

Political science scholarship on the Middle East: A view from the journals

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Supplemental online appendix

I. Journal selection procedures

The primary journal inclusion criterion is based on triangulation among several major disciplinary journal ranking systems, including Google Scholar Political Science Metrics, Scimago Journal & Country Rank in Political Science and International Relations, Scimago Journal & Country Rank in Sociology and Political Science, and InCites Journal Citation Reports in Political Science. All journals in the dataset were listed in the top 20 of at least one of these ranking lists with the exception of *The Journal of Comparative Politics*. Although it does not appear in the top twenty journals in recent versions of any of these lists, *Comparative Politics* consistently ranked among the top subfield journals in the discipline earlier in the time period we cover.

Table A1 shows the selected journals, their positions in these distinct ranking lists, and their average rank across all four metrics.¹

¹ Some journals were established after 2000, notably *Perspectives on Politics* and the *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, and thus were not included in earlier years covered in the dataset. The average ranks across all four metrics of four journals in the dataset -- *Perspectives on Politics*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *International Studies Quarterly*, and the *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* -- do not place them in the top 20, but they meet the inclusion criteria described above.

Table A1: Journals in the dataset

Journal Name	Google Scholar Metrics – Political Science Rank (2018)	Scimago Journal & Country Rank – Political Science and International Relations Rank (2018)	Scimago Journal & Country Rank – Sociology and Political Science Rank (2018)	Journal Citation Reports – Political Science Rank (2018)	Average Rank (2018)
American Political Science Review	2	4	5	7	4.5
Annual Journal of Political Science	1	1	2	2	1.5
Annual Review of Political Science	10	n/a	10	6	8.7
Journal of Politics	4	n/a	9	36	16.3
World Politics	19	7	13	15	13.5
International Organization	n/a	2	3	1	2.0
Comparative Political Studies	5	n/a	15	18	12.7
Comparative Politics	n/a	n/a	69	80	74.5
British Journal of Political Science	7	n/a	20	4	10.3
Perspectives on Politics	n/a	18	n/a	39	28.5
Political Research Quarterly	18	n/a	82	75	58.3

International Studies Quarterly	n/a	12	32	18	20.7
Quarterly Journal of Political Science	n/a	3	4	64	23.7

II. Article selection and coding procedures

The following criteria guided the selection of articles in the dataset. First, in accordance with standard classifications, we defined the MENA region to include Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Israel Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Yemen. Articles covering these countries or the whole region, whether defined as “Arab,” “Middle East” or “North Africa,” were included, while those on international bodies with members outside of the region, such as the Organization for Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), were excluded. Similarly, articles focusing on policies towards the region by non-MENA countries, such as those on U.S. foreign policy, or on external depictions of the region, such as publications on Western media coverage on the Middle East, were dropped from the dataset. Literature and book reviews as well as short response pieces were not included. For articles with cross-regional coverage, those with at least one-third of their empirical evidence derived from MENA cases were included while publications below this threshold were dropped. Finally, our coverage spans the last two decades (2000 through 2019), enabling us to examine trends over a significant time period both preceding and following major events that have attracted extensive policy and scholarly attention, such as 9/11 or the Arab uprisings.

More specifically, we used several procedural steps to construct the dataset:

- Search JSTOR (or Google Scholar, Sage, or the journal website directly, if limited date range) with query (i.e. “"Algeria" OR "Arab" OR "Bahrain" OR "Egypt" OR "Iraq" OR "Iran" OR "Israel" OR "Jordan" OR "Kuwait" OR "Lebanon" OR "Libya" . . . OR "Middle East" -cloth source:"[insert journal name]"”
- Download information for relevant articles as txt citation file using the citation export tool
- Read txt files into the Zotero citation manager, merge duplicates
- Export as CSV file, clean to match desired format
- Manual deletion of irrelevant articles and repeat articles
- Code for topics, methods, etc.
- Cross-checks of coding decisions

III. Share of MENA-focused scholarship in political science journals, 2000- 2019

Here we expand upon the evolution of MENA-focused publishing in political science journals, assessing trends in the percentage of total articles that focus on the Middle East as well as the share of individual journal coverage and trends in coverage over time. Data on total articles published were compiled by manually counting the number of research articles published in each volume of each journal from 2000 to 2019 using either JSTOR, Sage, or the journal website directly. Following the criteria for MENA-focused articles discussed in Part II of this supplemental online appendix, only research articles were included in the count.

Figure A1: The evolution of the percentage of MENA-focused articles in political science journals, 2000-2019

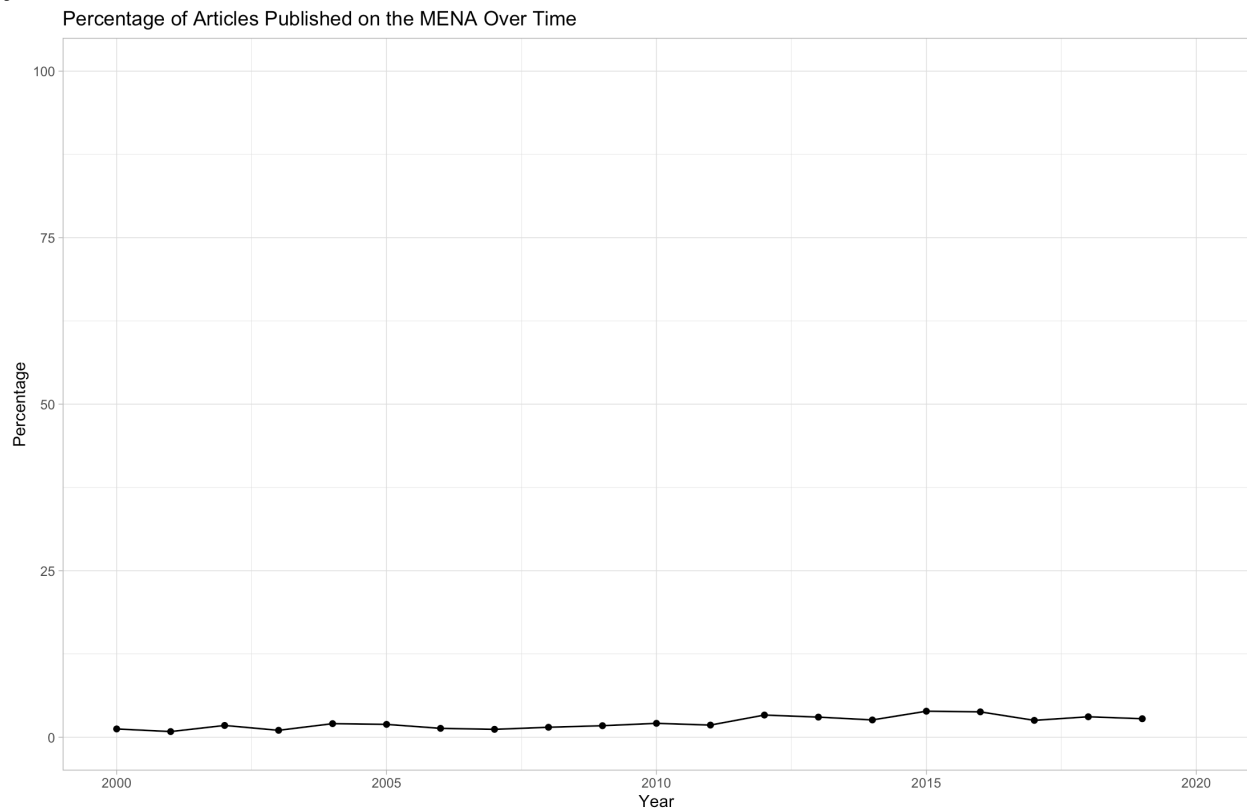


Figure A1 shows the evolution in the percentage of MENA-focused articles as compared to the total number of articles over time. In the study period, articles focusing on the Middle East increased as a percentage of journal content. In 2000, MENA articles accounted for 1.24 percent of all research articles while in 2019 they took up 2.77 percent of the total. Middle East coverage peaks as a percentage of journal coverage in 2015 with 3.90 percent of the research published in that year focused on the region. Although the percent share of MENA-focused research has steadily increased over time, the share of research on the region remains low in absolute terms. Future assessments of publishing trends in political science that contextualize these findings in a cross-regional comparative perspective would shed light on how MENA-focused scholarship fares compared to other regions such as Latin America, South East Asia, and others.

Figure A2 shows a disaggregated view of the journal share of articles included in our dataset.

Figure A2: Journal share of MENA-focused articles, 2000-2019

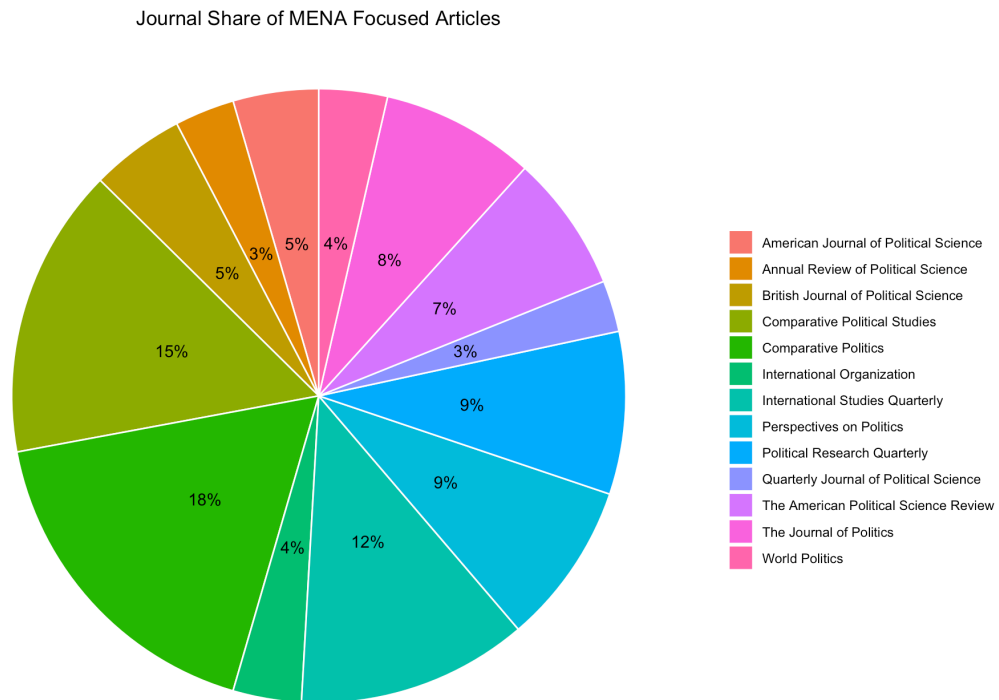
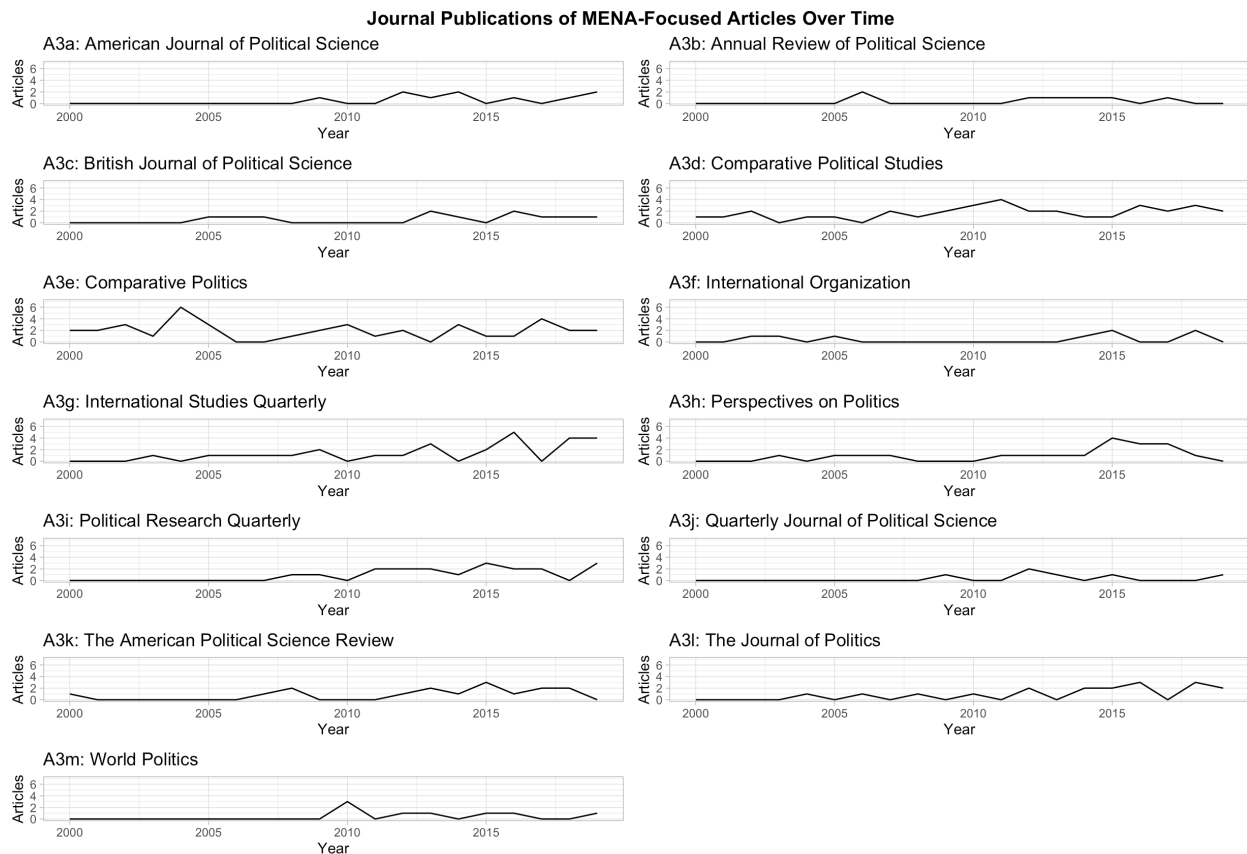


Figure A2 depicts the wide variation in journal coverage of MENA articles. Almost half, 45 percent, of articles in the dataset were published by *Comparative Politics*, *Comparative Political Studies*, or *International Studies Quarterly* (with 18, 15, and 12 percent of the journal share respectively). While these three journals published the largest share of articles, an additional four journals published a moderate amount of articles. Specifically, these journals take up the share of articles we would expect given even coverage from all journals (or roughly 7.7 percent of articles per journal). These journals are *The Journal of Politics* (8 percent), *The American Political Science Review* (7 percent), *Political Research Quarterly* (9 percent), and *Perspectives on Politics* (9 percent). Finally, the remaining eight journals comprise the group with the lowest share of articles in the dataset. While the overall dearth of MENA-focused articles largely explains this pattern, it is worth noting that two journals in the dataset did not exist in 2000: *Perspectives on Politics* and the *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* were established in 2003 and 2006 respectively.

Figures A3a through A3m further disaggregate MENA-focused publications by journal.

Figures A3a-A3m: The evolution of MENA-focused articles over time in political science journals, 2000-2019

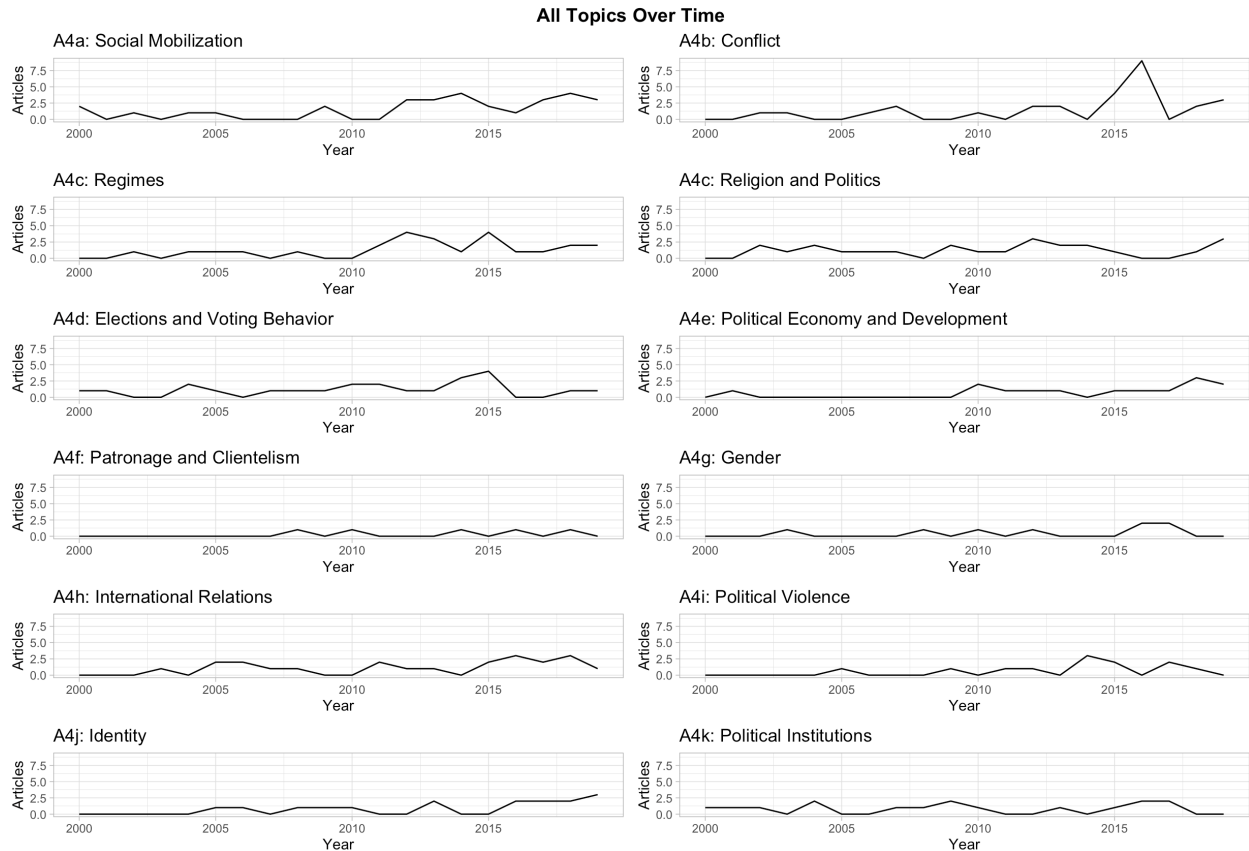


Mirroring the general uptick in research on the region after the Arab Spring, all journals (except *Comparative Politics* and *International Organization*, shown in Figures A3d and A3f, respectively) show some increase in MENA-focused publishing directly after 2011. Notably, there is a dramatic spike in MENA coverage in *Comparative Politics* in 2004 (A3d). Somewhat surprisingly given increased attention on the region at that time due to the 2003 Iraq War, these 6 articles do not share common geographic coverage (two discuss Egypt, one discusses Israel, one Turkey, one discusses both Morocco and Jordan, and the last has a regional scope). However, all these articles focus on regimes as their primary topic. Additionally, another spike in articles appears in *International Studies Quarterly* in 2016 (A3g). However, the 5 articles published by *International Studies Quarterly* that year share little in common, both with regards to geography and primary topic of interest.

III. Trends in topics in MENA-focused scholarship in political science journals, 2000-2019

This section further depicts trends in topic coverage over time.

Figures A4a-A4k: Topics in MENA-focused scholarship in political science journals, 2000-2019



Figures A4a-A4k show the evolution of topic coverage for all topics from 2000-2019. Key trends in topic coverage overtime are discussed in the article.

While we mainly focus on the primary topic in each article, many also had secondary topics. In our coding criteria, we classify the primary topic of an article based on the focus of the dependent variable or outcome in question and the secondary topic based either on the independent variable or on a second, main focus in the piece. In our dataset, about 38 percent of articles employ two or more topics. The most common topic combinations (regardless of which topic was primary and which was secondary) were international relations and conflict (roughly 7 percent of multi-topic articles),

regimes and social mobilization (roughly 6 percent of multi-topic articles), and regimes and religion and politics (roughly 6 percent of multi-topic articles).

IV. Research methods used in MENA-focused scholarship in political science journals

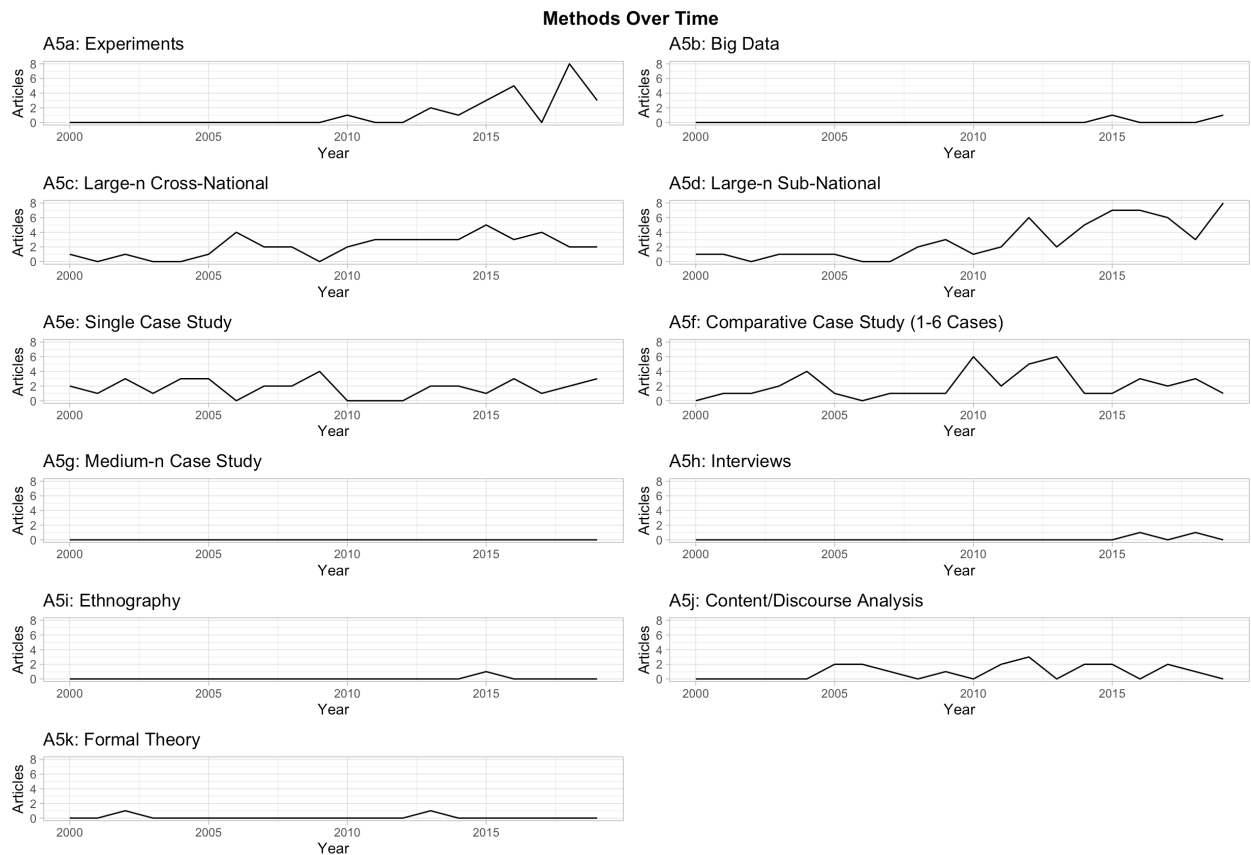
Here we present results from a more disaggregated coding scheme, which breaks down the qualitative category into additional sub-types (i.e., single case study, comparative case studies of one to six cases, medium-n studies of more than six cases, interviews, ethnography and content or discourse analysis), and the statistical category into additional sub-types (i.e., large-n cross-national, large-n subnational, and automated text analysis).

Table A2: Disaggregated methods in MENA-focused articles in political science journals, 2000-2019

Method	Articles	Percentage
Large-n Sub-National	57	25.7
Comparative Case Study	42	18.9
Large-n Cross-National	41	18.5
Single Case Study	35	15.8
Experiments	22	9.9
Content/Discourse Analysis	18	8.1
Big Data	2	0.9
Interviews	2	0.9
Formal Theory	2	0.9
Ethnography	1	0.5
Medium-n Case Study	0	0

Table A2 shows the number and percentage of MENA-focused articles published in the past 20 years broken down by the expanded methods coding scheme. Large-n sub-national research is most common method, constituting just over one-fourth of all articles published on the Middle East. Furthermore, comparative case studies (about 19 percent), large-n cross-national methods (about 19 percent), and single case studies (about 16 percent) were the second most common methods. Articles using both formal theory and big data are extremely low in Middle East-focused published research and, despite the greater prevalence of qualitative work on the region in comparison with the discipline as a whole, less than one percent of MENA-focused publications in these journals employ interviews and ethnographies, respectively.

Figures A5a-A5k: Disaggregated methods in MENA-focused scholarship in political science journals, 2000-2019



Figures A5a-A5k depict the evolution of the use of the expanded categorization of research methods. Mirroring the general disciplinary trend, articles on the Middle East show a steady increase in large-n quantitative research - whether based on sub-national or cross-national units - over the study period. While both types of large-n methods rose in this time period, large-n sub-national work increased more dramatically (Figures A5c and A5d). In recent years, most MENA-focused articles have employed either large-n sub-national methods or experiments (Figures A5a and A5d). As shown in Figure A5f, the use of comparative case studies peaked from 2010 to 2013, however, in more recent years the application of this type of method dropped sharply in published research in the selected journals. Finally, Figure A5e depicts a gradual decrease in the use of single case studies over time.