

Analysis of the Functions of Social Media in Social Movements with Emphasis on Workers' and Teachers' Social Protests in Iran Since 2015

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Received: 2025-02-20	Revised: 2025-04-14	Accepted: 2025-04-20	Published: 2025-04-26
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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

While this section is thorough, it risks becoming over-theoretical. Consider weaving in more connections to the contemporary Iranian context to increase relevance and applicability.

The claim “social media networks are nonexistent unless banned by the state” (Table 1, final row) is both provocative and unclear. Consider rephrasing for analytical precision—are they “non-existent” or “underground”?

In the statement “radicalism can weaken movements,” no direct quote is attributed, nor is this theme substantively discussed. Consider elaborating on how radicalism emerged in the data.

The statement about “alternative narratives” versus “state media” is compelling but lacks elaboration on how these narratives were validated or circulated. Clarifying mechanisms of trust and credibility would add rigor.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The claim that “the explanatory power of Castells’ theory in [Middle Eastern] contexts is limited” is significant but underdeveloped. Please elaborate on empirical evidence or scholarly debates that support this limitation.

The discussion of Castells' caution against overestimating social media is strong. However, the reference to Egypt's 26.4% internet penetration would benefit from a precise source and year of measurement to enhance credibility.

While thematically rich, the table lacks methodological clarity regarding how these basic and organizing themes were derived. It would help to briefly explain the coding process (e.g., open, axial, selective coding).

The phrase "new form of activism among social classes" is vague. Specify what distinguishes this "new form"—is it networked, decentralized, digitally mediated?

The authors state that "social media have evolved beyond mere communication platforms..." This is an important argument but would benefit from a stronger empirical linkage to the interview findings (i.e., quote participants directly).

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.