

Editorial Essay

Louisa Ha*

National image of China and cross-national comparative studies

<https://doi.org/10.1515/omgc-2022-2002>

This issue is our fourth and last issue in 2022. This issue features four cross-national comparative studies. Our first two articles were originally submitted to and presented at the 5th International Forum on China's Image and Global Communication of Shanghai International Studies University in June, 2022. The first article, "How Effective are Chinese Media in Shaping Audiences' Attitudes Towards China? A Survey Analysis in Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa" is a longitudinal comparison of three public opinion survey results of people in African countries on their attitude toward China in light of the increasing presence of China's investments and media in those countries from 2017 to 2021. Authors Dani Madrid-Morales and Herman Wasserman found that use of Chinese international media in Africa is still low with little increase during this period. But those who used them have a more favorable view on China than those who did not.

The second article from the forum is Cole Highhouse's "China Content on TikTok: The Influence of Social Media Videos on National Image." The study analyzes the top 100 most viewed China content on TikTok and examines American college students' experience of China content on TikTok and their national image of China. He found most of the top-viewed TikTok content in the U.S. related to China is positive about China and that those people who believe the videos about China are authentic and relationship between China and U.S. is good are more likely to have a positive national image of China.

Claudia Kozman, Clement Y. K. So, Sahar Khalifa Salim, Mostafa Movahedian, Jana El Amin, Jad Melki's study is a four-country comparison of social media users' selective sharing and avoidance of social media messages during the protests in China (Hong Kong), Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon. They found that users who are more supportive of the protest across four countries are more likely to share messages supporting the protests and avoiding messages opposing to the protest than those

***Corresponding author: Louisa Ha**, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH, USA,
E-mail: louisah@bgsu.edu. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0223-368X>

 Open Access. © 2022 the author(s), published by De Gruyter.  This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

who are more opposing the protests. They are much more closed-minded than the those opposing the protests through creating their own echo chambers.

“Broadband, Effective Labor, and Economic Growth during the COVID-19 Pandemic Period: Evidence from a Cross-country Study” by Xiaoqun Zhang is a cross-national comparison of 201 countries’ economic growth data in 2020–21. He found that countries with high mobile broadband penetration rate during COVID-19 when effective labor is lower due to the non-availability of broadband, their economic growth is less negatively affected by COVID-19.

Although Mathias-Felipe de-Lima-Santos and Wilson Ceron’s “Racism, Death, and Protests in Brazil: Digital and Traditional News Coverage of Black Awareness Day After a Racism Crime on Twitter” is a study about racism protest in Brazil, it illustrates how “Black Lives Matter” has become a global movement and shows that digital outlets and regions with higher black population have much more progressive and higher coverage of the protest against racism than traditional news media outlets and regions with lower black population.

Our Gem from the Global South in the issue is an article translated from Russia. Elena Vartanova, Denis Vladimirovich and Anna Gladkova’s article, “On Representation of Conflict in Modern Academic Discourse,” is an interesting, updated review of the conflict research in Russia in contrast with western research on conflicts from the original published article in 2021. Especially considering the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, this review offers insights on how interaction between media and conflicts, methodology of conflict research, and the types and key subjects of conflicts are similar and different between Russia and the West and the limitations of current conflict research especially its lack of ethics and morality focus.

Happy Reading!