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**SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN  
COLLABORATIVE KNOWLEDGE CONSTRUCTION**

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***Abstract***

Since 1980s the sociology of social movements has been witness of a constructivist perspective which turned to a disputable method in the study of social movements. Further discussions of some of the key elements in this approach pave the way to recognize distinctly how social movements and movement organizations are constructed. The main elements of constructivism procedure in analysis of a social movement is the “social power” of the movement organizations to construct a strong identity and effective strategies; however, the given opportunities in society to defend or advance the ideology of the movement has a special place in this analysis. Since we have to define social power in terms of influence on attitudes, values, opinion and behavior, it makes the role of media in social power more prominent. Therefore, media could have an effective role in construction of social realities and knowledge that in turn influences in social identity and norms. To shed light on this issue, in current research, the discussion centers on the role of the BBC Persian TV (BBCPTV) in 2009 Iranian Green movement to portray how media outcomes could impact on social identity and norms in order to support a social movement framing. To that end, considering the constructivism approach, discourse analysis of the BBCPTV’s news appears to validate such a view. The results provide confirmatory evidence that the BBCPTV attempted to reinforce collaborating knowledge of the Green movement to construct powerful identity and effective strategy.

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**Keywords:** Constructivism approach, media and social movement; collective identity action.



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## 1. Introduction

Over the past decades, the prominent political theories in social movement framing have been challenged by some scholars in this field (McAdam, 1982). There are some scholars who their viewpoints targeted the existence of political opportunity while estimated the nature, quality and structural elements such as culture and identity in social movements (Polletta & Jasper, 2001). The advent of constructivist approach in field of social movement's research, influenced the infrastructures of studies like process of collective identity and collective behaviors. Regarding both psychological and sociological aspects of social movements, constructivism came to be supplementary approach in field of social movements' studies.

What is Evident in social movement's studied, is departure from collective identity to collective actions. In this regard, collective behavior is the behavior of individuals under the influence of a whim that is common and resulted from social interactions and shared understanding and knowledge of social and political problems. Alberto Melucci (1981), focuses on the creation of collective identities as the "starting point" of the social movements and collective behavior; identification of intergroup and the ability of distinguishing "we" for the people who are supposed to take action together, from the "others" with different identity and "interests."

But what are social problems? Why some of the instances of deviances or dysfunctions fail to achieve the status of social or political problems whereas other instances do reach this status. How identification of in-group against out-group effects on interests and social and collective behaviors? Considering the role of media as an integral part of the movements and also the core aspects of constructivist approach, the present research has been managed to answer such a key questions. Evidently in this approach, social movements are recognized as a social and collective behavior that are affected by identification of new social identity and norms.

Review the constructivist approach, Alexander Wendt, the political scientist and one of the core social constructivist scholars, argues that "People act toward objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have for them" (Wendt, 1994). Therefore, in a simple sentence, social or political problems are recognized as a problem when it is interpreted as a problem. Along similar line, constructivism believes that individuals' social identity get a raise out of their affiliation with a specific social group with common interests. It is discussed by Wendt that "interests presuppose identities because an actor cannot know what it wants until it knows who it is" (1994).

In constructivism framework, people are identified through their social relationships and interactions (Jepperson, Wendt, & Katzenstein, 1996) and social interactions create sense of "self" and "other" among actors and also help them to identified their status while configure their interests (Pouliot, 2007). Accordingly, social identity explains group members' behavior, answers the question 'who are we' in comparison to 'them' and moreover, how should we be, think and act. Constructivism also, emphasizes on the influence of social norms in defining and shaping actor's behaviors.

In this regard, social realities and knowledge are collaborating process of individual understanding that are socially and culturally constructed (Ernest, 1999; Prawat & Floden, 1994). Therefore, "systems of shared knowledge, idea, beliefs and values" exert a powerful influence on social actions (Smit, 2001). On the other hand, we cannot ignore the importance of social power of movement's organizers in

transformation of shared ideas and collective identity to collective actions that change the incentive structures of other actors in order to bring about outcomes. As a matter of fact, movement's organizer need "immense power" to mobilize a broader parts of society. This immense power is consequence of simultaneous combination of two, encouraging and compelling individuals to act more collectively (Mann, 2012). Reasonably, access to such a power to influence on community's social will and knowledge, prominent the role that the media could play in driving movement's goals.

## 2. Problem Statement

Considering media function as an integral part of movements, particularly new movements, within constructivism approach, underlined the role of media in creating social and inter-subjective sphere. Therefore, media in all its forms, could be paramount in any communication as a system of shared idea, values and social knowledge, while the knowledge is socially distributed (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Regarding the constructivism as a theoretical framework to describe social behaviors, media, as an intersubjective sphere should be able to affect and shape individual's social identities as well as social norms, rather than influence on their behavior, directly. The term "construction" in this framework seems to induce that the media is not mirror that reflects the realities, otherwise, it is constructing and creating the social realities in order to have the most influence on audiences' knowledge and attitudes.

Regarding social movement's studies within constructivist approach, what is almost certain is that we have to characterize variations at a level of generality that covered changes in identity, norms, beliefs, behavior, attitudes, goals, needs, values, and all other aspects of individual's psychological traits. Evidently, in this vain, creation of a "we feeling" and transformation of collective identity to collective actions depends on a "shared understanding" of social realities and that conveyance of knowledge that underline the facilitation role of media in social changes.

## 3. Research Questions

In an overview, social movements are always occur when dissatisfaction and feeling of relative deprivation and injustice burst in a community who their needs and interests are not considered by the ruling class. However, public grievances never leads to social movement unless a reliable organization is created by the leaders to mobilize and form large-scale of supports. Generally, success of a social movement depends on three level of framings (Snow & Benford, 1988). First, in diagnostic stage the social or political problems are cleared. Furthermore, there is an identification between "we" and what the in-group call "them." Prognostic framing is the next stage that the leaders offer a solution and states how it will be carry out. Finally, motivation al framing that is action-oriented is supposed to end in social "change" as the ultimate goals of all movements. However, it could be a resistance to change like anti-globalization movements.

With this general preface, in continue, the present research will focus on social movements' literature in two section: first as a social and collective behavior and then we review that behavior in constructivists' point of views.

In retrospect, social movements for the first time were introduced as a part of general debates in field of "collective behavior." The tradition collective behavior, formed in 1920s, has been under the

influence of the Chicago school and interactionism. The term collective behavior has been coined by Robert E. Park, when he wrote his dissertation, "Masse und Publikum in 1903" (Baker, 1973). For him, the collective behavior, which is resulted of social interaction, is individuals' behavior under the affection of special thought and identity (Park, Burgess, & McKenzie, 1925). The other approach that consider collective behavior within social attitude existed in 1960s by Smelser (1962). According to their point of view "structural strain" and "collective deprivation" are the main reasons of existing social movements.

In 1970s "resource mobilization theories" grew up. They all emphasized on "social movements' organization" as an integral part of social movements. They also presume separation of social movements and collective behaviors. Furthermore, there are two another famous theories in this field, namely the "new social movements" and "collective identity approach" (Pakulski, 1991) which have been brought up with some social movements like student movements, peace movement, women movement and est. to assess why and how they are existed. Melucci (1981) also fostered theory of "new social movement"

In practical research, a movement's goals and directions are characterized according to what the research focuses on. Emphasize on society, shows the social context which movement has occurred in it and study of actors tell us who is or are the creator(s) of a social movement. To be exact, individualist approach is obvious in Max Weber's works. He coined "meaningful action" and insisted on individual knowledge in social events. According to Weber, explaining the result of an individual's social action involves taking into account his beliefs, values and knowledge. Furthermore, Weber suggests that it is necessary to appoint people's incentives for their actions (Albrow, 1990).

Karl Marx discussed about the dominance of society over individual and remarked the significance of social elements and their effects on individual's actions. Through his controversial approach he focused on both that aspect of history which is interpreted materialistically and dialectic approach in movements' analyzing. He also criticized the current political programs and social arrangements of reforms and revolutions (Güçlü, 2014).

Concerning the relation between individuals and societies, Giddens's "structuration" theory (1984) is the most credible and comprehensive among the other theories. According to this theory, social life is not driven only by social imposition but it is something more than unintended individual acts. In Giddens views, social structure and human agency are interconnected and they are made by one another because both of them concern social actions (Giddens, 1984). Structures have dual aspects; on the one hand they are made up of situated actors to do the social actions, social interactions and knowledgeable activities in different situations. On the other hand, social interactions lead to production and reproduction of the rules, resources and social interrelations.

Considering social movements as the collective actions help us to have a deeper understanding about constructivist approach to this point while the constructivists emphasize on psychological dimensions of movements. By the end of 1980 and early of 1990, constructivist approach turned into a main international theory. It was recommended in international relations arena by Nicholas Onuf (1989) as a comprehensive approach that enjoy a wide variety of field of study, namely Weberian interpretative sociology, Symbolic Interactionism, variants of Marxism, Veblenian institutionalism, post-structuralism(s) and hermeneutics (Palan, 2000). Different from Neorealism that only believe in the supremacy of material power (military and economic power), and Neoliberal Institutionalism that only

confirms a partly insignificant impact of non-material power, for the constructivists, “material power” has a particular place in this approach as well as “discursive power” which covered some concepts like social knowledge, ideology or even culture and language (Nugroho, 2008).

Moreover, in this approach the construction of human society is founded essentially on common grounds of beliefs rather than material power. Therefore, social identities and interests are recognized as the purposive actors that are constructed by those common beliefs and ideas rather than inherent nature (Palan, 2000). As a matter of fact, constructivism approach has been founded on an interactive atmosphere of human action. In this regard, meaning are created through intersubjective space and individuals’ interactions with each other and with the environment they live in. On the other word, shared understanding of meaning exist among conscious minds those interaction is based on common interests and presumptions which shape their minds toward a communication (Rogoff, 1990).

In an overview, based on constructivism approach, objects are labeled by different meaning via individuals’ intersubjective interactions. And on the other hand, the attached meaning determines people’s interactions within a community. Therefore, what determines social actions in a society toward different issues and objects is the meanings that those objects have for them, which comes out of “social knowledge,” however, social identities and interests have a special role to form individual’s behavior and actions.

Since 1980s, the sociology of social movements has been witness of a constructivist perspective which turned to an important approach in the study of social movements. Such an analytical approach to individual’s and collective behavior widen the scope of study to some of key elements to recognize more precisely how social movements and movement organizations are constructed. Many scholars such as Melucci, Eyerman and Jamison, Touraine, Gamson and modiglian, Gerhards and Rucht, and Snow and Benford, have dedicated considerable parts of their research in this field.

According to Melucci (1989), followers of the constructive approach believe that studies on resource mobilization try to ignore the mediator processes that lead movement organizations and individuals to find the meanings of an event and interpret a situation. As a result, the theory of social mobilization cannot understand the relationship between a problem, the related movement and its organization in a society. Because a problem in a society cannot lead to a movement in that society and a movement organization does not always use resources to get the help of supporters.

Berger and Luckmann (1966), remark in their book that individuals and groups who interact in a social system provide concepts or represent each other’s actions. In their view, these concepts are changed into habitual reciprocal roles that the actors play toward each other. While the community members access these roles, they play the roles in reciprocal interactions which are institutionalized. During the institutionalization process, meanings appearance in a society. Thus, what people know, believe and understand about the meanings of a reality have been constructed within a society. (Berger and Luckmann, 1966).

The cultural dimension of social movements was discussed in the late 1990s by Alberto Malucci in his book “Challenging Code” and by James Jasper in the book “The Art of Moral protests”. Melucci emphasized on this point that social movements especially the new ones mostly emphasize on creation of “collective identities”. Melucci (1989) also, was very interested in the constructivist theory regarding the

social movement. He had contradictory ideas about Marxist and the deprivation theory in which collective behavior means integrated empirical experiences. Melucci believed that actors follow various processes of meanings making, to discuss and to decide all which are known as the collective phenomenon. The construction aspect of the collective action focuses on individuals' creative powers who act in a collective way. According to Melucci, collective action is the outcome of individuals' ability in defining the political struggle content and organizing their common actions.

Reviewing literatures on this issue, seems that Blumer (1969), the American sociologist, provided the most comprehensive approach in this field when he talks about "symbolic interactionism". He summarized the perspective that people do something based on the meaning that the objects have for them. They extract the concepts from their social interaction and interpret them and attach to their objects to make changes in them. Blumer provides the three main aspects of this issue:

- 1) Facing with things, people act based on the meanings they get from the things.
- 2) The social interaction among people and between individuals and the society make these meanings.
- 3) Individuals follow interpretive processes to make changes in these meanings to be able to deal with the things they face with.

Blumer believed that people do not just react to each other's actions but they interpret or define each other's actions in order to interact with each other. They respond each other not directly to one another's actions but on the basis of the meaning of such actions. In addition, Griffin, Ledbetter, and Sparks, (2006) believes that symbolic interactionism describes "thinking as an inner conversation"; in their view this inner conversation is "minding" that means a person delays in his thinking about what his next action is. The second issue is that people in dealing with the things they face with use an interpretative process to handle in and modify these meanings (Kuwabara & Yamaguchi, 2013). Griffin et al. (2006) believe that human beings naturally talk to themselves to find out the meaning of a difficult situation. However, first of all, they need language and prior to any thinking, they must interact symbolically.

Therefore, accordance to constructivism framework, social movement will be imminent when there is a common knowledge of social or political problem at first stage of movement framing process. Identification of "we" against "them" is the second needs to determine movement's interests, values, ideology and goals that should be ended to collective identity. However, transformation of collective identity to collective action depend on many factors like sociopolitical structure of society, political opportunity, mobilizing structure, protest cycle and most important, leadership of the movement, but creation of "we-feeling" and achieve to a collective identity is significant in this transformation.

Considering constructivism approach, media in all its forms, could be paramount in any communication as a system of shared idea, values and social knowledge, while the knowledge is socially distributed (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Controlling social knowledge and attitudes could be an outcome of controlling the discourses of mass communication, whether it carry out by the journalists themselves or, indirectly, by those are accepted as credible sources. In this framework, media as an intersubjective sphere should be able to affect and shape individual's social identities as well as social norms, rather than influence on their behavior, directly.

No doubt media framing within a field of meaning is too important in shaping minds of audiences and raising a particular idea and promoting conformity in public thought (Watimin & Zanuddin, 2017). Indeed, media provide an opportunity to form a collective definition of a social or political problem (Ganjian & Zanuddin, 2017) which are defined by the specific codes. Therefore, media have the potential of shaping public opinion and behaviors (Ambikapathy & Zanuddin, 2017; Yasir, Batool, Khan, Imran, & Qureshi, 2016). On the other hand, access to internet and new media “promote individual’s ability to become a source of information by sharing their thoughts and beliefs” (Abdoulaye & Zanuddin, 2017). Furthermore, the intersubjective space created by the new media reinforce the interactive communication era (Mudjirin & Zanuddin, 2017). On the other hand during the political or social crisis while the majority of news are dedicated to conflict news (Ambikapaty & Zanuddin, 2017), it pave the way for social admission of what the media is framing for.

In present paper, the case of 2009 Iranian Green Movement is selected by the authors, as an practical example to evaluate the role of media, concentrating in constructivism approach to show how the BBC Persian TV tries to effect on Iranian social knowledge, identity and norms to in order to advance the Green leaders’ goals and demands. Here we have a glance look at the movement and its goals.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

What is known as a familiar story, is refers to the 2009 controversial presidential election in Iran that has been changed the political space of Iran. The historical election, put incumbent president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the radical candidate against Mir Hossein Mousavi, the popular “reformist” candidate and former prime minister of Iran (1981-89). In fact, the Green was Mousavi’s campaign color which after the election turned to symbol of protests, and what was called wide fraud in election. Earlier after the election, Iranian were informed by Iran’s interior minister, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad won the election for second turn with two-third of votes. The results were ridiculous for both defeated candidates and the people who were shock by what had come out of ballot boxes. However, the protestors have come to street with the slogan of “where is my vote?” but after a while their goals and demands change to something beyond nullification of the election (see figure 1).

Iran’s street riots and political crisis flashed across cable news networks and front pages of worldwide news agencies. Iranian authorities attempted to restrict access to networks and internet to prevent free-flow of information, from inside to outside of the country and conversely. Therefore, eradication of foreign correspondents was managed by Iranian security forces all over the country. With intensification of the protests, the reporters who tried to coverage the events were often arrested, expelled or confined to their bureaus and many local journalists already languishing in jail. In this phase a new collaboration appeared between foreign and even internal news-agencies and citizen-journalists. In fact, the task of reporting the news had fallen to the millions of young, tech-savvy Iranian protesters, armed with video phones to support the media with significant amount of user-generated content (UGC).



**Figure 01.** The Greens' Street protests

Among all foreign-based media the newly established BBC Persian TV (BBCPTV), appeared more powerful to coverage Iran's events for the Iranian from London. Regarding the blatant censorship of news by Iran's press and state-run radio and television (IRIB), the BBCPTV turned to a main conduit of information, tried to make a close relation with the Green leaders and protestors to "give voice to voiceless", as the BBC directors claims.

However, after house arresting of the Green's leaders, Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, on 25 February 2011, the fail or success of the movement is under question, but what is almost certain is that the Iran's Green Movement put the foundations of Islamic Republic of Iran in a serious challenge. In fact, their goals targeted the legitimacy of the Islamic system, politically and religiously; although, at first they just demanded for holding a new election. On the basis of the manifestos, issued by the leaders, it was evidenced that "separation of Islam from state" and discredit of "Velayat-e-Faqih" as the fundamental concept in Iran's constitution, was on top of their subjects of goals. "Releasing the political prisoners", "freedom of press and expression" are also their main concerns (Soroush, 2010). They also emphasized on inefficiency and injustice of Iran's authorities while insisting on fraud in election.

In a glance to the Green goals, it is clear that most of their goals, targeted the Islamic identity and norms of Islamic system of Iran; however the leaders were products of the same system. They tried to put the religious and political legitimacy of the authorities in a serious challenge and pave the way for admission of new norms and identity in Iran. No doubt, supporting their goals and demands by the aligned and anti-government media was significant in framing process of movement, but their hopes were ruined by the end of the story.

In continue, regarding the constructivism approach as theoretical framework, we will have an analytical look at the movement and the role that the BBCPTV played to advance the green's goals.

## 5. Research Methods

The researcher chooses qualitative research because it enables us to explain and interpret the interacted realities. Moreover, the qualitative research outcome, can be generalized to similar geographical and population. The constructivism approach is also considered as theoretical framework with emphasize on intersubjective interaction, created by the media and its effective on "social



knowledge”, “identity” and “norms.” Since intersubjective meanings are produce and reproduce by discursive power within this framework, in this paper, discourse analysis is employed as a tool to examine a set of selected of the BBCPTV’s news and programs that coverage Iran’s aftermath of 2009 presidential election.

Accordingly, discourse analysis aims in this paper, considering theoretical framework, reveals how the media and specifically the BBCPTV could have a certain effect on recipients’ perceptions (Iranian) by construction of Iran’s current political realities that in turn creates a system of knowledge; influence on social identity and norms in order to effect social practice and behavior. Definitely, the framing and way to propagation of social or political problem’s definition and its interpretation and moral evaluation, or sometimes recommendations (Entman, 1993) has an important impact on audiences’ attitude and their actions.

However, some believes that the Iran’s Green movement has survived and even grown since its birth but in practice, there is no unfold and open activity since the arresting of the leaders. Thus to achieve the affective result, the research data belong to restricted time from the emergence of Green movement, from 15 June 2009, until the arrest of the movement’s leaders on 14 Feb. 2011 and about 21 months. In the light of NVivo 8 the data were tagged by pre-setting codes that were defined in coding sheet as a guide to either avoid missing or have an accurate and reliable coding process.

## **6. Findings**

Upon follow out the research goals to evaluate the role of that media could play in social movements’ collective identity and collective behavior, we process with discourse analysis of the BBCPTV’s programs based on possible affection of the BBCPTV on Iranians’ social knowledge, identity and norms. To that end, the specification of theme/subtheme of the programs is considered to formulate these key concepts to provide strong discussion while the BBCPTV’s framing is signalized as well. Utilized by Nvivo software, the coded data (nods), are classified based on specific theme/subtheme. Therefore, the theme/subtheme are identified by the concepts which provide demystification answers to present research questions. They are categorized in 8 sections as follows:

1. Fraud in election (Social knowledge and Norms)
2. Green Movement (Social knowledge and identity)
3. Iranian Identity (social knowledge and Identity)
4. Islamic Identity of System (Social knowledge and identity)
5. Democracy and violation of human rights (Social knowledge and Norms)
6. Legitimacy of government and executive branch (Social knowledge and Norms and Identity)

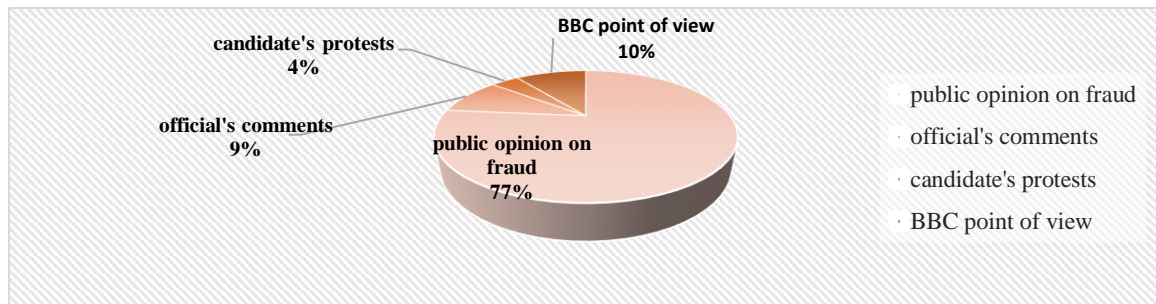
The discussion on these theme/subtheme based on findings that are displayed in related chart could be a great help for valid answers.

### **6.1. Fraud in election (Social knowledge and Norms)**

Concurrent with announcement of the election results, at first step, the BBCPTV tries to show the fraud in the election as an indicator of anti-norms that happened in Iran.

The BBCPTV attempts, as it is shown in figure 2, to reflect public opinion on this matter at first step. Confirmation of fraud in election by public opinion provides a social based for protests and identified the Green Movement as a self-motivated movement. Moreover, it brings the movement in line with the grassroots movement in next steps.

The reflection of public opinion on fraud in the election, on the other hand, shows the BBCPTV's success in creating interaction space with Iranian communities.



**Figure 02.** Fraud in election

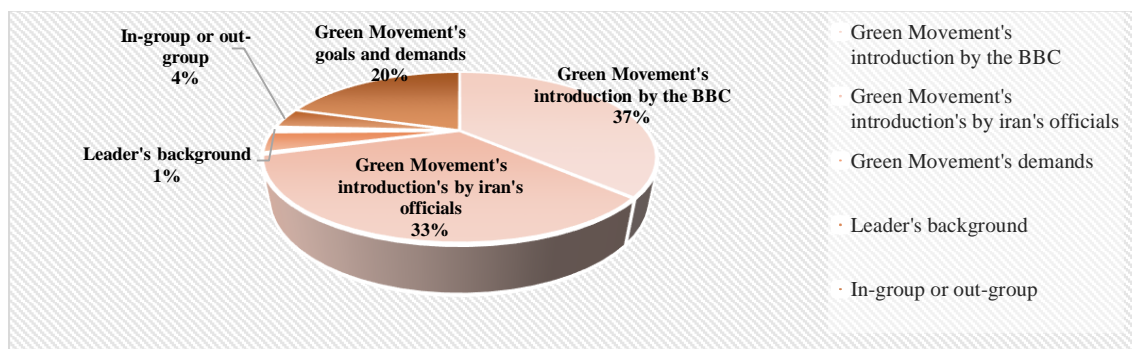
After the introducing the election results by the Iran's press and media, the BBCPTV paid special attention to details of the results and ballot boxes. Referring to amount of defeated candidates' votes in their birthplace, and losing the majority of the votes in their hometowns, the BBCPTV calls it as a rear case in compare with other countries or even in Iran's election history. This service even drawing audiences' attention to pre-filled ballots that shows not only political anti-norms, but also horrible social anti-norms that Iranian authorities has been committed. With the advent of massive protests, the BBCPTV endeavors to induce fraud in election in various ways. Referring to a premature congratulation of Ayatollah Khamenei, after the early announcement of the election results that is interpreted as an unusual case and proof of rigging in election.

The BBCPTV reconfirms fraud as a political anti-norm by putting forward Green leaders' point of view about the "engineering the election" and calling ballots as "jugglery boxes." The BBCPTV repeatedly emphasizes on "ridicules results" and considering the election as a "game" to bold the seriousness of the issue. The noticeable point, as it is shown in figure 2, is that the leaders of the movement and Iranian officials' comments have a low percentage of protests to election results against higher percentage of public opinion toward fraud in election that in turn reconfirms the social based of the Green Movement. *Indeed, fraud in the election is interpreted as a reality and political anti-norms that carry out by Iranian authorities. In fact, the BBCPTV portrays the fraud as a fact that is provided by the public opinion.*

## **6.2. Green Movement (Social knowledge and identity)**

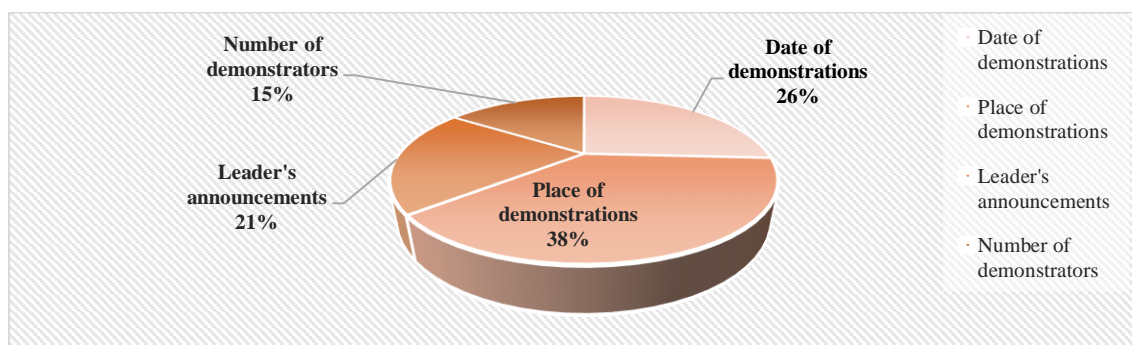
The widespread protests over the alleged fraud in election lead to massive street demonstrations in support of Mousavi and the reformist movement. Since then the demonstrators were known as the pro-Green Movement with Green headband or flag. In spite of lack of access of the Green leaders to media, the BBCPTV identified the Green movement by draw attentions to their goals and demands and broadcast the messages of the leaders (figure 3).

In BBCPTV's reports the Green movement is introduced as a movement, setting up by the innocent people who just asking for their "primary rights." It is against the Iran's authorities' opinion about the protestors that addressed them as "hooligan", "subversive" and instigated by the foreign enemies. Since the protagonist of the story are always the movement's leaders, the BBCPTV tries to recognize a new identity for them that makes them separate from the Iranian authorities which are introduced as the antagonists of the story. Indeed, it could be a great tactic to show "we" against "them" and creation of "we-ness" feeling among the protestors. The protagonists of the story are identified as those who seriously defend the people's right and fight for freedom of speech and never silent against violation of human rights in Iran. On the other hand, the antagonists are those who beat, torture and kill the innocent people and do everything to keep their power.



**Figure 03.** Identification of Green Movement

Moreover, the further information about the date and place of demonstrations, the number of participants and the leaders' announcement for their supporters are all confirm the BBCPTV's endeavors to orchestrate the movements (figure 4).

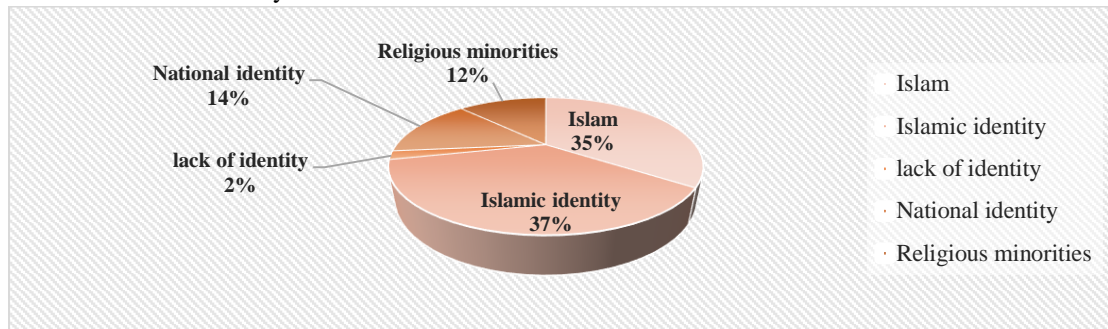


**Figure 04.** Green Movement's Information

### 6.3. Iranian Identity (social knowledge and Identity)

The BBCPTV in some parts, tries to draw Iranian attentions to their national Identity and non-religious identity which reminds their identity before 1979 Islamic revolution. Actually, the BBCPTV has tried to undermine the Islam and Islamic Identity of Iranian, since reminding their previous identity, pave the way for admission of new identity.

**Table 04.** Iranian Identity

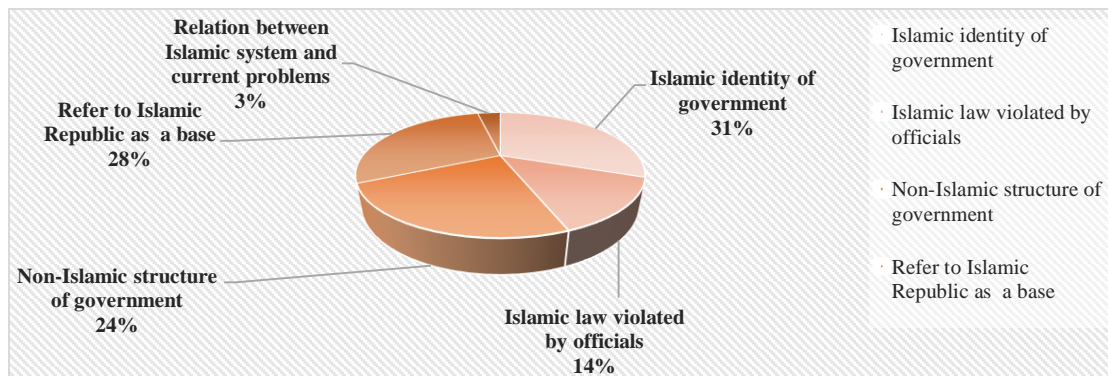


**Figure 05.** Iranian Identity

Talking about Islam and Islamic concepts is also prominent in programs (figure 5). In BBCPTV’s reporting, not only the pretty face of Islam is not shown, but also there is a gentle comparison between Islamic concepts and Baha’i’s teachings to picture the violent nature of Islam. In addition, the religious and Islamic identity of the Iranian has been challenged when the whole programs covering violations and trample of Islamic teachings by the claimants of Islam that are the ruler of Islamic government. Also, the BBCPTV, gently, identified “them” against “we” while introduces the governmental forces as those who suffer from personal crisis and lack of Identity. Therefore, the BBCPTV has tried to undermine the Islam and Islamic Identity of Iranian, since reminding their previous identity, pave the way for admission of new identity

**6.4. Islamic Identity of System (Social knowledge and identity)**

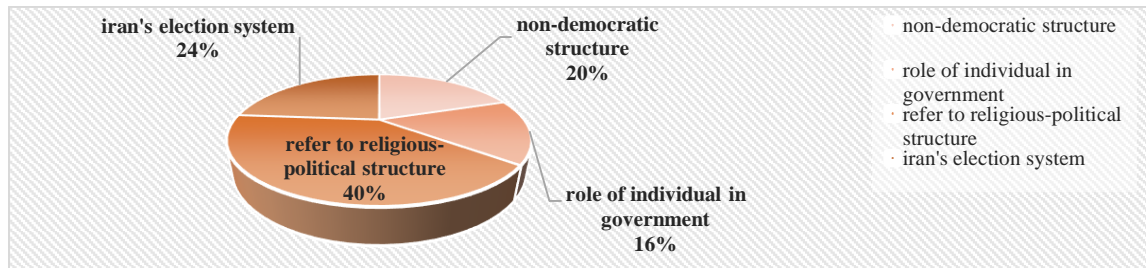
After emphasizing on Iranian identity and Islamic identity as dominant identity in Iran, now the BBCPTV refers to Islamic identity of government and undermines the Islamic system by depicting the Islamic law that is violated by Iran’s executives (figure 6). Torturing, sexual abuse and killing the protestors that are bolded considerably, are not only illegal actions but also they are abhorrent in all religious schools. Execution sentence for political activities, bringing up the Iran 1988 mass political executions, violation of human rights are all considered as the issues that arose out of revolutionary thoughts of revolutionaries’ leaders. Therefore, it is shown that the current problems are not new but they have been brought by the advent of Islamic revolution and those who committed acts of violence under the name of Islam.



**Figure 06.** Islamic Identity of system

### 6.5. Democracy and Violation of Human Rights (Social knowledge and Norms)

Since the elections is the matter of utmost importance in any democratic country, therefore the election has a decisive role in the state's structure of democracy. Referring to the role of individuals in the election and the considering aftermath of the election and wide unrests in Iran, are all suggestions of non-democratic structure of the Islamic system.

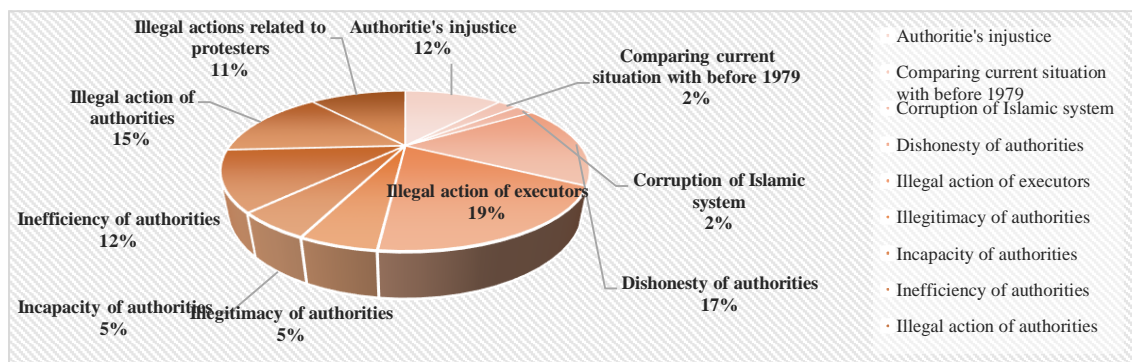


**Figure 07.** Democracy and Structural problems

Furthermore, according to the figure 7, the BBCPTV has more emphasize on religious-political structure of Islamic system as the source of all current problems. In fact, the structure of power in Iran and the key role of the clerical establishment in accreditation of candidates, are all suggest the non-democratic structure of Iran. Above all, rigging in the election and referring to the electoral system of Iran as a rare case, confirm a political anti-norm and anti-democratic function, carried out by Iranian governors.

### 6.6. Legitimacy of government and executive branch (Social knowledge and Norms and Identity)

The concept of “legitimacy” is originated in individual’s beliefs about the justness of authorities. It is also positively expounded as the normative stance granted by the citizen to their governors. On the other words, when a government is in legitimized status, it means that the governors are appropriate in uses of power.



**Figure 08.** Legitimacy of the government

What the Iranian authorities were address by the BBCPTV, indeed has a serious credibility deficit for the Islamic system. Inefficiency and injustice, dishonesty and incapacity of authorities and executives, effects on admissibility and legitimacy of government by people (figure 8). On the other hand it gives a

new identity to Iran's government that is against Islamic structure of the system. The BBCPTV, also tries to confirm the non-Islamic and non-democratic structure of the system by comparing the Islamic system with Iran's monarchy system, before the revolution in 1979.

## 7. Conclusion

Review the literature on social movements, there is most attention on process of the forming a movement. Some of them like Hans Toch, have individual-oriented approach or some others like Eric Hoffer with "mass society" theory or Adam Smith with concentration on "relative deprivation" and have tried to underline the role of individuals in movements and revolutions. On the other hand some scholars have tried to propose a wider scope and consider social structure as well as social interactions. Blumer argues that besides "agitation" and "incitation" which are a personal factor, "ideology" and "circular reaction" are the main contributed factors on forming a social movement and collective behavior (Smelser, 2013). There are other researchers, like McCarthy and Zald (1987) that have emphasized on social organization. In their view, a social movement is a set of people's opinions and beliefs revealing the priority of changing some elements of social structures. They explained the "resource mobilization" approach which focuses on societal support and limitation of social movement phenomena. And among all, Blumer (1986) that putting forward the "symbolic interaction", that is more comprehensive while paying attention to various aspects of movements from collective definition and identity to collective behavior.

Considering social movements as a social behavior, constructivism approach turns into a comprehensive theory. Since constructivism rests on the intersubjective dimension of human action and social knowledge, it also prominent the role that media could play in creation of public sphere and interpretation of social realities. Given the centrality to social identity and norms as an effective factors in social behavior, the present paper is an attempt to evaluate the role of media (here the BBCPTV) in influence on general public identity and social norms in order to advance the movement's goals. To portray the issue, the Iran's Green Movement take as an excellent example that was supposed to bring up the new identity and norms, we examine the role of the BBCPTV in this concern, while the media is inseparable part of new movements.

With a glance look at discourse analysis and considering the synthesis of findings, it is obvious that the BBCPTV since the beginning of the protests has insisted to induce rigging in election in light of opposites candidates' remarks and experts' comments in this regard and more important, resorts to public opinion to identify the protests as the social movement with social base. After the identification of Green Movement and Iran's authorities, the BBCPTV giving a full specification of "we" against "them", and determination of in-group against out-group.

According to the BBCPTV "we" are identified as those innocent and defenseless people who only seek for their citizen rights and are tortured and killed just for expressing their feelings. They are also identified with Islamic identity, but not in the forms of what the Islamic revolution had brought for them. In fact, it was a new Islamic identity which is identified by the Greens' leaders and reformist movements and under the banner of Green Movement.

Furthermore, “them” are those treacherous and dictators with furious spiritual who don’t hesitate to kill or torture their opposites. They are leaders of the Islamic revolution, allege radicalism thought of Islam. They are specified by injustice, lying, atrocity and brutality against civilians during the news and programs.

Evidently, the most emphasize has been in violation of human rights and freedom of speech as the obvious anti-norms in Iran. The illegal actions and all violations committed by the Islamic ruler has been brought up to challenge the legitimacy of the Islamic system, both politically and religiously. The state’s lack of legitimacy and internal disintegration and division of the heads, suggest the fragility of the state. On the other hand, it paves the way for either civil disobedience, nor legitimized opposite movements and entice neutral people’s sympathy as well as international society. Therefore, the BBCPTV with underscoring the inefficient and illegitimacy of the Islamic system, confirms the legitimacy of the existence of opposite movements and reinforcement of public acceptance for new norms, introduced by Green Movement’s leaders.

Regarding inconclusive debates on emergence, flourishing, success or fail of social movements due to their different backgrounds, ideologies, interests, and their origins, this paper present constructivism approach, as the best way to analysis the process of formation of movements. Given the centrality to constructivism in field of movement’s studies, enables the researchers to explain individual’s social behaviors that included social movements as a collective social action. Since imagine of new movement without media is impossible, the role that the media plays in collaborative knowledge construction and interpreting social and political realities, is considerably significant.

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