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The Ebb and Flow: Examining the Promises and Pitfalls of the ‘Deliberative Wave’ Metaphor

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ABSTRACT

This article critically examines the ‘deliberative wave’ metaphor, a popular term describing the rise of deliberative mini-publics and democratic innovations. While acknowledging its value in communicating a growing trend and raising public awareness, the article argues that the metaphor carries significant dangers. It risks oversimplifying complex political processes, fostering unrealistic expectations, and inadequately addressing crucial issues of power dynamics, exclusion, and the diverse nuances within deliberative theory and practice. The article discusses alternative theoretical conceptualizations, such as ‘deliberative systems’, ‘empowered participatory governance’, ‘open democracy’, and other metaphors to offer a more nuanced understanding. This analysis contributes to the scholarly debate by urging a more critical assessment of democratic innovations that bridges the gap between normative theory and empirical realities.

KEYWORDS

Deliberative wave;
deliberative democracy;
deliberation; deliberative
systems; open democracy

1. Introduction

The term ‘deliberative wave’ has gained considerable currency within political science, particularly among scholars and practitioners concerned with democratic innovation (Curato et al., 2021). Coined by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to originally refer to a surge in representative deliberative processes,¹ it has become a descriptor for the overall perceived widespread adoption and study of deliberative tools and practices, such as citizens’ assemblies, deliberative polls, and consensus conferences. This metaphorical framing has been significantly amplified by the OECD’s publication of the influential report *Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave* in 2020, a text that has rapidly become a central resource in the field, evidenced by its substantial citation count (OECD, 2020). The ‘deliberative wave’ metaphor was intended to express the potential of these participatory approaches to rejuvenate the relationship between citizens and their governments (OECD, 2021a).

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While the metaphor has gained traction relatively recently, the underlying trend it describes – the increasing interest in and implementation of deliberative practices – has been evolving over a longer period (Florida, 2017). This interest has been building since the 1980s, experiencing a notable increase in momentum around 2010. The global scale of this trend is underscored by analyses such as the OECD's own report and data base of participatory processes, which examined nearly 300 cases of deliberative processes implemented worldwide (OECD, 2023).

This article aims to critically analyze the 'deliberative wave' metaphor, arguing that while it offers a seemingly straightforward way to communicate a growing trend, it carries inherent dangers that can oversimplify our understanding of deliberative democracy. Specifically, this analysis will explore how the metaphor might obscure crucial complexities and pitfalls associated with the theory and practice of deliberation. Simultaneously, the article acknowledges the metaphor's communicative value, particularly for engaging audiences beyond the immediate subfield and the discipline of political science and will propose alternative conceptualizations that may offer a more nuanced and accurate perspective on the evolution and impact of deliberative democracy. This contribution is vital to the current scholarly debate on the usefulness of deliberative mini-publics (DMPs) and democratic innovations, urging a more critical and sophisticated understanding of their actual impact and the challenges they face in diverse contexts (Ryan, 2022); Vrydagh, 2023). It seeks to move beyond a simplistic narrative of growth to address the underlying complexities that shape the effectiveness and legitimacy of these democratic tools (DemocracyNext, 2024).

The rest of the article proceeds as follows: The next section explores the relevance and theoretical foundations of the 'wave' metaphor, followed by an analysis of its limitations and potential value. After reviewing existing alternative metaphors in the deliberative democracy literature, the article concludes with a key implication: no single metaphor can fully capture the dynamic nature of democratic innovations. Instead, making use of a plurality of metaphors may better characterise these evolving processes.

2. The Growing Relevance and Appeal of the 'Deliberative Wave' Metaphor

The increased relevance of the 'deliberative wave' metaphor is particularly evident in scholarly and scientific literature, where it has become a widely adopted term. Since the publication of the OECD's report in 2020, the phrase has seen a significant surge in citations, with Google Scholar recording more than 800 hits, a substantial increase from only twelve prior to its publication. The growth in scholarly attention to the 'deliberative wave' is further illustrated by the trend in additional Scholar hits over recent years. As shown in [Figure 1](#), the number of hits of scholarly articles referencing 'deliberative wave' has steadily increased from 2020 to 2023, reaching a peak of approximately 275 hits in 2023, before a slight decrease in 2024. This visual representation underscores the metaphor's rising prominence and its continued use as a key descriptor within the academic discourse on democratic innovations.

This swiftly growing adoption signifies its function as a shorthand for academics and practitioners to describe the growing popularity of deliberative tools and the emergence of a dedicated field of study focused on revitalising citizen-state relationships (Dean,

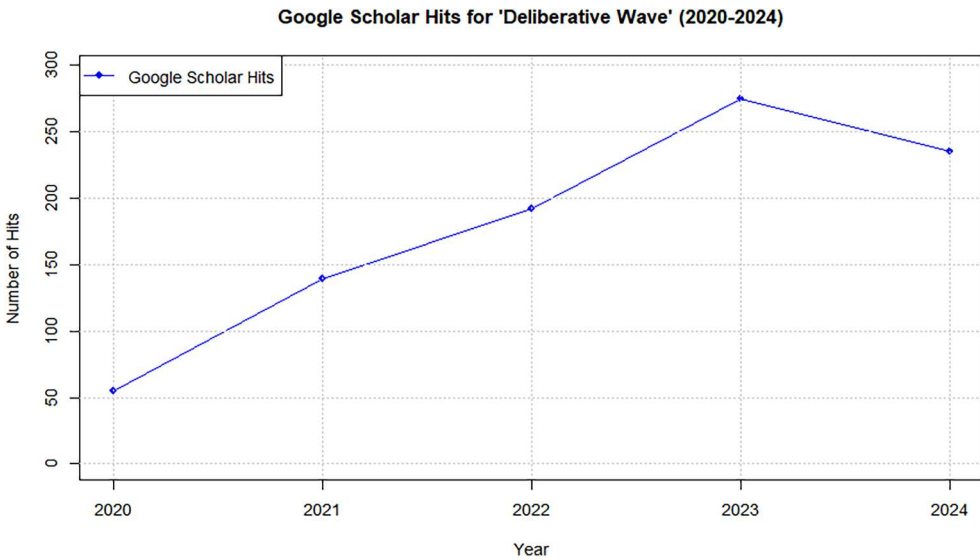


Figure 1. Relevance of the ‘Deliberative wave’ metaphor: Unique Google Scholar Hits for the term ‘Deliberative Wave’ (2020–2024).

2024). The metaphor acts as an umbrella term, supposedly bringing coherence and unity to the diverse approaches within deliberative democracy research (Ercan & Dryzek, 2016). This shared terminology facilitates communication and understanding among researchers, policymakers, practitioners and the media, enabling a more cohesive discussion about democratic innovation and its potential impact. According to the initial OECD report, the field of deliberative democracy itself benefits from this close connection between normative theory, practical application, and empirical analysis, with the metaphor serving as a conceptual anchor in this dynamic interplay (OECD, 2020).

The ‘deliberative wave’ metaphor resonates due to its ability to effectively communicate the growing interest in and application of deliberative democracy across various levels of governance (OECD, 2021b). The image of a wave conveys a sense of increasing momentum and rapid expansion, mirroring the reality of numerous governments and public authorities turning to DMPs to grapple with intricate policy issues. Examples abound in countries like Ireland, with its pioneering citizens’ assemblies, as well as in France, Germany, Belgium, and Canada, all of which have experimented with and, in some cases, institutionalised various forms of citizen deliberation (Mehr Demokratie e.V., 2020; van der Does & Jacquet, 2023). This metaphorical framing simplifies a complex phenomenon, making it more accessible and engaging for individuals who may not be deeply immersed in the academic literature on democratic theory (We Do Democracy, 2023).

Beyond these examples primarily from OECD countries, the ‘deliberative wave’ also encompasses a growing number of cases from the Global South, alluding to the reach and adaptability of democratic innovations. For instance, the 2021 Global Assembly on the Climate and Ecological Crisis brought together 100 individuals chosen by lot reflecting the more than 80%-non-OECD majority among the global population (Curato et al., 2025). This initiative aimed to set a precedent for bringing the voices of

lay citizens to multilateral negotiations, a space where they were largely absent before, and resulted in the co-creation of a declaration promoting environmental justice and sustainability. Studies from South India highlight how village-level deliberations can effectively mobilise civic agency among marginalised populations and counteract social stratification (Sahoo, 2022). Similarly, in Latin America, various democratic innovations, including deliberative polling, participatory budgeting, and citizen juries, have been implemented to address issues like governance transparency and economic inequality (Curato et al., 2017). These diverse global cases underscore the widespread interest in and the varied manifestations of deliberative practices beyond Western democracies.

Furthermore, the ‘deliberative wave’ metaphor highlights the perceived potential of democratic innovations to inject new vitality into democratic systems facing a range of challenges (e.g. Fishkin & Mansbridge, 2017). It suggests a positive and dynamic force capable of addressing issues such as declining public trust in political institutions, the rise of political polarisation, and the increasing complexity of public policy (Curato et al., 2017). The metaphor taps into a widespread hope that deliberative democracy can serve as a crucial mechanism for reconnecting citizens with the political process, fostering a greater sense of ownership and empowerment in decisions that shape their lives (OECD, 2021b). This optimistic framing can generate enthusiasm and garner support for deliberative initiatives among policymakers, civil society organisations, and the broader public seeking solutions to perceived democratic deficits (CIMA, 2020; Fishkin, 2018).

Beyond its appeal for the public and practitioners, the ‘deliberative wave’ metaphor also serves as a common reference point within the academic and practitioner communities (e.g. Goldberg & Bächtiger, 2023, p. 239). It provides a shared language for scholars from diverse disciplines and practitioners involved in various forms of citizen engagement and democratic innovation. The emergence of handbooks, guidelines, and reports that utilise this metaphor to frame their discussions further underscores its role in facilitating interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration within the field (e.g. Nabatchi et al., 2012). By providing a unifying base, the metaphor can help bridge the gap between theoretical academic work, emancipatory aims, and the practical implementation of deliberative democracy (Parkinson, 2018).

3. Dangers of the ‘Deliberative Wave Metaphor’

While the ‘deliberative wave’ metaphor effectively communicates a sense of growth and momentum in the field of deliberative democracy, it carries several inherent dangers that warrant a critical examination. These dangers primarily stem from the metaphor’s tendency to (1) oversimplify complex political processes, (2) create unrealistic expectations, (3) inadequately address issues of power and exclusion, and (4) obscure the diversity and nuance within the theory and practice of deliberation. Examples from the existing literature pinpoint the complexities of deliberation in a way that permits to illustrate these criticisms (see Table 1).

One significant danger lies in the metaphor’s potential to gloss over the inherent political risks and the possibility of failures associated with implementing deliberative processes (Ryan, 2022). The image of a smooth, ever-increasing wave might not adequately capture the challenges and setbacks that can occur. For instance, politicians who

champion DMPs can face considerable political risks, as evidenced by the French president Emanuel Macron's political gambit with the recommendations of the French climate convention (Galván Labrador & Zografos, 2024). The case of the South Australian citizens' jury on nuclear waste storage, which was perceived as being infiltrated by interest groups, ultimately led to the discontinuation of citizens' juries in the state, illustrating the potential for negative political repercussions (Ryan, 2022). Furthermore, the 'wave' metaphor might inadvertently contribute to the publication of cases that emphasise successes while overlooking the negative impacts of poorly designed or compromised deliberative processes (Spada & Ryan, 2017).

The 'deliberative wave' might also downplay the necessity of more profound systemic changes within democratic systems. Ryan (2022) argues that the metaphor could suggest that simply increasing the number of deliberative events is sufficient, without addressing underlying structural issues that might limit their impact. A notable discrepancy can exist between the immediate policy influence of a deliberative process and its broader effect on the democratic system. Policymakers might selectively adopt recommendations or even disregard them, thereby limiting the transformative potential often implied by the 'wave' (Lacelle-Webster, 2022). Moreover, the metaphor might not adequately emphasise the crucial role of careful process design and ensuring genuine understanding and engagement among participants. Adoption of recommendations or overall positive outcomes are not guaranteed simply by convening citizens; effective deliberation requires meticulous planning (Dillard, 2013), skilled facilitation (Landwehr, 2014), and a shared understanding of the process and its goals (Gastil et al., 2012).

Furthermore, the 'deliberative wave' can foster unrealistic expectations about the transformative power of deliberative democracy. While these processes can positively influence participants' attitudes and knowledge (Fishkin, 2018; Paulis & Pospieszna, 2025; Scarrow, 2001), the metaphor might overstate their capacity to rapidly resolve deeply entrenched political problems like polarisation and distrust. The narrative of an ever-increasing wave might also imply a universal and unstoppable movement, potentially overlooking the reality that the success of deliberative initiatives is contingent and subject to various challenges (Ercan & Dryzek, 2016). Additionally, the 'wave' metaphor might downplay the substantial time, financial resources, and sustained commitment required for effective deliberative processes, potentially creating the impression of a quick and easy solution to democratic challenges (Abati & Lee, 2020).

Another significant danger of the 'deliberative wave' metaphor lies in its potential to inadequately address issues of power dynamics and exclusion (Bächtiger et al., 2010). The metaphor might not sufficiently account for the deeply rooted power imbalances and inequalities within society that can permeate deliberative settings, influencing participation and outcomes (Fishkin & Mansbridge, 2017). Factors such as wealth, race, class, and education can all affect whose voices are heard and whose perspectives are prioritised (Carnegie, 2025). The 'wave' narrative risks presenting an idealised vision of equal participation, potentially masking the ways in which existing social hierarchies can be replicated or reinforced within deliberative processes (see Sanders, 1997). Moreover, the norms and practices of deliberation, often originating from Western liberal thought (Curato et al., 2017; Neblo, 2007), might inadvertently exclude or marginalise certain modes of expression or cultural perspectives, silencing the voices of some citizens

(Fraser, 1990). Ensuring genuine representation and meaningful participation for minority groups remains a critical challenge (Drake, 2024), which might overlook the subtle yet significant power dynamics that can emerge even within seemingly egalitarian deliberative forums, influenced by factors like facilitation, the framing of expert information, and the dominance of certain personalities (Bächtiger et al., 2010; Bohman, 2007; Gastil, 2018; MosaicLab, 2022). The potential for manipulation or strategic use of deliberation by powerful actors further complicates the idealised image of a uniform and benevolent ‘wave’ (Hendriks, 2009; Przeworski, 1998).

Finally, the ‘deliberative wave’ metaphor can obscure the diversity and nuance within the field of deliberative democracy (Johnson et al., 2017; Neblo, 2020). It might lead to a homogenisation of the various forms, models, and design choices, overlooking critical nuances in their goals, variations in their structures, and differentiated groups of addressees (O’Doherty & Davidson, 2010). Deliberative processes are implemented for a wide range of purposes, from providing informed policy recommendations to gauging citizen opinion and evaluating ballot measures (Gastil et al., 2017; Gilbert et al., 2023). The ‘wave’ narrative might not adequately acknowledge the significant contextual variations, including purpose, cultural norms, political systems, and the specific issues being addressed, which can profoundly influence the implementation and outcomes of deliberative democracy initiatives across different settings (Charteris-Black, 2012). The critique that many existing models and much of the empirical research are often most overwhelmingly Western-centric further highlights the limitations of a metaphor that implies a universal form of applicability and a common ground (Mendonça &

Table 1. Summary of prominent critiques of and implications for the ‘deliberative wave’ metaphor based on example characteristics of deliberation found in the literature.

Limitation	Examples	Implications
Oversimplification of Complex Political Processes	Ignoring Political Risks and Failures, Downplaying Need for Systemic Change; Overlooking Process Design and Engagement (Ryan, 2022.)	Fails to acknowledge the challenges, setbacks, and systemic reforms necessary for effective deliberative democracy.
Creation of Unrealistic Expectations	Inflated Hopes for Transformation (Fishkin, 2018; Scarrow, 2001); Assumption of Universal Success (Ercan & Dryzek, 2016); Neglecting Time and Resources (Abati & Lee, 2020; Fishkin, 2021; Scarrow, 2001)	Leads to potential disillusionment when the transformative power, universal success, and resource intensity are not fully realised.
Inadequate Attention to Power Dynamics and Exclusion	Ignoring Existing Inequalities (Bächtiger et al., 2010; Carnegie, 2025; Sanders, 1997); Potential for Exclusion of Marginalized Voices (Bächtiger et al., 2010; Curato et al., 2017; Drake, 2024; Fraser, 1990; Goldberg & Bächtiger, 2023); Power Dynamics Within Settings (Bohman, 2007; Ercan & Dryzek, 2016; Gastil, 2018; Hendriks, 2009; MosaicLab, 2022; Przeworski, 1998; Sanders, 1997)	Masks the ways power imbalances can be reproduced or reinforced, leading to the exclusion of certain voices and perspectives.
Obscuring Diversity and Nuance	Homogenization of Practices (Gastil et al., 2017; Johnson et al., 2017; Neblo, 2007); Ignoring Contextual Variations (Charteris-Black, 2012; Curato, 2025; Houghton, 2014); Oversimplifying Theoretical Evolution and Obscuring Messiness of Deliberation (Bächtiger et al., 2010; Hesse, 1966; Lafont, 2019)	Fails to capture the wide range of approaches, the importance of context, the evolution of thought, and the complex realities of deliberative interactions.

Asenbaum, 2025). The ‘wave’ might also oversimplify the intellectual development of deliberative democracy theory, which has evolved through distinct generations with varying theoretical focuses (Florida, 2017; Bächtiger et al., 2018). Lastly, the metaphor might create an overly idealised image of deliberation as a purely rational and harmonious process, failing to capture the often messy, unpredictable, and contentious nature of real-world discussions (Lafont, 2019).

4. Positive Aspects and Strategic Value

Despite the potential pitfalls, the ‘deliberative wave’ metaphor does offer certain positive aspects and strategic value, particularly in the realm of communication. Its effectiveness as a communication tool is grounded in its simplicity and evocative (and partly provocative) nature, making the concept of increasing interest in deliberative democracy readily understandable to a general audience (e.g., Gilbert et al., 2023). The image of a ‘wave’ clearly conveys the growing momentum and widespread adoption of these practices across various levels of government and in diverse geographical locations. This accessibility is particularly valuable for public outreach, media engagement, and initial communication with policymakers who may not be deeply familiar with the academic intricacies of deliberative theory (Gastil et al., 2017).

The metaphor also plays a role in raising awareness about the potential of deliberative practices to address democratic deficits and enhance citizen participation (Fishkin & Mansbridge, 2017). By framing deliberative democracy as a dynamic and expanding phenomenon, the ‘deliberative wave’ can contribute to a more positive perception of democratic innovation and encourage greater engagement from citizens, policymakers, and civil society organisations seeking more inclusive and effective forms of decision-making (CIMA, 2020; Ryan, 2022). The optimistic and forward-looking connotations associated with a ‘wave’ can be a powerful motivator, inspiring individuals and groups to explore and support deliberative initiatives as a means of strengthening democratic practices (We Do Democracy, 2023).

For individuals whose understanding of democracy might be primarily limited to elections, the ‘deliberative wave’ metaphor can serve as an accessible entry point to a broader understanding of democratic governance (Deveaux, 2003; Hickerson & Gastil, 2008). It can help convey the idea that democracy involves more than just voting, emphasising the importance of thoughtful discussion, reasoned argumentation, and collective deliberation on public issues. Furthermore, the metaphor can subtly promote a more nuanced understanding of democratic legitimacy, suggesting that it stems not only from the aggregation of informed preferences but also from the quality of public discourse (e.g., Goldberg & Bächtiger, 2023; Pilet et al., 2024).

5. Beyond the ‘Wave’: Alternative Conceptualizations

Given the limitations of the ‘deliberative wave’ metaphor, exploring alternative conceptualizations such as deliberative systems, open democracy or empowered governance can offer a more nuanced and accurate understanding of deliberation’s evolving conceptual landscape (see Table 2). One prominent alternative is the framework of ‘deliberative systems’ (Bächtiger & Parkinson, 2019; Conover & Searing, 2005; Dryzek, 2015;

Involve, 2025; Mansbridge et al., 2012). This approach moves beyond the focus on single deliberative events to examine the interconnectedness of various discursive spaces, institutions, and actors within a political system (Parkinson, 2018). It considers deliberation as a communicative activity occurring across multiple, diverse, yet partly overlapping spaces, emphasising the need for interconnection between these spaces (Ercan & Dryzek, 2016). This perspective allows for a more comprehensive analysis of how deliberation contributes to democratic legitimacy and policy-making at a broader societal level, rather than solely focusing on the outcomes of individual forums. Bächtiger and Parkinson (2019, p. 85f.) differentiate between the subforms: a generalist systems approach (Mansbridge et al., 2012) and the deliberative capacity approach (Dryzek, 2009). The former views deliberation as dispersed across a variety of sites in the political system, including formal institutions, media, and everyday talk, and emphasises the complementary roles these sites play in achieving democratic outcomes (similarly Neblo, 2015, p. 22). In contrast, deliberative capacity focuses on the system institutions and actors' ability to support inclusive, reasoned, and reflective discourse (Niemeyer, 2014), assessing how well different components enable deliberative values to be realised and spread in practice. Both aim to move beyond idealised micro-settings to evaluate deliberation at the system level but differ in scope and emphasis (Bächtiger & Parkinson, 2019).

While the 'deliberative system' metaphor is a prominent alternative to the 'wave', health and policy scholars have coined alternative or extended metaphors to the 'system' that might also prove fruitful to bring more nuance to the discussion: Instead of a 'wave', metaphors based on specific methods of participation in health or climate governance like 'deliberative dialogue(s)' (Candel, 2022; Darcel et al., 2023; Plamondon et al., 2015; Yuille & Willis, 2025), 'deliberative network(s)', (i.e. personal discussion networks: Moy & Gastil, 2006; elite networks in governance: Knops, 2018), or 'memes' (policy ideas and their legal and material implementation: John, 2003) could better capture the ongoing, embodied, interactive, and multifaceted nature of deliberative democracy (Bächtiger & Parkinson, 2019, pp. 64–65). These metaphors are advantageous because they do neither encompass a homogenous development outside of human influence nor claim universal coverage. Rather, they emphasise the continuous exchange of ideas, the diverse range of actors involved, and the interconnectedness of various deliberative initiatives within a broader democratic landscape.

Another valuable concept is 'empowered participatory governance' (Fung & Wright, 2001; 2003). This framework emphasises the direct link between deliberation and concrete problem-solving, as well as the active participation of lay citizens in decision-making processes. It highlights the pragmatic orientation of many deliberative experiments, which are geared towards solving specific, tangible problems within communities (Fung & Wright, 2003; Pilet et al., 2024). This approach underscores the empowering aspect of deliberation, where citizens are not just consulted but are actively involved in shaping the solutions to the challenges they face.

Finally, Hélène Landemore's paradigm of 'open democracy' offers a view that envisions deliberative democracy as a central pillar of a more inclusive and accessible democratic system compared to existing electoral democracy (Landemore, 2020, p. 134ff., 2017). Along with direct participation rights and deliberation that guarantee broader inclusion (Landemore, 2020, p. 136),lottocratic institutions play a vital role in an

Table 2. Alternative conceptualizations of the ‘deliberative wave’ metaphor and their respective advantages.

Alternative conceptualizations to the ‘wave’ metaphor	Key Features	Advantages
Deliberative Systems (e.g. Dryzek, 2009; Mansbridge et al., 2012)	Interconnected discursive spaces; focus on broader system capacity; diverse actors and institutions	Captures complexity and interconnectedness; moves beyond individual events; considers systemic impact
Empowered Participatory Governance (Fung & Wright, 2001)	Link to problem-solving; direct citizen involvement in decision-making; focus on tangible outcomes	Highlights practical application and citizen empowerment; emphasises action-oriented deliberation
Open Democracy (Landemore, 2020)	Deliberation as core principle; inclusivity and accessibility of power; prioritises nonelectoral representation	Envisions a more fundamental integration of deliberation into democratic structures; emphasises ongoing citizen involvement
Metaphors (<i>Dialogue</i> , e.g. Darcel et al., 2023, <i>Networks</i> , e.g. Moy & Gastil, 2006), <i>Memes</i> , e.g. John, 2003)	Ongoing interaction; diverse actors; interconnection; continuous exchange	Emphasises relationality, and evolution; avoids the potentially unidirectional connotation of a ‘wave’

open democracy, potentially replacing rather than complementing existing institutions of representative democracy. This model prioritises nonelectoral forms of representation generally and emphasises the continuous accessibility of power to less politically engaged citizens. In this view, deliberation is not merely a supplementary tool but a fundamental principle for ensuring democratic legitimacy and responsiveness.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the ‘deliberative wave’ metaphor, while possessing communicative strengths for a general audience and effectively signalling a growing trend, carries significant dangers when employed as a primary analytical tool within political science. Its inherent simplicity risks obscuring the complex political realities, challenges, and nuances that characterise the theory and practice of deliberative democracy. The metaphor’s potential to create unrealistic expectations, overlook issues of power and exclusion, and homogenise diverse approaches necessitates a more cautious and critical engagement with its use. On a cautionary note, however, none of the proposed alternatives may fully capture the appeal and intuitive clarity of the ‘wave’ metaphor. In fact, no single metaphor might be able to both adequately and precisely capture the dynamics of deliberative democracy at the same time. Instead, making use of the plurality of conceptualizations could better reflect the dynamic and evolving nature of deliberation.

This work ultimately aims to combine a theoretical critique of the deliberative wave metaphor with a subsequent review of potential alternatives, ensuring that democratic innovations are assessed with a full understanding of their potential and limitations in real-world political systems. The article contributes to the scholarly debate on DMPs and democratic innovations by providing a nuanced critique of the ‘deliberative wave’ metaphor, moving beyond its superficial appeal to expose its inherent risks and limitations (Mendonça & Asenbaum, 2025). By highlighting how the metaphor can oversimplify political processes, create unrealistic expectations, and inadequately address power dynamics and diversity, this analysis refines the understanding of what deliberative

democracy truly entails in practice (Sanders, 1997). While the ‘deliberative wave’ can serve as a useful starting point for raising awareness and encouraging initial interest in deliberative democracy, particularly among those outside the immediate subfield, a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding requires moving beyond this singular image. Alternative conceptualizations, such as the ‘deliberative systems’ approach, the framework of ‘empowered participatory governance’, the paradigm of ‘open democracy’, and alternative metaphors like ‘dialogues’, ‘networks’, offer more sophisticated lenses through which to analyse the evolution, complexities, and multifaceted nature of deliberative democracy. Embracing these alternative perspectives will foster a more accurate and productive understanding of deliberative democracy’s potential and its limitations in the ongoing pursuit of more just and effective democratic governance (Curato et al., 2017).

Note

1. Representative deliberative processes are defined by three criteria: (1) deliberation, (2) representativeness achieved through random sampling, and (3) impact, requiring at least a response to the process’s output (OECD, 2020, p. 13).

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Notes on Contributor

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Data Availability Statement

There is no data associated with this manuscript.

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