

Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution for Higher Professional Education  
National Research University Higher School of Economics

St. Petersburg School of Social Sciences and Area Studies

Review of the Bachelor's Project

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Year 4. Degree programme: Sociology and Social Informatics

School: St. Petersburg School of Social Sciences and Area Studies

Topic: Studying The Creation, Change and Spread of Social Narratives Using Data from Telegram Channels Covering COVID-19 Pandemic

Thesis Components	Assessment Criteria	Grade (10-point scale) (indicative) 0,1,2,3 – unsatisfactory 4,5 – satisfactory 6,7 – good 8,9,10 – excellent
<b>Problem Statement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The work has clearly communicated relevance and positioning</li> <li>• The research problem, topic, goals and questions are clear, correctly formulated and well-communicated</li> <li>• Research questions match with the thesis problem statement</li> <li>• Thesis problem statement and goals match with the thesis content</li> </ul>	<b>8</b>
<b>Theoretical Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The review matches with the thesis problem statement, RQs/goals</li> <li>• The review covers key research areas related to the problem (including at least 30 key international sources) and provides a critical overview of key research areas</li> <li>• The thesis has clearly communicated, correct and grounded in literature theoretical model (e.g., RQs are clearly presented and theoretically motivated, proposed hypotheses are explicitly formulated and theoretically supported)</li> <li>• Employed research strategy matches with the theoretical model</li> <li>• There is a clear connection with the literature and reviewed theory in the discussion of the results</li> </ul>	<b>7</b>
<b>Data Collection and Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RQ match with data and method employed</li> <li>• The validity of the methodology, data collection, and research design (including sampling strategy) is motivated based on the critical analysis of relevant studies</li> <li>• Data and methodology are critically evaluated, limitations of the study are discussed (including sample bias discussion)</li> <li>• Data gathering process (or database search and selection), systematization and preprocessing performed according to quality standards</li> <li>• Data is of sufficient quality and quantity to answer RQs</li> <li>• The degree of the author's involvement in the data gathering process in case of the primary data use</li> </ul>	<b>9</b>

<b>Data Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Choice of the tools and methods is reasonable and well-motivated</i></li> <li>• <i>Methods of analysis are applied correctly</i></li> <li>• <i>Data analysis process and limitations are critically analyzed</i></li> </ul>	<b>9</b>
<b>Results and Contribution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Research independence is demonstrated</i></li> <li>• <i>The obtained results are credible and of importance to the research or practice</i></li> <li>• <i>Conclusions are theoretically motivated, empirically grounded, independent, reasonable and concise, showing a clear connection with RQs/goals</i></li> </ul> <p><u><i>In the case of research contribution:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The scientific contribution of the study to the research field</i></li> <li>• <i>Completeness and integrity of the study</i></li> <li>• <i>Critical reflection on the results and limitations of the study and its positioning in the research field</i></li> </ul> <p><u><i>In the case of practical contribution:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The practical significance of the study</i></li> <li>• <i>Completeness and integrity of the presented project/project proposal, research program, plan of activities</i></li> <li>• <i>Theoretical motivation and empirical research grounding of the project, relation to the practical applications and chosen professional activity</i></li> <li>• <i>Match between the proposed activities and recommendations and study goals</i></li> </ul>	<b>6</b>
<b>Structure and Formatting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Literacy and consistency</i></li> <li>• <i>Cohesiveness and coherence</i></li> <li>• <i>Formatting of the text, tables, and figures, reference list</i></li> <li>• <i>The correctness of the professional thesaurus and concepts usage, adherence to academic style</i></li> </ul>	<b>9</b>
<b>Final grade of the reviewer (final grade may differ from the arithmetic average on the criteria)</b>		<b>8</b>

Comments on grade:

This study evokes mixed emotions, which undoubtedly may be attributed to the format of the work, the intricacies of which I am unfamiliar with. First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge the author's highly advanced level in the field of modern statistical methods and their automation. However, this very fact has a side effect - the author's intense focus on the chosen methodology and its implementation detrimentally affects other parts of the research. In my opinion, the text lacks a clear problem statement, encompassing not only the research question itself but also the necessity for its solution. Thus, it is challenging to agree that the work has a clearly formulated relevance and positioning. At the very least, it would have been beneficial to provide a more comprehensive elaboration of the main research question, the significance of the obtained data, their potential benefits, and limitations. The same applies to the theoretical review, where the author referenced several studies on the topic but omitted even a brief assessment of their practical applicability beyond academic research. Overemphasizing the scientific nature of the text is not advisable as it may significantly limit the potential audience, considering that not all sociologists would be able to digest such content.

The theoretical model is presented in the study. However, it seems to get lost between the fragmented theoretical review and the dense narrative in the empirical section. The theoretical support for the hypotheses can also be described as "semi-transparent" because the author swiftly transitions from practical questions to the empirical aspect, creating a distinct narrative frame that stands out from the more grounded introduction. To achieve "research independence," certain aspects of the study need to be addressed. Specifically, it would be desirable to see a more

