

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	Glasgow 2409241 DCU 18114687 Charles 74900848
Dissertation Title	Internet shutdowns during protests: A practice in digital authoritarianism

INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING

Reviewer 1 Initial Grade <i>Select from drop down list</i>	Reviewer 2 Initial Grade <i>Select from drop down list</i>	Late Submission Penalty <i>Select from drop down list</i>
Word Count Penalty (1-15% over/under = 1gr point; 15-20% over/under = 2 gr points; 20-25% over/under = 3 gr points; more than 25% over/under = 0 fail)		
Word Count: 22035 Suggested Penalty: <i>Select from drop down list</i>		

JOINT GRADING (subject to agreement of the external examiner and approval at Joint Exam Board)

Final Agreed Mark. (Following correspondence reviewers should list the agreed final internal grade taking before and after any penalties to be applied).

Before Penalty: B2 [16] **After Penalty:** Select from drop down list

DISSERTATION FEEDBACK

Assessment Criteria	Rating
A. Structure and Development of Answer	
This refers to your organisational skills and ability to construct an argument in a coherent and original manner	
• <i>Originality of topic</i>	Excellent
• <i>Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified</i>	Very Good
• <i>Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work</i>	Very Good
• <i>Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions</i>	Good
• <i>Application of theory and/or concepts</i>	Very Good
B. Use of Source Material	
This refers to your skills to select and use relevant information and data in a correct manner	
• <i>Evidence of reading and review of published literature</i>	Excellent
• <i>Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument</i>	Very Good
• <i>Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence</i>	Good
• <i>Accuracy of factual data</i>	Very Good
C. Academic Style	
This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• <i>Appropriate formal and clear writing style</i>	Excellent
• <i>Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation</i>	Very Good
• <i>Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)</i>	Excellent
• <i>Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?</i>	Yes
• <i>Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)</i>	Not required

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- *Appropriate word count*

Yes

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

This is an innovative thesis which seeks to explore "how internet access within a country can be monopolized in favour of governments looking to gain control over the media and dissemination of information" (p2). The author defines key concepts relating to digital governance and develops a convincing analytical framework drawing on practice theory. There is also good use of data sources.

However, the empirical part of the thesis, namely the focus on India as a preminent example of internet shutdowns used as authoritarian practices, is less coherent and robust. The discussion of how internet shutdowns benefit the incumbent regime would for example need to be placed in the context of the criticism that these actions generated within the country, both in the media as well as provoking rebukes from the Supreme Court.

Reviewer 2

The dissertation attempts to analyze the impact of network shutdowns on citizen protests. The topic is timely, as since the uprising during Arab Spring, it resurfaces with every major protest in the countries with fragile democratic institutions. The theoretical discussion is the strongest point of the dissertation and reaches well above average. However, and this is a considerable shame, it is rather distant from the actually performed empirical analysis. This creates problems of its own. Namely, the presentation of the investigated case studies is disorganized to say the least. Hence, the great expectation, with which one enters the empirical part of the dissertation, is not realized. This is unfortunate. Additionally, there a minor point as well. According to its title, the dissertation speaks about disruptions of the connectivity to the Internet. Yet from what is presented, the shutdowns apply to internal networks in the analyzed countries. There is a rather profound difference between keeping the internal networks operational and only isolating the country from the international networks or shutting down the internal networks entirely. Hence, the title is ambiguous. Overall, even if there are some problems, I am glad to see a decent research effort.