

Presenting a Model for How Digital Media Affects Protest Political Crises in Iran

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1-Introduction

Addressing the role of digital media in protest actions in Iranian society is indeed crucial, as it has played a significant role in expanding and strengthening these actions. digital media has played a significant role in facilitating and amplifying political action among Iranian citizens in recent years. While it is important to note that digital media alone does not cause individuals to engage in political activities, it has certainly provided a platform for online political activities and the dissemination of information. However, it is also true that the use of digital media can sometimes lead to the dissemination of false information and the creation of rumor-oriented atmospheres. This can potentially incite citizens to join protest groups based on inaccurate or misleading information. The influence of digital media on protest actions in Iran can be attributed to several key factors:

- a. Explaining the direct effects of digital media on the protesting political action of citizens
- b. Explaining the indirect effects of digital media on citizens' protest political action through the mediating variable of online political action
- c. Explaining the indirect effects of digital media on protest political action through mediating variables of online political action and increasing political concerns among citizens.

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2- Method and Theoretical Framework

In this research, the 7th wave of the World Values Survey has been used for data analysis.

Based on existing theories, it is anticipated that digital media facilitates virtual interactions among users, enabling them to connect with family, friends, colleagues, and even strangers. These platforms often expose individuals to diverse political perspectives and allow for the sharing of news and information, fostering conversations within a network that can potentially spur increased political engagement both online and offline. Therefore, the primary premise of this study is that the utilization of digital media may result in heightened online political activism among citizens.

Furthermore, according to the theoretical framework of the research, it is posited that the escalation of online political activism via digital media channels could lead to an upsurge in protest movements among the populace. The efficacy of political actions in digital media as opposed to traditional media stems from factors such as the cost-effectiveness of information dissemination, inability of governments in enforcing complete censorship, enhanced access to political content like news and protest-related information, and the expedited delivery of protest-related news to the public. Consequently, attributes like the ease and speed of information retrieval, the organizational capabilities of these networks in mobilizing protesters, and the potential for multimedia dissemination of protest-related news have transformed digital media into an indispensable and influential tool for activists and politicians. Based on the theoretical model of the research, it is expected that online political action can indirectly increase citizens' protest political action. In this context, the expansion of digital media has indeed made it easier and less expensive for individuals to engage in political activities. However, the proliferation of digital media platforms has also introduced new challenges and threats to social and psychological security.

While the Internet offers unprecedented opportunities for connecting with others and accessing information, the rapid growth and widespread use of digital media can be perceived as a threat to traditional forms of



human interaction. This shift may lead individuals to view the world, including the international sphere, as an unsafe place. Consequently, individuals may participate in political activities as a way to mitigate potential threats and challenges they perceive in their environment.

3-Discussion

It appears that the theoretical research model in this figure has been tested using standard estimation methods. The numbers provided within the dependent and mediating latent variables represent the coefficients of determination and explained variance of these variables. These values indicate the percentage of changes in the dependent variable that can be attributed to the independent variables. According to Cohen (1988), values of 0.019, 0.13, and 0.26 are considered small, medium, and large effect sizes respectively.

in this case, the effect sizes of the direct and indirect effects of variables on online political action were found to be moderate. Furthermore, all research variables were observed to have positive effects on each other. The root mean square residual index value of 0.08 suggests that the model fits well.

4-Conclusion and Suggestion

The results of this research, in line with the theories of Kim and Chen (2016), indicate that digital media has a positive and significant effect on online political action, leading to the strengthening of online political activities among people. Additionally, the findings of this research, consistent with Virman's (2020) theories, demonstrate that social media, indirectly through the increase of online political action, has a positive impact on protest political action. Finally, the research results, in accordance with the theories of Giddens (2007) and Levin (2005), suggest that digital media, indirectly through the increase of political concerns and people's sense of insecurity, also influences protest political action.

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