimacy is increasingly contested through public discourse and digital mobilisation rather than through parliaments alone.*

*The significance of this research lies in capturing a historical turning point: the transition from elite-controlled democracies to generationally contested democracies. Times have changed, and so must governance systems. Listening to youth voices and ensuring their representation is no longer optional but necessary. Yet this paper stresses that not all youth actors embody the competence required for democratic renewal. Representation must privilege serious, pragmatic, and visionary young leaders rather than superficial forms of celebrity activism driven by TikTok videos or Instagram performances.*

*This study is unique in two respects. First, it positions Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal within a comparative framework that treats these movements not as isolated crises but as interconnected examples of a regional Gen Z political wave. Second, it integrates political science with CDA, highlighting how discourse and digital communication are not merely tools of protest but transformative forces that redefine what governance, legitimacy, and democratic participation mean in the twenty-first century. By doing so, it offers both an analytical lens and a normative call for governance models that recognise the generational shift now underway in South Asia.*

**Keywords:** Gen Z, CDA, South Asia, youth politics, political opportunity structures, Critical Discourse Analysis, digital mobilisation, democratic legitimacy, protest discourse

## Introduction

The freedom to choose one's own representatives is the foundation stone of any true democracy. (Khan, 2023). South Asia, in this regard, is undergoing a profound political reconfiguration in which youth-led mobilisations are no longer peripheral but decisive in reshaping state power and redefining democratic legitimacy. In Sri Lanka, the **Aragalaya movement** of 2022, driven largely by young citizens facing economic collapse, inflation exceeding 50 percent, and systemic corruption, culminated in protesters storming the presidential residence and forcing President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee the country in July 2022 (Reuters, 2022; Al Jazeera, 2025a). The occupation of elite political spaces symbolised a rupture between entrenched authority and popular sovereignty, marking a historic moment in Sri Lanka's post-independence politics.

In Pakistan, political transformation followed a constitutional rather than revolutionary route. Prime Minister Imran Khan was removed from office on 10 April 2022 through a parliamentary vote of no confidence, yet the episode was accompanied by unprecedented youth engagement through digital platforms, street demonstrations, and sustained political discourse challenging elite bargaining and dynastic politics (Reuters, 2022). While distinct in form, Pakistan's experience reflects the same generational disillusionment with stagnant democratic institutions visible elsewhere in the region.

Bangladesh represents one of the most striking examples of youth-driven regime change. What began in early 2024 as student protests against discriminatory public-sector job quotas escalated into a nationwide movement after repeated police crackdowns and communication blackouts, eventually forcing Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to resign on 5 August 2024 and flee to India (Al Jazeera, 2025a; Reuters, 2024). Analysts note that the movement's strength lay in its loose leadership structure, digital coordination, and ability to transform narrow policy grievances into a broader challenge to authoritarian governance.

The volatility of Bangladesh's generational politics intensified further in **December 2025** following the assassination attempt and subsequent death of **Sharif Osman Hadi**, a 32-year-old leader of the 2024 uprising and spokesperson for *Inquilab Mancha*. Hadi was shot in Dhaka on 12 December 2025 and died days later at Singapore General Hospital, sparking violent protests across Dhaka and other cities as demonstrators demanded justice and accountability (Al Jazeera, 2025b; Reuters, 2025a). Tens of thousands attended his funeral amid heavy security, while clashes with police, attacks on media offices, and heightened nationalist rhetoric highlighted the fragile political climate ahead of Bangladesh's planned February 2026 elections (Reuters, 2025a; Arab News, 2025).

Nepal has most recently emerged as a focal point of what observers describe as a **regional Gen Z political wave**. In September 2025, youth-led protests triggered by corruption, nepotism, economic stagnation, and a government ban on social media platforms escalated into mass unrest. Protesters breached barricades, ransacked the prime minister's residence, and clashed

with security forces, leading to more than 70 deaths before Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli resigned (Al Jazeera, 2025a; Reuters, 2025b). In a striking departure from traditional electoral politics, thousands of Nepali youth subsequently participated in an online poll hosted on the gaming platform Discord to select an interim prime minister, highlighting the emergence of alternative, digitally mediated forms of political participation (Al Jazeera, 2025a).

Comparative analyses suggest that these movements are not isolated national crises but interconnected manifestations of a broader generational shift. As Paul Staniland argues, South Asia is witnessing a “new politics of instability” distinct from past patterns dominated by military coups or elite power struggles, with legitimacy increasingly contested through mass mobilisation rather than institutional channels alone (Al Jazeera, 2025a). Scholars and human rights observers further note that unaddressed socioeconomic inequality, corruption, and the generational gap between aging political elites and digitally fluent youth have created a profound dissonance that fuels collective anger and action (Al Jazeera, 2025a).

Digital platforms have played a central, though ambivalent, role in this transformation. Generation Z activists across Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal have leveraged social media for rapid mobilisation, narrative framing, and transnational learning, even as states attempt to curb dissent through internet shutdowns and platform bans (BBC, 2025). As Rumela Sen observes, beneath the imagery of rage lies a deeply democratic aspiration for political inclusion, economic justice, and accountability that challenges the limits of conventional electoral democracies in South Asia (Al Jazeera, 2025a).

Taken together, these developments indicate that South Asia may represent a critical testing ground for **Gen Z-driven democratic reimagining**, where governance is increasingly contested through discourse, digital mobilisation, and generational solidarity rather than through established elite institutions alone. This study situates these movements within a comparative regional framework to examine how youth activism is reshaping governance beyond the confines of older democratic models.

## Literature Review

### Youth, Generational Politics, and Democratic Discontent

The growing role of youth in political upheavals has attracted increasing scholarly attention, particularly in regions experiencing demographic youth bulges and economic precarity. Scholars argue that Generation Z differs from previous cohorts due to its digital fluency, exposure to global inequalities, and heightened expectations of political accountability (Castells, 2012). In South Asia, where nearly half of the population in several countries is under the age of 28, this demographic reality has intensified generational tensions within political systems dominated by aging elites (Al Jazeera, 2025a).

Political scientists have long noted that democratic erosion often occurs when formal institutions fail to translate participation into representation (Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018). Recent South Asian protests demonstrate this disconnect vividly, as youth-led movements have bypassed traditional party politics and challenged legitimacy directly through mass mobilisation, occupation of symbolic spaces, and digital discourse (Reuters, 2022; Reuters, 2024). These movements reveal a crisis not of democracy per se, but of *elite-managed democracies* that have become unresponsive to younger citizens.

### Social Movement Theory and Political Opportunity Structures

Social movement theory provides a foundational framework for understanding these uprisings. McAdam’s concept of **political opportunity structures** emphasises how shifts in institutional

openness, elite alignments, and state repression create conditions for collective action (McAdam, 1996). In Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal, economic crises, corruption scandals, and coercive state responses acted as catalysts that lowered the costs of protest and legitimised dissent (Al Jazeera, 2025a; Reuters, 2025b).

Charles Tilly's work on **contentious politics** further explains how sustained protest can escalate from grievance articulation to regime-threatening action when claims become broadly resonant and organisational forms remain flexible (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015). The largely decentralised, leader-light nature of Gen Z movements in South Asia aligns with this model, enabling adaptability but also creating post-uprising governance challenges.

### **Digital Mobilisation and Protest Discourse**

Digital communication has become central to contemporary protest movements. Castells (2012) argues that networked movements rely on emotionally resonant narratives circulated through digital platforms to construct collective identity. In South Asia, platforms such as Facebook, X, WhatsApp, TikTok, and even Discord have facilitated mobilisation, coordination, and symbolic framing, particularly among youth populations (BBC, 2025; Al Jazeera, 2025a).

However, scholars also caution that digital activism is a double-edged sword. While it enables rapid mobilisation, it exposes movements to surveillance, misinformation, and fragmentation (BBC, 2025). Governments across the region have responded with internet shutdowns and platform bans, as seen in Bangladesh and Nepal, which often intensified protests rather than suppressing them (Reuters, 2024; Reuters, 2025b).

### **Youth Movements and Regime Change in South Asia**

Empirical analyses increasingly show that youth-led movements in South Asia have achieved outcomes previously rare in the region: the forced resignation or flight of sitting leaders. The overthrow of governments in Sri Lanka (2022), Bangladesh (2024), and Nepal (2025) represents a significant departure from earlier patterns dominated by military coups or elite bargaining (Al Jazeera, 2025a). Staniland characterises this as a “new politics of instability” in which legitimacy is contested outside institutional channels (Al Jazeera, 2025a).

The aftermath of Bangladesh's 2024 uprising and the renewed unrest following the killing of Sharif Osman Hadi in December 2025 further illustrate the persistence of youth mobilisation beyond initial regime change (Al Jazeera, 2025b; Reuters, 2025a). These cases suggest that youth movements are not episodic but constitute an enduring political force that continues to shape post-transition trajectories.

### **Critical Discourse and Generational Legitimacy**

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) scholars argue that language is not merely reflective of power but constitutive of it (Fairclough, 1995). Protest slogans, metaphors of dignity and justice, and digital narratives of betrayal and future hope have played a central role in legitimising Gen Z activism across South Asia. These discourses construct moral authority by framing youth as custodians of national futures against corrupt, out-of-touch elites (Al Jazeera, 2025a).

Yet, existing literature also highlights the risks of romanticising youth movements. Leaderless mobilisation can struggle to translate moral legitimacy into institutional governance, raising concerns about sustainability, policy coherence, and democratic consolidation (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015). This tension forms a critical gap that the present study seeks to address.

## Research Methodology

### Research Design

This study adopts a **qualitative comparative research design** integrating **political analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)** to examine Gen Z-led political upheavals in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal. A comparative approach is employed to identify shared structural conditions and discursive patterns while remaining sensitive to country-specific contexts.

### Data Sources

Data were collected from **three authenticated categories**:

#### 1. International News Agencies and Media

Primary factual accounts of protests, regime changes, and political responses were drawn from Reuters, Al Jazeera, and BBC News due to their global credibility, editorial oversight, and on-ground reporting (Reuters, 2022; Reuters, 2024; Reuters, 2025a; Al Jazeera, 2025a; BBC, 2025).

#### 2. Scholarly Literature

Peer-reviewed books and journal articles on social movements, digital activism, and democratic legitimacy provided theoretical grounding (Castells, 2012; McAdam, 1996; Tilly & Tarrow, 2015; Fairclough, 1995).

#### 3. Visual and Discursive Protest Material

Protest slogans, speeches, and digital narratives reported in reputable media were analysed as discursive artefacts, ensuring verification through cross-referenced reporting.

### Analytical Framework

#### 1. Comparative Political Analysis

Each case was examined in relation to political opportunity structures, elite responses, and protest outcomes to identify convergences and divergences across South Asia.

#### 2. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

CDA was applied to protest language and narratives to examine how legitimacy, generational identity, and moral authority were constructed through discourse (Fairclough, 1995).

#### 3. Process Tracing

Chronological sequencing of protest escalation and political response was used to establish causal linkages between youth mobilisation and regime outcomes.

### Ethical Considerations

All data were obtained from publicly accessible, ethically produced sources. No private social media data or unverifiable content was used. Given the sensitivity of political violence, reporting was contextualised to avoid sensationalism and ensure analytical neutrality.

### Limitations

The study relies on secondary data due to security and access constraints. While media sources provide reliable documentation, future research could incorporate interviews or ethnographic methods to deepen understanding of participant motivations.

### Data Analysis

South Asia has experienced a wave of political upheavals between 2022 and 2025. While Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal witnessed **youth-led street protests directly forcing leaders to resign**, Pakistan's change of government in 2022 occurred through parliamentary mechanisms. Nevertheless, all events illustrate the **broader context of political volatility in South Asia**.

**Table 1: Chronology of Political Movements in South Asia (2022–2025)**

Country	Date of Uprising / Event	Leader Affected	Trigger of Protest / Mobilization	Outcome / Impact	Source (APA)
Sri Lanka	July 2022	President Gotabaya Rajapaksa	Economic collapse, corruption, fuel & power shortages	Resignation and flight of President; occupation of Presidential Secretariat	Al Jazeera, 2025
Bangladesh	Aug 2024	Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajid	Student protests over quota reforms and authoritarian policies	Resignation; temporary government formation; flight to India	Al Jazeera, 2025
Bangladesh	Dec 12–19, 2025	N/A (assassination of activist Sharif Osman Hadi)	Assassination attempt on prominent youth leader	Violent protests across multiple cities demanding justice; funerals attended by tens of thousands	Reuters, 2025
Nepal	Sept 2025	Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli	Social media bans, corruption, nepotism	PM resignation; over 70 deaths; temporary government; new elections announced	Al Jazeera, 2025
Pakistan	April 2022	Prime Minister Imran Khan	Elite political realignment; youth mobilization online but largely disorganized and ineffective	Government change via no-confidence motion in parliament; street protests had minimal direct effect	Wikipedia, 2025; BBC, 2022

**Table 2: Characteristics of Youth Mobilization Across Countries**

Dimension	Sri Lanka (2022)	Bangladesh (2024–2025)	Nepal (2025)	Pakistan (2022)	Source (APA)
Digital Coordination	Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram	Twitter, Facebook, TikTok	Discord, Twitter	Twitter, Facebook; fragmented mobilization	Al Jazeera, 2025; Reuters, 2025;

					BBC, 2022
Nature of Protest	Mass occupation, camps, art performances	Street protests, campus sit-ins, ultimatums	Street protests, occupation of government offices	Online campaigns; occasional demonstrations but largely disorganized	Al Jazeera, 2025; BBC, 2022
Leadership Structure	Networked, decentralized	Student leaders + coalitions	Decentralized, digital voting for interim PM	Fragmented; no centralized leadership	Al Jazeera, 2025; BBC, 2022
Key Demographic	Students & young professionals	University & high school students	Youth under 28, students, diaspora youth	University students, online activists	Al Jazeera, 2025; BBC, 2022
Central Demands	Anti-corruption, economic relief	Fair quotas, anti-nepotism, justice for leaders	Anti-corruption, social media freedom, generational equity	Accountability and transparency, anti-corruption rhetoric	Al Jazeera, 2025; BBC, 2022
Government Response	Police confrontation, eventual resignation	Police crackdown, telecommunications blackout	Security crackdown, fatalities, property damage	Parliamentary procedures; no street-level concessions	Al Jazeera, 2025; BBC, 2022

## Data Collection and Analysis

### Data Collection

This study draws on **verified news reports, official statements, and peer-reviewed research** to capture youth-led political movements in South Asia between 2022 and 2025. The following **data sources** were used:

#### 1. News Agencies and Media Outlets:

- Al Jazeera (2025) provided detailed coverage of the youth-led movements in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal, including chronological events, demographic participation, and digital mobilization.
- Reuters (2025) reported on the assassination of Sharif Osman Hadi in Bangladesh and subsequent protests, offering verified eyewitness accounts and photographs.
- BBC News (2022) documented youth participation in Pakistan's political mobilization, including social media campaigns and demonstrations, as well as parliamentary outcomes.

## 2. Official Documents and Parliamentary Records:

- Pakistani parliamentary proceedings and no-confidence motion records were used to confirm that the removal of Imran Khan was conducted through institutional channels rather than direct street protests (Wikipedia, 2025).

## 3. Social Media and Digital Archives:

- Verified social media posts from platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Discord were analyzed to trace the organization, slogans, hashtags, and narratives of youth mobilization. These provided primary evidence of **digital coordination, discourse framing, and grievance articulation** (Al Jazeera, 2025).

## 4. Peer-Reviewed Academic Literature:

- Articles on social movement theory, political opportunity structures, and youth participation in South Asian politics were consulted to provide **theoretical grounding** for interpreting observed patterns of mobilization (Staniland, 2025; Sen, 2025).

The selection criteria for sources emphasized **credibility, verifiability, and relevance**. Only sources providing **first-hand or well-documented accounts** were included. Rumors, unverifiable blogs, or opinion pieces without citations were excluded.

## Data Analysis

The study employed a **mixed qualitative approach**, combining **content analysis, critical discourse analysis (CDA), and comparative analysis**:

### 1. Content Analysis:

- News articles and social media posts were systematically coded to extract data on **dates, locations, participant demographics, leader involvement, and triggers of protest**. This allowed construction of **chronological tables and comparative matrices** (Tables 1 and 2).

### 2. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA):

- Protest slogans, digital narratives, and social media rhetoric were analyzed to identify recurring **themes of anti-corruption, anti-nepotism, generational justice, and digital solidarity** (Fairclough, 2013).
- CDA helped examine how language and symbolism contributed to **legitimacy-building and mobilization**, particularly among Gen Z participants.

### 3. Comparative Analysis:

- Cross-country comparison was performed to identify **commonalities and distinctions** in youth-led uprisings in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan.
- Pakistan was treated separately due to its **elite-driven parliamentary change**, while still contributing to understanding the regional context of political volatility.

### 4. Verification and Triangulation:

- Multiple sources were used to **triangulate information**, ensuring reliability. For example, Al Jazeera reports were cross-verified with Reuters coverage and official statements for Bangladesh and Nepal.
- Social media posts were cross-checked for authenticity using timestamps, verified accounts, and media corroboration.

### 5. Justification:

- This approach aligns with **standard norms in social science research**, ensuring **rigor, transparency, and credibility**.

- The methodology supports the abstract's claim that **digital literacy, youth demographics, and corruption grievances** are driving forces behind Gen Z-led uprisings.
- It also allows distinguishing between **direct youth-led mobilization (Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal)** and **elite-driven parliamentary action (Pakistan)** while situating all events within a **South Asian regional framework**.

### Observations and Analysis

1. **Generational Drivers:** Youth-led protests in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal were **directly influential in government turnovers**, while Pakistan saw youth mobilization online but without direct street-level impact (BBC, 2022; Wikipedia, 2025).
2. **Digital Platforms:** Across all countries, social media enabled coordination and narrative framing, though Pakistan's mobilization was **fragmented and less effective in forcing governmental change** (BBC, 2022; Al Jazeera, 2025).
3. **Decentralized Leadership:** A key feature of successful uprisings (Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal) was **networked leadership**, contrasting with Pakistan's dispersed online activism.
4. **Regional Commonality:** All movements occur within **South Asia**, highlighting the generational and digital dimensions shaping political engagement across the region.
5. **Impact of Youth Mobilization:** While direct outcomes differed, the events demonstrate **a rising generational consciousness and demand for accountability**, supporting the paper's theoretical framework that youth, digital literacy, and corruption grievances create political opportunities (Al Jazeera, 2025; Reuters, 2025).

### Findings

The analysis yields several key findings regarding Gen Z-led political mobilization in South Asia between 2022 and 2025.

First, the study finds that **youth-led collective action constituted a significant causal factor in leadership turnover** in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal. In these cases, sustained street mobilization, coupled with digital coordination, altered political opportunity structures and constrained incumbent elites, leading to resignations or regime reconfiguration. By contrast, Pakistan's 2022 governmental transition occurred primarily through parliamentary mechanisms, indicating that youth mobilization, while present, did not independently produce regime change.

Second, **digital media platforms functioned as enabling structures for mobilization, coordination, and discursive framing** across all cases. Social media facilitated rapid information diffusion, decentralized leadership, and the construction of shared grievance narratives. However, the effectiveness of digital mobilization was contingent upon its translation into sustained offline collective action. Where online activism remained fragmented or episodic, its political impact was correspondingly limited.

Third, the study identifies **decentralized and networked leadership as a distinguishing feature of successful youth-led movements**. Movements in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal exhibited horizontal organizational forms that reduced reliance on individual leaders, enhanced adaptability, and limited the effectiveness of state repression. Pakistan's comparatively fragmented mobilization lacked such organizational coherence.

Fourth, **discursive practices were central to the construction of political legitimacy**. Critical Discourse Analysis reveals consistent framing of protests around themes of anti-corruption,

generational injustice, meritocracy, and moral accountability. These discourses positioned youth actors as legitimate representatives of the public interest and broadened societal support beyond traditional partisan alignments.

Finally, despite national variation, the cases demonstrate **regional convergence in the structural and discursive conditions of youth mobilization**, suggesting the emergence of a shared generational political orientation shaped by demographic pressures, digital literacy, and dissatisfaction with elite governance across South Asia.

### Recommendations

Based on the empirical findings, the study proposes the following policy- and research-oriented recommendations.

First, **institutional mechanisms for youth political participation should be strengthened**. Formal channels for consultation and representation may reduce reliance on extra-institutional protest as the primary means of political engagement.

Second, **governments should prioritize transparency and accountability reforms**, particularly in areas of corruption, nepotism, and economic exclusion, which consistently emerged as core mobilizing grievances.

Third, **digital civic spaces should be protected rather than restricted**. The use of internet shutdowns and social media bans risks exacerbating political instability by undermining state legitimacy and intensifying public mistrust.

Fourth, **capacity-building initiatives targeting youth leadership and civic education** should be expanded to support informed, programmatic participation in democratic processes.

Finally, **future research should adopt longitudinal and comparative designs** to examine whether youth-led mobilization produces durable institutional reform or primarily short-term political disruption.

### Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Gen Z-led mobilization has become a consequential factor in contemporary South Asian politics. The cases of Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal illustrate that youth-driven collective action, when combined with favorable political opportunity structures and effective discursive framing, can directly influence regime outcomes. Pakistan's experience, by contrast, highlights the limits of youth mobilization in the absence of institutional fractures and organizational coherence.

By integrating comparative political analysis with Critical Discourse Analysis, the study highlights the central role of discourse in shaping political legitimacy and mobilization dynamics. Protest language and digital narratives function not merely as communicative tools but as mechanisms through which authority, representation, and democratic claims are constructed and contested.

More broadly, the findings suggest a shift from elite-dominated political transitions toward increasingly contested forms of democratic participation shaped by generational actors. While the long-term implications of this transformation remain uncertain, youth mobilization has clearly altered the terrain of political legitimacy and engagement in South Asia.

### Delimitations of the Study

This study is subject to several delimitations.

First, the analysis is geographically confined to Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan, and does not extend to other South Asian contexts that may exhibit different patterns of youth political engagement.

Second, the study focuses specifically on **national-level political mobilization** associated with leadership change, excluding localized, issue-specific, or non-regime-oriented youth movements. Third, the research relies primarily on **secondary data**, including news media reports, official records, and verified digital content. Primary data collection through interviews or ethnographic methods was beyond the scope of the study.

Fourth, the analytical emphasis is placed on **political and discursive dynamics**, rather than quantitative assessment of protest size, economic impact, or electoral behavior.

These delimitations were intentionally adopted to maintain analytical focus and methodological coherence.

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