

A Sociological Perspective on an Engineering Issue: Social Consequences of Water Transfer Projects in the Province of Origin

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The introduction states, “An initial search in this field returned no results” but does not specify the databases or criteria used. Providing a brief literature gap analysis would strengthen the argument.

The section discusses social impact assessment (SIA) but does not explicitly integrate sociological theories (e.g., conflict theory, dependency theory). Strengthening this link would improve academic rigor.

While the study claims to use grounded theory, it does not explain why this method was chosen over alternative qualitative approaches (e.g., narrative analysis, ethnography). A justification would add methodological depth.

The study identifies problems but does not suggest actionable policies. Adding a paragraph on legal frameworks or participatory governance models (e.g., stakeholder negotiations) would increase the study’s impact.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The research questions should be explicitly stated in bullet points to enhance readability and emphasis.

The sentence “The province selected for this study is considered the most affected by water transfer in terms of tension” lacks a precise explanation of “tension.” Is this social unrest, economic hardship, or political conflict? Clarifying this would improve precision.

The introduction mentions “critical realism” as a perspective but does not provide references or elaborate on how this framework informs the study. Adding a theoretical background section would enhance the argument.

The literature review predominantly discusses Iranian cases but does not compare international water transfer projects. Including examples from other regions (e.g., China’s South-North Water Transfer Project or California’s water policies) would provide a broader context.

The claim “Discrimination between residents of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari and neighboring provinces was a primary cause of unrest” lacks direct evidence. Were protests documented? Are there official complaints? Adding concrete examples would strengthen this assertion.

The discussion states, “Water transfer projects should align with sustainable development principles,” but does not specify which framework (e.g., Brundtland Report, SDGs). Adding theoretical backing would improve academic weight.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.