

Scholarship on the Middle East in Political Science and International Relations: A Reassessment

In *PS: Political Science & Politics*, Volume 56, Issue 2, April 2023

Andrea Teti and Pamela Abbott

A recently published dataset of Middle East and North Africa (MENA)-focused scholarship in journals selected to represent the disciplinary “core” of political science sheds empirical light on key publishing trends, from the balance between quantitative and qualitative studies to the growth in experimental and “large-N” statistical methods. Cammett and Kendall’s (2021) analysis shows that between 2001 and 2019, MENA-focused studies declined as a share of publications but that slightly less than half of that work is qualitative. However, the definition of qualitative research that the study uses significantly overstates the number of such articles in the Cammett and Kendall dataset. Our analysis rectifies this, distinguishing among research studies that use qualitative evidence, qualitative methods, theoretical traditions, and paradigms (i.e., positivist/post-positivist). This yields a more accurate and significantly starker picture of the marginality of MENA qualitative research in core politics journals. These results raise the question of why methodologically sophisticated scholarship outside of the “top journals” has not been published there.

More information

<https://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1049096522001378>

About the Authors

[Andrea Teti](#) is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Salerno (Italy) and Senior Associate Editor of [Middle East Critique](#). Andrea has published widely on democratization and authoritarianism and on EU-Middle East policy, including as lead author of [The Arab Uprisings in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia](#) (2018) and [Democratization Against Democracy: How EU Policy Fails the Middle East](#) (2020).

[Pamela Abbott](#) is the Director of the Centre for Global Development at the University of Aberdeen. Her research interests include socioeconomic and political transformations in the global south and the impact of these transformations on quality of life and wellbeing.