



## Iran's Strategy and Perspectives in Lobbying

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### Abstract

The goal of lobbying is to influence the government's policy, implement its policies, help determine policy guidelines for political, social, ecological, business, and other purposes. Lobbying is often an effective way of influencing decision-makers. But its success depends on our knowledge, our resources and our communications. In fact, lobbying is a modern phenomenon that private sectors, such as NGOs, active trade unions in the country, political, economic, ideological and even military organizations, are trying to help move the development engine in various fields. This will be done by providing real, documented, valid, and free analysis. Therefore, they influence decisions, which are in the interest of the lobbyists. Lobbying is certainly a new and legal form of communication. The Internet is a new technology that greatly improves the process. For many years, Left thinking has made the word private sector synonymous with rendering. This view is changing over the last few years. But, at some point, there is still no positive look at private-sector organizations. Years ago, cooperation with union activists and trade unions in Iran was not pleasant. They believed that the syndicates sought their own personal interests and benefits. So, they said why should they work with them? After some time, the power of the influence of the trade unions was determined, but again the taboo of opposition to it were not broken. Many believed that lobbying was a tool that cooperated with power institutions and should be supported by the state and party powers. On the other hand, there was a negative attitude in the society about lobby and lobbying, and among lobbying people it meant cunning and jobbery, sabotage or to tamper. One of the most important means of success in lobbying is to have a government backing and power. But the general view of the Iranian society about the word lobby is wrong. In many countries, lobbying has been accepted as an important tool. Lobbying is a lucrative and formal job and even lobbying firms are officially active. Therefore, we must attention to the inside and outside of lobbying. Perhaps the most important problem at the moment is that lobby and lobbying in Iran lack a clear framework, which is why the views on it are not so positive. That is why in this article we will try to address the issue of lobbying and its effects. Why in Iran, despite such different views, lobbyists have been able to develop rapidly? What is the strategy of lobbying? This important question forms the essence of our article.

**Keywords:** Lobbying, İran's lobby, NGO, lobbying strategy

### Lobi Faaliyetlerinde İnan'ın Stratejisi ve Bakış Açısı

#### Öz

Lobi yapmanın amacı, hükümetin politikasını etkilemek, politikalarını uygulamak, politik, sosyal, ekolojik, iş ve diğer amaçlarla ilgili politika rehberlerinin belirlenmesine yardımcı olmaktır. Lobcilik, genellikle karar alıcıları etkilemenin etkili bir yoludur. Ancak başarısı bilgimize, kaynaklarımıza ve iletişimimize bağlıdır. Aslında, lobcilik, STK'lar, ülkede aktif sendikalar, politik, ekonomik, ideolojik ve hatta askeri örgütler gibi özel sektörlerin, kalkınma motorunu çeşitli alanlarda hareket ettirmeye yardımcı olmaya çalıştığı modern bir olgudur. Bu gerçek, belgelenmiş,

geçerli ve ücretsiz analiz sağlayarak yapılacaktır. Bu nedenle, lobcilerin çıkarıma olan kararları etkiliyorlar. Lobcilik kesinlikle yeni ve yasal bir iletişim şeklidir. İnternet, süreci büyük ölçüde geliştiren yeni bir teknolojidir. Uzun yıllar boyunca Sol düşüncesi, özel sektörü kelimeyi render ile eşanlamlı hale getirdi. Bu görüş son birkaç yılda değişiyor. Ancak, bir noktada, özel sektör kuruluşlarına hala olumlu bir bakış yoktur. Yıllar önce, İran'daki sendika aktivistleri ve sendikalarla işbirliği yapmak hoş karşılanmıyordu. Sendikaların kendi kişisel çıkarlarını ve yararlarını aradıklarına inanılarak çalışmaların desteklenmesi zordu. Bir süre sonra sendikaların etkisinin gücü ve etkisi belirlenerek ciddiyetle oluşmaya başladı. Fakat lobciliğin güç kurumlarıyla işbirliği yapan ve devlet ve parti yetkileri tarafından desteklenmesi inancı, lobcilik hareketine olumsuz etki bıraktı. İran toplumunun lobi sözcüğü hakkındaki genel görüşü yanlıştır. Birçok ülkede lobcilik önemli bir araç olarak kabul edilmiştir. Lobcilik, kazançlı ve resmi bir iştir ve hatta lobcilik şirketleri resmi olarak aktiftir. Lobciliğin dış ve iç yönlerini ele alarak İran'da lobciliğe yaklaşımı analiz etme mümkün olacaktır. İran'daki lobi sektörü ve lobcilik net bir çerçeveye sahip değildir, bu yüzden bu konudaki görüşler çok olumlu sayılmamaktadır. Ancak son yıllarda ve özellikle dış politikada İran devleti ve STK'lar yoğun bir şekilde lobciliğe meyil göstermişlerdir. Bu nedenle bu makalede, lobcilik ve etkileri konusunu ele almaya çalışacağız. Neden İran'da farklı görüşlere rağmen, lobciler hızla gelişebiliyor? Lobcilik stratejisi nedir? Bu önemli soru, makalemizin özünü oluşturur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Lobcilik, İran'ın lobisi, sivil toplum örgütü, lobi stratejisi

## 1. Preface

Non-governmental organizations (NGO), although backed by non-governmental sources, are seriously involved in the implementation of democratic laws and help governments in this direction. As such, NGOs can contribute to the development of community-based infrastructure. As it has become so important in other countries, and especially in Europe, NGOs contributions to participation in inside and outside lobbying in Iranian government policies are affecting other governments and the people. This article explains the factors influencing lobby behavior. In this context, we will try to find an answer to the critical question. What are the NGOs and lobbies in Iran and which strategies do they apply to the inside or outside lobby?

This contrasts with the organization's assumptions about the communication features and resources of NGOs, with the hypotheses of the level of the subject of complexity, importance and interest group on the issue of politics, economics, commerce and civil liberties. Expectations are based on the assumption that different logic of influence and reputation interferes inside and outside non-governmental organizations. In a literal sense, the lobbying work is very similar to putting the wheel in the car. A machine known as the machine of knowledge, values and actions of decision-makers. In the current context of the world, lobbying is an important part of the political, social and economic development that is being used. Lobbyists can strongly support decision-makers.

The findings of this research show that the subject-level features have more explanatory power than those of the organization at the level. More prominent issues, more complex issues and public interest issues are considerably more than lobbying, while public goods are getting less expensive by lobbyists. The reputation logic seems

to attract an external lobbyist, while driving logic within lobbying is still confusing (Junk, 2015).

The meaning of the lobby is the corridor. In the past, lobbyists stood in parliamentary corridors or special meetings places and tried to meet informal politicians. For this reason, such people were called lobbyists. These people usually those who were adversely affected by a law and were trying to solve personal problems with the help of politicians. For example, by implementing a large community program or great society program that would raise the tax rate, they would go to the politicians meeting and talk to them. After the development of large corporations, lobbying was aimed at shortening the government's hands on corporate businesses. At that time, lobbyists held their meetings secretly, but now lobbyists meet and negotiate with government officials and employees, even by holding formal meetings. In this way, in legal, judicial or organized public opinion matters affect political, legal and economic decisions.

The lobby can operate informally or formally. The objective of lobbying is not to preserve its interests and benefits or to remove the state from economic and commercial affairs. Today, lobbyists are trying to use the government as a partner and supporter of corporate businesses and corporate policies and attract support. Nowadays, lobbies try to identify all factors that impede the growth and development of large firms by analyzing government performance. This will prevent government stagnation and corporate bankruptcy. Lobbyists try to help government decision-makers to make good decisions by using statistics and providing scientific information and they work in the interest of the state and employers.

Apart from the native lobby, there is also an external (foreign) lobby. These are in foreign countries and they work on their own goal to secure the interests of a country or their own country. For example, in the US, the Cuban lobby, the Japanese lobby, and the lobby of China, are lobbyists of Israel, each with a history of lobbies and lobbying for its own country. As the Cuban lobby has been operating in the US for almost sixty years. Meanwhile, the Israeli lobby in the US has a long history. Today, new lobbies in the US can be noted, one of which is the lobby of Saudi Arabia or Iran. Referring to lobbying and their strategy, Iran's lobbying strategy and activities will also be considered.

## **2. Introduction**

In formations there is a general term called advocacy. In the general definition, the meaning of advocacy is to: seek, advise, defend an idea to the benefit of others. The advocacy are designed to influence the power owners with the goal of making change. This is common among organizations.

In fact, the most principled reason for a syndicate or NGO to be realized is advocacy. The firms often have limitations in setting up advocacy areas. But when combined, they can be more effective in supporting the discussion.

To advocacy, there are 6 general strategies:

- Networking
- the coalition
- Media
- Campaign
- Mediation
- lobby

That is why the word lobby is included in the literature of the trade unions.

### **3. Lobby from Politics to Economy**

The term lobby is more of a political term. In a general definition, lobby groups are referred to as those groups that act to influence the process of political-social decision-making and to safeguard their own interests. In a more precise definition, "specific and legal measures taken in conjunction with lawmakers and policymakers to persuade them to defend a particular position" (Mohammadi, 2010).

In fact, the lobbying of actions is a direct and obvious expression of demands to influence policy-makers in order to understand and support the adoption of a law or not. Lobbying has a long history. One of the first lobbies in American history was formed in 1792 by William Hall. William Hall was hired by a retired army soldier. The mission was to lobby for increased salaries and pensions of soldiers at the newly constituted US Congress. Since then, lobbying has been growing in this country. For the first time, the name of lobby and lobbying was used in the American political atmosphere in the 1830s.

Samuel Colt, inventor of Colt's arms, donated to lawmakers and their families in the 1850s that these gifts were in fact his newly invented weapon. In this way, he was able to convince them to review the laws of the invention and consider the appeal of the colt. But the golden age of the US lobby was in the 1870s and the lobby industry peaked. In this era, Sam Ward was one of the best lobbyists. Sam Ward, one of the pioneers of social lobbying. He was able to capture the views of members of the Congress by arranging sumptuous parties and creating convincing discourse.

Although in 1875, Sam Ward was charged with bribery and convicted in court, the lobby was not confined to the US. Governments and organizations from other countries also lobbied. Most of these lobbies were in relation to the US government. In the years before World War II, when the Nazis were in power in Germany, the US Congress was forced to pass the Foreign Enforcement Act, due to the fear of Nazi infiltration in the US and the creation of anti-American currents. Under this law, all individuals and Non-US entities were required to make public all political and political affiliations with American politicians. The law was the first legislation on lobbying that was passed. Eight years after the enactment of the Foreign Enforcement Act, the Congress passed the "Lobbying Register Law" in 1945 (Alemanno, 2017).

For the first time in American history, the country's lobbyists were forced to register with the Senate and the House of Representatives and record seasonal

reports. In 1946, the Supreme Court set up amendments to the Lobbying Register Act, which made the law more precise and clearer. Based on these changes, only those lobbyists who spend most of their time on lobbying, meeting privately with lawmakers and obtaining salaries for lobbying, are subject to this law.

Contrary to popular perceptions in Iran, lobbying issues are clear issues that can be defended in all circumstances. Many relationships outside the lobbying framework are not generally considered to be lobbying. Lobbying means the exchange of information and communication and, accordingly, the entire process of information exchange must be transparent. Lobbying does not involve the exchange of money, gifts, and the like, and is not considered a bribe. Basically, no hidden agenda or secret action should be made among lobbyists.

There is also no threat to lobbying. Contrary to popular belief, lobbyists are not allowed to use threat tools at all, and the use of pressure tools is a kind of act contrary to law. There is a general criterion for determining the lobbying boundary. If activity is carried out during a lobby that can not be reported, that activity can not have a lobby title. In the lobby, everything can be reported, and the topic should not be considered illegal.

#### 4. Lobbying Strategies

Generally speaking, four strategies for lobbying are considered.

*A) The Opposite or negative strategy:* The opposite or negative strategy is a model in which a proposal, law, or plan is put on the agenda and the organization decides to prevent its adoption. There are no other alternatives in this situation. The purpose of this model is to make the offer completely unworkable. This kind of lobby can turn into opposed campaigns. For example: We assume that the government is trying to increase the retirement age to save pension funds and to increase from 60 years to 62 years.

Workers' unions are lobbying to deter the government from this decision. To reach this goal, a lobby is being held, and unions are negotiating with MPs. They communicate with representatives of workers in other sectors, and even in certain cities, and they are unite the protest movement. They are organizing to hold protest campaigns with together. NGO are organizing television and radio programs and make their protests public. Making hashtags on social networks and the like is one of the examples that can be called lobbyists.

*B) Defensive strategy:* A defensive strategy occurs when there is a huge change in rules and business owners decide to maintain the status quo. In this context, the goal is not to change the law or the conditions. For example, in this way, the employers meet with the minister of labor or the co-operative and any minister dealing with the business. He also talks with the heads of the relevant commissions in the parliament and speaks of the political and social losses and changes in the law and warn the government.

**C) Reaction strategy (passive):**The strategy that is the most widely used strategy is the attempt to change the rules proposed by other institutions. The organization is trying to modify some of it for its benefit. In fact, in this section, the principle of work is not a problem, but a modification of the plan to support the formation should occur.

**D) Active strategy:**The most sophisticated lobby strategy is active strategy. The organization is attempting to present a plan, and it defines a specific framework for the game. The targeting of this plan, the complete design of the terms and details of the plan, the professional forces in lobbying, and the provision of sufficient information and knowledge are among the most important requirements in this section. For this reason, less formations are coming to this level of lobby.

### **5. Tools for Alignment and Compromise**

There are various tools for lobbying for convergence. 1) Personal meeting with the legislator 2) Invitation to the ceremony 3) Evidence or witness 4) Applying 5) Use of media and news conferences 6) Lobbying by telephone 7) Lobby by email or letter.

Nonetheless, it's commonplace to see personal appointments as the most important lobbyist. In this model, it is imperative to negotiate a high-level person from the organization. It is also important to not use media tools during talks. The bargaining with the opposing sides should not be done at different levels of the organization, but there must be full mutual trust between the parties. The demand for the organization should be very clear in this model. The lobbyist should also have sufficient authority from the members.

Let's imagine that we are the one who is responsible for lobbying. To be successful, we should be well aware of the indicator in the target group. Specifications and addresses, and how to access us should be prepared and provided as needed. Our intention and purpose must be clear and transparent. The reasons and importance of the subject are clear to us and we must have the ability to explain it well. We must understand our motivation to implement the plan and clearly explain to the other party. We need to know that fulfilling our demands will make our position tight and the interests of decision makers will be secured.

We need to show that the subject under discussion at all levels and dimensions is under our control, and we will be able to volunteer to bring decision makers and institutions in line. We should invite members of the target group to get acquainted with the community during the mass gatherings. Send related developments to your monitor and periodic reports and analyzes for target groups.

### **6. Iranian lobbyists in and out of the Country**

Given the specific circumstances of Iran in the field of politics and economics and the importance of finding lobbying, for nearly two decades, the lobby has become customary in Iran. Inside the country, there are various lobbies in the field of sports, economics, commerce, law and the judiciary. Some of these are even supported by government agents or their lobbyists are somehow in the government's structure.

Major lobbying activities in Iran are mostly in the field of commercial and legal competition. In addition, there are other lobbyists in Iran working periodically and they are known as political-parliamentary lobbyists who work to attract supporters from the parliamentary and municipal elections as well as presidential candidates.

### **6.1. Political Lobbying**

In short, the lobbyists of the political arena are divided into three groups: (a) The lobbyists who support the radical policies of the system. This group is generally affiliated with the Revolutionary Guards, the clerical community, and revolutionary institutions. This group of lobbyists, in addition to domesticizing their activities in favor of fundamentalist parties, is working to introduce the Islamic Revolution of Iran, spreading the opinion and propagating the Islamic Revolution of Iran in other Muslim countries. Their lobbyists are either religious or propagandist organizations. (b) Lobbyists who support the reformist policies of the system. This group of lobbyists came to the forefront almost after the Iran-Iraq War, which ended in 1988. Their peak years have been around since 1995 to the present. This group of lobbyists is active in attracting the support of the young potential and dynamic Iranian generation inside and outside of Iran. Their goal is to find weaknesses in the policies of the radical group in Iran and to attract public opinion, especially the younger generation. They are active in promoting reformist systems in politics, economics, business, social-cultural affairs. Part of the lobbyists of this group have been working abroad, and they are trying to introduce a new face of Iran to the world by establishing media companies abroad and connecting to international media networks and consulting them. (c) One of the most important political lobbyists in Iran is human rights activists, civil liberties advocates, secularist supporters and women's rights activists (Daie, 2007).

This group of lobbyists, in addition to creating Internet and hashtags internally, is often trying to create protest campaigns to bring their voice to the attention of political leaders in the country. They cry out their wishes and their desires by creating discourse abroad. This group of lobbyists systematically and in accordance with the principles of lobbying meet with some of the most important international politicians in the US, the EU, the UN, Human Rights Organizations, and so on, to convey their point of view. With the help of officials from other countries, diplomatic laws affect Iran. In this way, the Iranian government is forced to behave in accordance with international standards.

It is compelled to observe the rights of national and religious minorities. This group of lobbyists in recent years has been able to significantly benefit the interests of religious dissidents, political prisoners, civil activists, and women's freedoms. In the meeting and lobbying with ministers from some European countries, Americans and important social and economic organizations, they have been able to put pressure on the Iranian government to achieve the desired result.

## 6.2. Economic Lobbying

In the economic sector, there are various lobbyists. Most of them serve the government and government purposes. Although these lobbies operate independently, they have strong and strong links with government and military organizations in the internal shell. If we take into account the core of the economic lobby in Iran, they should be said that they are in specific formats that are not commonplace elsewhere in the world. For example, the following lobbyists in Iran operate in the economic sector: military lobby, government foundations lobby, private or semi-private foundations, business and trade guides lobby, masters bous lobby. It should be said that the type of lobbying in Iran has led to an increase in administrative and financial corruption in Iran due to its state-sponsored or semi-governmental nature. The same corruption in administrative agencies has caused government corruption to emerge.

During the past years, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has been able to increase its political power after the Iran-Iraq war. The headquarters of Khatam-ol-Anbia, the Revolutionary Guard's economic arm, has already won several bills worth billions of dollars without bidding. The four contracts without a tender, which the IRGC has assumed, will give the government-military funding a huge amount. All this is done in the shadow of lobbying.

**First Contract:** The first contract between the National Iranian Gas Company and the construction site of Khatam-ol-Anbia was signed. The contract for the construction of a gas pipeline for the transfer of 50 million cubic meters of Assaluyeh gas through Hormozgan province to Sistan and Baluchestan province is 900 kilometers. The contract amount is \$ 1.3 billion.

**Second Contract:** Three days after the \$ 3 billion agreement was signed between the Oil Ministry and the IRGC, another corporation affiliated with the Revolutionary Guard Corps (National Building Company) and a subsidiary company of the Mostazafan Foundation (Qorb Company), a \$ 2.4 billion contract with the subway Tehran signed. The project is run by the EPC method. Namely, the engineering and designing of the project will be carried out by the two companies and will be operated by the Metro Company.

**Third Contract:** The development of Phases 15 and 16 of South Pars was transferred to the construction site of Khatam-ol-Anbia. The contract amount is \$ 2.5 billion.

**Fourth Contract:** In June 2007, the Ministry of Energy handed over to the Revolutionary Guards all Western power and water projects. In the contract between the Ministry of Energy and the IRGC, all hydroelectric and hydroelectric projects were carried out by the Revolutionary Guards in the provinces of West Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, Kermanshah, Ilam, Lorestan and Khuzestan.

Of course, during the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the power of the lobby attached to the Revolutionary Guard has doubled (wikipedia, 2018).



The Mostazafan Foundation and the Shahid Foundation were two non-governmental organizations that, after the 1997 revolution, seized all the property belonging to the non-profit organizations of the Government of Pahlavi regime and confiscated the property of the Pahlavi regime by them. These two foundations have virtually controlled more than half of Iran's economy. In the absence of any supervision by the parliament and the judiciary on their performance.

At the time of the Ahmadinejad government, an agreement was signed between the Ministry of Oil and the Mostazafan Foundation, which was concluded without a bid. Under this agreement, the Mustazafan Foundation won oil trade and control to export of Iran Petrols. It was for the first time since the nationalization of the oil industry and the withdrawal of British companies from Iran that Iran's oil was sold to a non-governmental organization outside of legal supervision. The economic sanctions of Western countries against Iran has led to an increase in the economic lobby in Iran, and this lobby provides grounds for administrative and governmental corruption (BBC.New, 2009).

The Islamic Consultative Party (former names: Islamic Compulsory Assembly and Islamic Consultative Committees) is an important political and religious party in Iran, which was formed in 1963 by a coalition of three religious groups. This organization, which belongs to the right wing and traditional conservatives, represents the class of religious marketers. The party was also active in the charity and foundations of institutions such as the Islamic School and the Interest-free banking system Fund (Abbasi aghadm, 2007).

Committees and chambers of commerce are the two arms of Iranian marketers to influence Iran's economy. Marketers also comprise a number of members of the Expediency Council that are currently active. The members of these parties, as well as influential marketers, are in fact lobbyists. Given the influence they have on political-economic systems, they can easily meet with MPs and give them their own points of view. Many of the international business decisions are made by the lobby. This group of marketers is also influential on the supply and demand of gold and currency on the Tehran Stock Exchange.

Masters boys, is a term that is given to some of the children of influential people in the state system. This group of people is the children of influential people in the political system. Childrens of parliamentary lawyers, ministers of government, or political leaders are party or military commanders are in this group.

Mehdi Karroubi, former President of Iran parliament in June 2004, revealed that Mojtaba Khamenei, the son of Ali Khamenei, a religious-political leader in Iran, had lobbied for Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. So Ahmadinejad won the 9th presidential election in Iran (Persian News, 2005).

In 2002, the Tehran court prosecuted a case. This case is known as "Al-Mekaseb" (Tradesman). The content of this case was related to the work of people who were accused of economic corruption in the country. Many top executives of this company

were ordered by Naser Vaezi Tabasi, whose father was the representative of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic, and they were accused of embezzling the economic system of Iran and causing economic and administrative corruption. But interrogations were carried out behind closed doors and the court acquitted the main defendants of the case.

Al-Mekhaseb Company was in Dubai and Nasser Vaez Tabasi, CEO of the company, announced at a public trial that the reason for setting up a company in Dubai was announced by the Minister of Intelligence and some of the IRGC's intelligence agencies. This file was closed for security reasons without identifying its agents or lobbying function.

Another active economic activity lobby in Iran is related to sport. Due to the fact that football is one of the most expensive sports in the world, there are lobbies in the field. This group of lobbyists are trying to persuade soccer clubs to buy top international players. Even the secret lobbying is done among the clubs and it has been seen in recent years that they have been colluding and scandalous for climbing the top rows of the league standings.

This has caused corruption to be seen in the system. Some clubs have been bankrupt due to lobbying. The bankrupt clubs have been bought by some of the financiers and have continued their successful business. Because lobbyists have created new opportunities for them both inside and outside the country.

### **6.3. Lobbying in Party Systems**

In different periods, in the Iranian parliament there have always been characters who have been known as lobbyists of the parliaments. Their main role has been to convince some MPs in parliamentary positions and ratification of the law. In general, there are two political factions in Iran. Fundamentalism and the reformist faction. Interestingly, in both political factions, there are people who are lobbying in secret times in parliamentary congresses or secret meetings, and the political history of the Iranian parliament has changed at times by the lobbying of these people. These changes are in some cases in the interest of the state and at some times against the government.

The most important characteristic of the lobbyists of various different periods in the Iranian congresses is that they have a clear and positive history. They have good public relations power. There is a good base among their peers. They have the power to become leaders and manage a team, and they are effective in bargaining and persuading others (Didehban, 2012).

### **6.4. Feminist Lobby**

Another lobby in Europe is the lobby of the Forum, which works in the interests of Iran and supports women. Name of this lobby is "WEFORUM". This lobby is aimed at defending the status of women in Iran and trying to identify the status of Iranian women in comparison with neighboring countries.

Elaheh Rostami is the leader of this lobby. "In the current situation, women in Iran have more rights than women in neighboring countries," she said in an interview with the Socialist Workers magazine on February 21, 2004. She said: "Women in Iran have the decent and legal right to vote. In the family office and the decision on the issue of marriage, in education and employment, but the Western world does not see such success and victory of Iranian women."

Mrs. Mirhosseini, a member of the lobby network in London, like Rustami, believes that Iran's current situation for women is much more modern and secular than in the past. According to him, religion has lost its ideological role and religious values such as veil, which do not have a compelling value for women in Iran.

She is a women's rights activist also considers Iran a more advanced country than other Islamic countries, claiming that women in Iran are more involved than their own country in any other Islamic country (Shafiei, 2006).

### **6.5. Overseas Lobbying**

Throughout the history of the Islamic Republic, Iran's domestic dynamics have had a direct impact on its foreign policy agenda and approach. In the past, factional infighting has precipitated some of the most provocative elements of its foreign policy, such as the 1979 seizure of the U.S. embassy, the 1989 promulgation of a fatwa condemning writer Salman Rushdie to death, and the more recent "Dialogue Among Civilizations" initiative. Today, internal rivalries continue to infiltrate Iran's external activities, and, as a result, Iran's many official institutions often pursue policies in direct contradiction with one another. The Islamic Republic initially repudiated the prevailing norms of the international system, today its government has largely abandoned its efforts to topple the region's existing political order and approaches interstate relations primarily on the basis of national interest rather than ideology. In seeking to project its influence and protect its interests, the Islamic Republic has increasingly yielded to realist principles.

Today, Iran's foreign policy exhibits striking extremes of accommodation and antagonism. Commercial considerations figure prominently in the realignment of Iranian foreign policy. Iran's interests in maintaining and expanding international trade, attracting foreign direct investment, and coordinating oil policy with other leading producers to prevent a future price collapse have shaped its approach to the world and conditioned its partial abandonment of confrontational tactics in favor of a more accommodating stance. These broad contours of Iranian foreign policy are evident in its successful implementation of detente with its neighbors in the southern Persian Gulf, in its pragmatic approach to its northern neighbors in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and in its cultivation of close ties with a range of regional actors, including India, Russia, China, Japan, and the EU.

This last effort is designed to offset Iran's persistent official antagonism with the United States. Tehran's approach to Washington remains one of several decisive exceptions to the general trend toward moderation and realism in Iranian foreign

policy. In formulating Iranian policy toward the United States, ideological imperatives continue to outweigh dispassionate calculations of national interest. Iran's strident opposition to Israel is also the product of self-defeating dogma. These exceptions may be slowly abated by the erosion of Iran's revolutionary orthodoxies, the growing importance of public support as a component of regime legitimacy, and the increasing difficulty of international integration (Brzezinski, M.Gates, & Maloney, 2004).

Nonetheless, Iran is trying to revive its legitimate face in the international community through its lobbying and show its constructive role. For this reason, investing in a lobby, and especially lobbying abroad, is one of the main goals of Iran.

Iran has recognized the importance of lobbying over the past years, especially from the 90's to the present day. The largest investment in lobbying abroad is done, partly for Muslim countries, along with lobbies operating in Europe and the US. The lobbies that benefit Iran are: 1) The CASMII<sup>1</sup> lobby that started its activity in 2006. A person named Pourzal spoke on October 29, 2006, with Abbas Maleki in a church in New York, which was also the peaceful nuclear program of the regime. The program was launched under the supervision of Ardeshir Omani by a group called the US-Iran Friendship Committee. The lobby is aimed at gathering all Iranian people with diverse perspectives to defend the interests of the country (M. Pourkesali, 2007).

The other active overseas lobby is NIAC.<sup>2</sup> The lobby of the National Iranian American Council (NIAC) is also one of those lobbies that claim to be based on the interests of the Iranian- American community. But if we follow the footsteps of groups and individuals affiliated with this council, we will see that NIAC is a 100 percent American lobby with the aim of influencing Iran and Iranian citizens. This powerful lobby is trying to play a role in the political developments in the country and minimize the conflict between Iran and the US. The lobby, although operating in the US, is sponsored by Iran. The name of the so-called NIAC in recent years has been raised in many American and even Iranian press (Group, 2013).

The NIAC is a nonprofit and community organization dedicated to advancing the interests of the Iranian- American community. NIAC's goals are to provide civilian knowledge and tools for active active participation - by Iranian Americans- along with informed information to Congressional lawmakers (Parsi, 2018).

On the website of this lobby, it has been claimed that since its inception in 2002, NIAC has consistently and effectively conveyed a powerful voice to the Iranian community in the congress center.

#### **6.6. Active Lobbies on Social-Civil Issues**

NGOs essentially act on three voluntary principles. They are formed and founded on a nonprofit and non-political basis. NGO funds are provided in the following ways:

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<sup>1</sup> Iranian – Americans Joint Anti-War Protests

<sup>2</sup> National Iranian American Council

- People's help and gifts,
- Endowments and goods given (Movable or immovable),
- Donations from government and non-governmental organizations,
- Donations from international organizations (subject to relevant regulations),
- Funds from the activities of the organization and the implementation of the project within the framework of the purposes and statute of the organization,
- Guest membership in the organization.

Obviously, each NGO follows a specific activity according to the needs of its members. Religion, education, health, environment, employment, culture, art, youth, children, women, elderly or specialty and scientific subjects are activities that non-governmental organizations do. Of course NGOs can be formed for various other reasons. The most important of these are:

- Humanitarian goals,
- A sense of need or personal experience in dealing with social dilemmas,
- The orders and orders of the elders in philanthropy and humanitarian movements.

NGOs need to have the features to ensure their survival and success in order to continue their work. Therefore, the following characteristics have always been considered in the formation of nongovernmental organizations:

- Self-efficacy and natural need
- Common goals of the members
- Legitimacy
- Schedule and activity
- Attract participation (membership)
- to be independent

The history of NGOs in Iran dates back to 1980-90. Mosques, religious lodges and societies, and even coffee houses are traditional or classical NGOs formations. Because the people here were lobbying for discussion and now the same conditions are going on. But the most important and most effective NGOs in the economy. Funds known as "Qarz al-Hassaneh" (lending in the way of Allah) are aimed at helping the poor and needy and the role of a non-governmental bank (Zarei, 2007).

However, the complexity of the bank management system is not prevalent, nor is it aimed at benefiting or benefiting from the people's savings. More often than not, these non-governmental organizations are trying to collect popular donations and pay loans and grants to people in need. Charities, student associations in universities, trade unions in factories or public and civil servant unions, business systems, engineering etc. are newer forms of civil society organizations. It should be said that the government has continued to inspect these institutions and that this control should be phased out by the semi-public administrators.

## **7. Forms and Rules for Non-Governmental Organizations**

The establishment and activities of non-governmental organizations have been approved and implemented on June 19, 2006 in accordance with Article 138 of the Constitution of Iran. NGOs in Iran have different titles. Such as: Society, community, headquarters, group, union, house, institution are operating under the name (Jamshidi, 2015).

NGOs can act domestically or abroad and they can become a member of international organizations in accordance with the purposes and subjects contained in their regulations. NGOs have legal potential in terms of their credibility and objectives and the development of their activities. Today, most NGOs are able to communicate with similar networks in international, political, social, cultural, research, statistics, economic and commercial matters and are active in various fields. They are conducting activities such as publishing, confernas, panel, workshop, congress, symposium.

#### **8. The Thought-Plan Approach Style in the case of NGOs in Iran**

As mentioned, lobbying can be direct or indirect. Direct lobbying involves meeting personally with decision makers and providing them with information pertinent to a bill or policy on which they will be voting. Lobbyists representing particular groups may give presentations to legislative committees. Indirect lobbying can take the form of advertising campaigns, media publicity, the filing of lawsuits, and public relations initiatives; or of influencing the people who are in direct contact with the decision-maker. Grassroots lobbying is the mobilization of large numbers of ordinary citizens to sign petitions, write letters, participate in demonstrations and otherwise make their opinions known to their political representatives. Grass-top lobbying involves the mobilization of community leaders, professional associations, celebrities and well-known figures who are able to influence public opinion and apply substantial pressure to political figures (Junk, 2015).

Given the goals of lobbying, the common systems in NGOs in Iran are different from the common systems in European and other countries. As stated above, most NGOs were active in the fields of economics, commerce and charity. But in socio-cultural issues, the activities of NGOs should not be ignored. If we consider the sociopolitical conditions of Iran in the past years, Iranian society has become more important than NGOs in the Islamic world. So that women's issues and the defense of their rights were important both before and after the revolution. Till 1979 there were only 15 NGOs in Iran. Of course, there were only 1 non-governmental organization working on women's rights issues. The organization was known as the Farah Pahlavi Foundation and had a semi-governmental structure and was run by Queen Farah Pahlavi. But since 1979, about 20 NGOs have been active in Iran. By 1997, this figure has reached more than 100 organizations, and by 2002 it has reached 277 organizations. Today, there are about 700 to 800 new foundations, about 200 women's organizations, about 3000 charities, 10000 non-benefit agencies, and about 5000 women's cooperatives in the country (Rezaie, 2002).

Increasing awareness of social and political issues, better use of time, interest in the organization's activities, and awareness of the existence of non-governmental

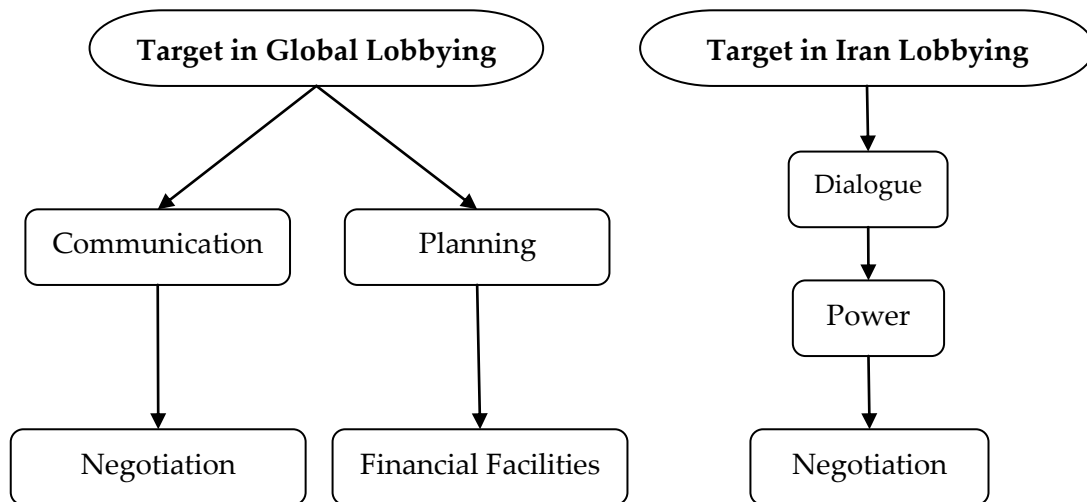
organizations are the reasons that led to the development of non-governmental organizations. Despite all these successes, it should be noted that Iran still faces problems in the formation of nongovernmental organizations at the macro level.

The lack of participatory political culture, the inappropriate elite's view, the absence of an independent state-run civil society and subtle controls, and the induction of compulsory government comments in non-governmental organizations have made predictable membership unacceptable. In general, Iran has many capabilities in developing non-governmental organizations. There is also a large number of people, and there are activity branches for non-governmental organizations. Positive and necessary advertising, the lack of government involvement in NGOs, democracy in nongovernmental organizations, and the autonomy of action in them, can put Iran in the future in the field of NGOs at high levels.

### 9. Findings

This section presents the results of the two models and, subsequently, discusses robustness and form of generalizability.

In the global perspective, communication lobbying (in the form of correspondence and mobilizer) + negotiation + planning + financial facilities + design takes shape and functions. But in Iran, the three pillars of dialogue + power lobbies + negotiation (using political or military power) dominate lobbying. In this way, the form of lobbying extends to many issues.



The system of lobbying in Iran is as follows: first, issues are presented in the basic form at dialogut. Then it is used to convince the financial and military power. If the other party is convinced, then serious negotiations will begin to reach the common goal.

## 10. Result

As a result of studies and research, it can be noted that specialized lobbying in Iran has begun very late but needs to be felt in all political, economic, cultural and social dimensions. Hence, over the past three decades, significant progress has been made in the development of lobbying. Think tanks and research institutes as Iranian lobbyists inside Iran and even the region and the EU and the US. Available statistics show that Iran, having a different system from the global system of lobbying, has been able to regain a very high degree of success. In fact, Iran's use of think tanks and research institutes is important in the inside lobby and outside lobby. Because the think tanks produce content and provide expert information to various institutions in the country, it makes it possible to properly make decisions and lobbyists are affected by these decisions.

Today, Iran is rapidly moving forward in various fields of industrial, commercial, political and common issues in the fields of universities and academic centers, facilitating academic cooperation, financial support for research centers and scientific diplomacy take important steps. All of this is the result of the lobbying of think tanks. Although on political issues, Iran has not benefited much from lobbying, the EU and the US, however, succeeded in reaching a good result during the onset of Iran's nuclear talks with Western countries. The reason for the lack of Iran's success in political lobbying was the lack of financial resources and lack of funding. One of the most important factors in lobbying is the provision and financing of financial resources. As we see in Iran's lobbying system, Iran has not paid much attention to this axis.

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