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The effect of the perception of the cognitive system of the 11th and 12th governments in Iran's nuclear negotiations with the West

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Abstract

Examining the cognitive systems of politicians and policymakers is one of the most important frameworks for understanding and analyzing the behaviors, actions, and decision-making processes of these individuals. The cognitive systems of individuals encompass their perceptions, worldviews, beliefs, values, and the prevailing discourses surrounding these beliefs, all of which significantly influence these processes. The decision-making patterns regarding Iran's nuclear policy as a central issue of foreign policy in the post-Revolution era have undeniably been shaped by cognitive psychology, personality cults, perceptual structures, and the leadership styles of the ruling politicians in this domain. This study aims to investigate and understand the cognitive system of the Rouhani administration and its impacts on Iran's political approaches and decisions regarding the nuclear dossier and negotiations with the

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West. Therefore, the main research question is: How has the cognitive perception of the eleventh and twelfth administrations of Iran influenced the political approaches taken in the context of Iran's nuclear negotiations with the West? The authors employ a qualitative methodology with a descriptive and analytical approach. It is noteworthy that the data collection tools include note-taking and reviewing books, articles, and websites. Due to the exploratory nature of this research, hypotheses are deliberately avoided. Ultimately, through the analysis of descriptive data, it can be stated that the cognitive system and the discourses dominant in the beliefs of this administration have played a crucial role in transforming Iran's political approach towards nuclear negotiations with the West, shifting from confrontation to *détente*.

Systematic and personality characteristics of leaders are among the factors that have a deep and undeniable role and influence on political approaches and foreign policy in general in relations between countries. The study and investigation of politics and personality has been one of the most important and oldest subjects of foreign policy analysts' attention, because they have always been interested in understanding these issues, how leaders see the world, what their perception and understanding of issues are. What motivates them and how they make decisions. In fact, what shapes and directs the behavior and decisions of leaders is their mental perception of reality, and any changes in this perception can be the origin and root of changes in the field of foreign policy. In other words, the political system of the countries in any form and in any form, the discourses and elites who take power in the country's political arena, shape their foreign policy according to their mental-psychological constructions and perceptions. And understanding the roots and mental bases of politicians and statesmen is the most important step for foreign policy analysis. The path of diplomacy and nuclear decision-making patterns of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as the biggest foreign policy challenge after the Islamic Revolution, has been undeniably influenced by the psychology of cognition, personality cult, perceptual constructions and leadership style of the ruling politicians in foreign policy. In fact, although several factors have an effect on the type of decision-making, understanding and understanding of a subject by a leader, his perception, beliefs and values play a much more important role in this process. Therefore, the understanding of the decision-making pattern and political approach of the leaders will be incomplete without the systemic recognition and their personality structure in foreign policy. Each dominant discourse puts a new approach and strategy on the agenda, according to the type of perceptual space. In fact, the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, despite having a common semantic system, has

different and even conflicting narratives and readings, which can be seen in a macro view in a completely undeniable way, influenced by mental and perceptual constructions, as well as The political orientations of Iran's foreign policy have always been between the perceptual-cognitive space of the conservative wing and the reformist wing, and this has caused Iran's foreign policy to gradually become a confusing combination of ideology and pragmatism. The important issue is that cognitive filters have an undeniable effect in shaping the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic, which is a clear example of these effects in accordance with the cognitive and perceptual structures of the ruling leaders in the foreign policy of different discourses. One of the most important challenges of the Islamic Republic was the nuclear conflict, which affected the relations between Iran and the actors of the international system in all dimensions. With the increasing efficiency of the Rouhani government, on the other hand, the foreign policy decision makers, the views and understanding of the politicians and the emergence of new literature in the field changed. The foreign policy all indicated the formation of a new chapter in Iran's foreign policy, the central signifier of this chapter and the new discourse was the concept of moderation. This sign meant creating and establishing a balance between the realism of the logic of the nation-state of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the idealism of the Islamic Revolution in foreign policy. As a result, according to this sign, in foreign policy, in addition to paying attention to the ideals of the Islamic Revolution, domestic and international realities were also considered, so that the ideals did not cause the realities to be overlooked and the realities did not cause the ideals to be neglected. This research is necessary because the position of personality and psychological aspects, as one of the most important factors affecting the decision-making process of leaders, as well as its decisive role in drawing relations and domestic and foreign policy of countries, in explaining activism, especially in politics Iran's foreign policy is increasingly necessary and its importance is that so far no work in this aspect has been able to address the neglected aspects of this field. The findings of the research indicate that in addition to the systemic effects of presidents, variables such as the role of internal factors, international factors, and bureaucratic and structural factors have also had a visible impact on Iran's political approach in the process of nuclear negotiations with the West. Although the severity and impact of these variables cannot be accurately measured, but according to the evidence and findings, after the 11th government took office, the approach and view of Iran's nuclear case also changed, and the principle of negotiation, the approach of diplomacy and constructive interaction was adopted; The way that created the ground for the resolution of the

nuclear case through de-escalation, confidence building, away from security, improvement of Iran's image and prestige, active diplomacy and relations with other countries and international organizations. The first step of this can be seen from the transfer of the nuclear file from the Supreme National Security Council to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Rouhani government always defended the multilateralist and internationalist approaches to resolve the nuclear case, and finally this approach led to the resolution of the nuclear case. In this regard, 2015 can be considered a turning point in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Due to the fact that the challenges and controversies of Iran's nuclear case for several years in the international community and international organizations through long-term negotiations, led to a political and international agreement under the title of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) between Iran and the countries known as (15)) became Rouhani was able to present and introduce his personality to the world, which had a combination of honesty and internationally understandable expression. As a result, under moderation, which has been the central sign in the speech of Hassan Rouhani's government, an attempt was made to establish a kind of balance between realism and idealism, which means less conflict and conflict with the international order and its relative acceptance and the need to interact with it. has been As the leader of moderation discourse, Hassan Rouhani's systematic knowledge provided the conditions and context for his leadership under the concept of transformational leadership. With measures such as changes in power centers, specialization of institutions, change of tactics, de-escalation and change of perception and attitude towards himself and others, Rouhani showed that he is eager to change And the transformation in the foreign policy decision-making process is in the process of nuclear negotiations with the West. In this process, the focus and emphasis of moderation discourse was on solving the nuclear conflict as the most central issue of foreign policy. In fact, Rouhani, influenced by his mental, semantic and perceptual system, which formed his systematic knowledge, as well as by the perception and interpretation of other actors of the international system as actors with a friendly and interactive identity, made the strategy of negotiation and interaction in the nuclear case the basis of his action. in foreign policy. Then, according to his worldview, he made a fundamental turn in the nuclear case, as an issue not at the top of other foreign policy issues, but during them. Therefore, according to Rouhani's first speech and reaction to Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA, from the perspective of his cognitive system, we can understand the following points:

1. His emphasis on the adherence of the Iranian government to its commit-

ments in the JCPOA until the US withdraws from this treaty

2. Emphasizing the non-adherence of the United States to international treaties, including the JCPOA, and the unreliability of the United States³. Emphasizing the fact that the JCPOA is a multilateral international agreement between several countries and it was not only between Iran and the United States that Trump wanted to withdraw from it unilaterally, and this action will definitely have consequences. In the end, in a summary, it can be stated that during the presidency of Mr. Rouhani, in the first order, his systemology and perception, the international system and environmental pressures, including sanctions, structural and bureaucratic factors (government structure, transfer issue) nuclear file from the Supreme National Security Council to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and finally internal factors such as the role of individuals (foreign policy decision-makers such as the Minister of Foreign Affairs), public opinion and influential groups, etc... They have been effective

Key words: nuclear negotiations, Iran's foreign policy, Trumpism, cognitive system.