

OPEN PEER REVIEW

The Impact of Social Media on the November 2019 Protests in Iran

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The sentence “Cyberspace is an environment constructed from invisible information that can take various forms...” is conceptually vague. Clarify what is meant by “invisible information” and consider citing foundational theorists like Castells or Virilio.

The claim that “Cyberspace can generate crises, rebellions, and spatial manipulation...” requires empirical support. Provide at least one scholarly citation or case study supporting this assertion.

The open codes are insightful, but the table lacks a clear structure distinguishing between first-order codes, axial codes, and themes. Consider providing a clearer hierarchical coding framework or thematic map.

The paragraph that begins “This is the conceptual label considered in this study...” is too brief for a findings section. Expand each axial code into separate thematic narratives with verbatim participant quotes.

While the paper emphasizes the role of social media in mobilization, it does not adequately discuss counter-narratives—such as government surveillance or misinformation—which can inhibit protest.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The sentence “Resource Mobilization: People participate... when these movements have access to key resources...” is inserted abruptly. More integration is needed between this and previous theoretical content. Also, explain why it is ultimately deemed inapplicable.

While the study mentions semi-structured interviews, the actual interview protocol (e.g., duration, setting, transcription method) is not described. Please add these critical details for methodological transparency.

The paragraph states, “...the collected data are accurate...”, but provides no evidence of validation procedures (e.g., member checking, triangulation, inter-coder reliability). Consider elaborating on steps taken to ensure trustworthiness.

While you mention the distribution of gender and academic rank, this information should be placed in a table for clarity. Also, indicate the academic fields of the participants.

The statement “The protest model can be subject-oriented rather than agent-oriented.” is provocative but not clearly defined. Elaborate on what is meant by “subject-oriented” using theoretical references.

In the discussion section, the manuscript does not compare its findings sufficiently with existing literature. For example, how do your findings relate to studies on Arab Spring or the role of Telegram in Belarus or Hong Kong protests?

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.