The role of expertise in the US foreign policy change and continuity: A comparative study of the Iran nuclear crisis and climate change.

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ABSTRACT

In his 2016 presidential election campaigns, President Donald Trump promised to withdraw from the Paris agreement and the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA). In the first year of his presidency, he could withdraw from the Paris agreement, but not from the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA). This thesis focuses on the role of experts and expert knowledge in the US foreign policy decision-making processes in terms of policy change. In this study, both US foreign policies of climate change and the Iran nuclear crisis are studied. The influence of expert knowledge is studied through the theoretical lens of the advocacy coalition framework. The main argument of this study is that experts within advocacy coalitions can influence US foreign policy change as well as continuity, but the extent of their impact is restricted to the extent that they can install more of their coalition members or sway actors with authority within the decision-making institution.

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1. Introduction

On June 1, 2017, US President Donald Trump announced that he has decided to withdraw from the non-binding Paris Agreement. President Trump has rejected reports of scientists on climate change causes and future effects by calling this issue a "hoax" made by and for the Chinese to diminish and weaken the competitive power of US industries (Yong Xiang et al 2017; Jafee 2018). Also claiming that the Paris agreement limits the US economic activities while favoring and empowering other countries (Mathews, 2017).

Member countries of the United Nation's Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) including the US passed the Paris Agreement in its COP21 in December 2015 with the aim of cooperation in low-carbon transformation and keeping the global temperature below 2 degrees. Although it was marked as a reversal of the prior Obama administration policy on this issue, actually it caps a trend of gradually increasing political polarisation of this policy issue for at least a decade; in the 2008 presidential campaigns, leading republicans and democrats agreed on the scientific research-based consequences of the global climate change (Jaffe, 2018).

John McCain during the campaigns explained that "We stand warned by serious and credible scientists . . . that time is short and the dangers are great. The most relevant question now is whether our own government is equal to the challenge" (The American Presidency Project, 2008). From a historical perspective, the US policy towards climate change has seen a mostly repetitive pattern from as early as J.F. Kennedy calling for enhancing research on climate change prediction to George. H.W. Bush adopting UNFCCC and President Bill Clinton signing the Kyoto Protocol of the UNFCCC, however, President George. W. Bush's administration seemed conservative on this environmental approach (Hongyuan, 2018).

But, the hurricane Katrina resurfaced the cruciality of this issue as in the 2008 summit of the G8 countries, the US agreed to reduce its greenhouse emission to half by 2050 (Hongyuan, 2018). In 2009, when President Obama found his way to the oval office, he accepted the scientific facts

and committed to the low carbon emission plan and he also signed the Paris Agreement (Hongyuan, 2018). The climate change policy maintained its direction from the course of at least the end of the Bush administration and through the Obama administration but noticed a dramatic change of approach in the Trump administration.

On the other hand, in 2000, President George. W. Bush along with his western allies called on Iran for its program of nuclear development and among the military action and economic sanction options, he opted for the economic sanctions but threatened Iran of military action (Hurst, 2018). In 2003, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) informed of the newly discovered facilities and activities regarding the Iranian nuclear program which violated prior safeguard agreements and among the economic sanctions, military strike and cyber warfare were the options on which the Bush administration again avoided the military option and continued with the other two instruments of economic sanctions and cyberattacks (Lantis, 2019). These sanctions and cyber attacks on the computer systems controlling the Iranian nuclear facilities continued through the initial phase of the Obama administration until President Obama decided to engage in the negotiation with the moderates in Iran that witnessed the process of displacement of concerned actors within coalitions both inside and outside the US government on this issue (Lantis, 2019).

In July 2015, the US and members of P5+1 countries signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran to resolve the conflict over the nuclear weapons program of Iran (Hurst, 2018). JCPOA poised as the summit of the period of more than a decade in which the Iran nuclear issue was the hot topic of dispute between the US and Iran (Hurst, 2018). This approach to Iran nuclear issue maintained a dominant belief throughout the Obama administration and even the supporters of a major change of policy could not impact the deal in the initial year of the Trump Administration.

The above case studies of US foreign policies on Iran nuclear crisis and climate change are highly technical issues because on the nuclear issue it was IAEA and the US nuclear and foreign policy experts who provided information and expertise on the nuclear advancement and capabilities of Iran and how its nuclear activities can be curbed (The White House, 2015).

On the other hand, the comprehension of climate change causes and impacts is also studied and elaborated by scientists involved in UNFCCC as well as US experts due to its highly scientific nature which is far from the expertise of politicians and policymakers (PNAS, 2016).

Such highly scientific issues, therefore, create demand and enough room for experts and expert knowledge maneuver, in a sense that lack of skills and expertise in both areas by politicians would require them to seek expert advice in order to assist them in decision-making or to legitimize their position on policies (Boswell, 2008). In both policy areas of Iran nuclear deal and climate change the formation and presence of competing coalitions in favor and against both policy issues are evident (Lantis, 2019: Hongyuan, 2018). Which in the period of a decade (2007-2017) indicate variation in terms of continuity of JCPOA that survived the initial year of Trump presidency despite his strong criticism of the deal and change of climate policy by withdrawing from the Paris agreement immediately after President Trump assumed office.

The support was so strong that even in the initial year of the Trump administration the Iran policy did not change. On the other hand, the climate change policy which was also following similar patterns from the end of the Bush administration and throughout the Obama administration witnessed a drastic change in policy which resulted in the US withdrawal from the Paris agreement on climate change. This study with the help of the advocacy coalition framework attempts to explain the mechanisms through which experts and expert knowledge find its way to the policy subsystem and impact policy decision making.

In other words, this study attempts to answer the basic question that **to what extent and how did experts impact change in US foreign policy regarding climate change and Iran nuclear crisis in the period of 2007-2017?** In the presence of expert knowledge involved in both cases, this study with the above research question attempts to surface the causal mechanism and the extent to which expert knowledge has contributed to a drastic change in the US foreign policy. Along this direction, this study first reviews the literature and theoretical framework then develops operationalized testable expectations following the research design and methodology,

and with this foundation would separately analyze the data on both case studies and provides a conclusion.

In order to investigate the research question, it is important to first understand and explain expert knowledge and then to investigate the role and involvement of experts in the manner that the expert knowledge is selected, incorporated, and utilized in the policy decision-making as well as how the configuration of these processes can result in different policy outcomes. This then could provide a lens through which the analysis of collected data relevant to the research question is possible, so it is necessary to visit the literature on expert knowledge and policy decision-making. Some of the recent work by scholars in this domain has taken many directions from focusing on the different roles of experts and different types of advice they provide (Sanaz & Marinus, 2019: Makkonen et al, 2016; Lingard, 2016; Kurthen, 2020), to the role of science in finding policy solutions and general policy decision-making politics in the US (Zittoun, 2014; Edwards et al, 2018).

Some other studies have also focused on the role of different institutions in the foreign policy change (Lantis, 2019), and different policy subsystems, but the focus is on the types of advice that experts provide (Karin and Muriel, 2014). However, they do not explain how the provision and incorporation of expert knowledge impact foreign policy decision-making in the US. So there is still a need for investigation of how expert knowledge impacts US foreign policy change. Therefore, this research is intended to add value to the existing academic work in this domain.

Climate change and the Iran nuclear crisis are still very relevant political debates in the US and as the time gap to the 2020 US presidential election is closing, the debate of climate change and the US policy towards Iran has once again intensified in US political debates, enhancing the importance and relevance of investigating the impact of experts in policy change in both policy domains of climate change and the Iran nuclear deal (Zurcher, 2020; Nasr, 2020).

In the second chapter, the literature on the topic of expert knowledge and policy decision-making will be reviewed and the theory for this study will be identified and explained following the conceptualization of the theory, and the expectations will be generated. The third chapter will

explain the research design and explain the methodological choices for this study and in the fourth chapter, the collected data will be analyzed based on the theoretical framework of this study. Chapter five will provide a discussion of the findings and theoretical relevance of the analysis and chapter six will provide a short conclusion.

2. Expert Knowledge in Policy Making

While many scholars have investigated the conditions under which state interests remain stable or change and through what mechanisms such events occur (Haas, 1992). The determination of interests and latitude of action perceived appropriate in particular policy issues are functions that depend on how the problem is perceived by the policymakers; or in the manner, the problem definition is provided by those that policymakers seek advice from in the situations of uncertainty (Haas, 1992). Haas recognizes networks of individuals equipped with expert knowledge who are involved in the articulation of complex problems by providing cause and effect arguments and with the virtue of that identifying interests, providing policy solutions, framing issues, and pointing out to important points for collective debates as epistemic communities (Haas, 1992).

Haas asserts that acquiring control over information and knowledge is a determinant of power and the dissemination of new evidence and information or ideas that could translate into altering behaviors towards policy coordination (Haas, 1992). Such networks are consisting of professional individuals with claim to knowledge and expertise in a specific policy area, who may come from different backgrounds and disciplines (Haas, 1992). But they share a set of "principal beliefs" directing their actions and cause and effect perceptions creating the basis for the conception of the problem, "shared notion" of knowledge validation in their area of expertise, shared default practices affiliated with problems upon which they are deemed as a member of the particular network (Haas, 1992; 3).

Such networks or epistemic communities provide a significant source of advice to policymakers in the events of uncertainty and in policy domains where the complexity of the issue requires for specific expertise and knowledge to the comprehension of the problem and possible solutions, but the advice they provide is contaminated with their "broader world view" and to the extent that these communities consolidate power in the bureaucracies, it institutionalizes their view within the national administrations (Haas, 1992).

Advice from these networks can come directly or indirectly, in the former, advice comes in the form of the direct definition of problems and proposal of solutions; or defining the interests for the policymaker, while in the latter advice is based on the saliency of some points at the cost of some other points from which then the decision-makers detract their attention and interest (Haas, 1992). On the other hand, Ikenberry studies the conditions upon which the application and acceptance of expert advice from such epistemic and epistemic type communities can be hindered and the political dimension which plays in (Ikenberry, 1992; Haas, 1992). In a post-war economic management study, Ikenberry conditions the possibility of an "epistemic agreement" on the isolation of the particular policy domain from the "political whirl", therefore, the impact that an epistemic community can create in different domains remain conditioned on the type of national structures within the national administrations which can either permit or hinder such impact to take effect (Haas, 1992; 5).

Based on the Advocacy coalition framework and belief system which recognizes the policy decision-making process as the contestation of coalitions composed of actors with shared policy beliefs and the policy decision as the translation of beliefs of the dominant coalition (Kubler, 2001). Ritter et al argue that scientific research and empirical evidence can not create a sufficient condition and account on its own for a change in policy (Ritter et al, 2018). Ritter et al further argue that all technical and scientific evidence flow through a belief system and the evidence that stands in contradiction with the particular belief system may be omitted and ignored, while only to the extent that the influence of such evidence can take effect is to just create an opportunity to change the decision-makers' belief.

Although Epistemic community and advocacy coalition frameworks share some attributes in terms of emphasis on the significant role of individuals in the networks as change agents, "learning processes" in the course of policymaking, and the importance of diffusion of ideas and information, both frameworks are different in at least three aspects (Meijerink, 2006). While epistemic communities are primarily knowledge-based networks, advocacy coalitions are primarily a value and interest-based coalitions (Meijerink, 2006). Advocacy coalition framework expects often two or three coalitions to exist within a policy subsystem, while the literature on epistemic communities in most cases points to the existence of only one epistemic community,

nevertheless, while the epistemic community approach assumes experts to be impartial, the advocacy coalition framework assumes the influence of experts on the public policy to be motivated by the policy concerns (Haas, 1992, 2001; Meijerink, 2006). Therefore, this study would draw further on the advocacy coalition framework for developing the theoretical framework of this study.

2.1. Advocacy Coalition Framework

First emerged in the 1990s, the advocacy coalition framework producing a general theory to explain that individuals engage in politics to turn their beliefs into action (Cairney et al, 2015). It explains the policy decision making through the study of different coalitions made up of different governmental and non-governmental actors engaged in contestation to advance their beliefs in the policy decision (Kubler, 2001). This approach to the policy process would allow for the study of the influence that different actors play in the policy decision-making process and with the virtue of that would also allow for studying the role of expert knowledge in this process. That how different coalitions utilize and internalize expert knowledge into their belief system which could boost or hinder a policy change.

The advocacy coalition framework is initially rooted in the interest for studying the role that technical information plays in the political process in different policy domains through the policy learning process (Hirschi & Wimder, 2010; Cairney et al, 2015).

Most of the policy issues which were once dealt with by a small group of individuals from inside the bureaucracies have now become politicized and controversial and the advocacy coalition framework's main focus is to make sense out of such complicated and complex public policy-making processes and systems (Cairney et al, 2015). It deals with a multiplicity of government levels and various actors involved, distinctly processes policy, from more politicized policies where a multiplicity of actors are involved to more specialist and technical ones which are dealt by experts out of the public spotlight and explains decisions with a high level of ambiguity and less information while taking a considerable period of time into account to allow for decisions to translate into outcomes (Cairney et al, 2015).

The advocacy coalition framework views the policy process as a competition between coalitions made up of individuals advocating for particular beliefs about the definition of problems and solutions (Kubler, 2001). This competition of coalitions occurs in the policy subsystem where individuals in the coalitions concerned with particular policy issues actively attempt to influence public policy related to the issue (Kubler, 2001).

The advocacy coalition framework argues that the world view and how to process information is perceived by individuals on the basis of a variety of "cognitive biases" which in complicated situations provide probative guidance (Kubler, 2001; 624). Kubler further argues that such guidance in public policies is provided by belief systems about how the problem is structured and possible solutions to deal with. Advocacy coalition framework consists of three structural categories, the deep core belief which defines normative beliefs and individual's personal philosophy and view of the world, a policy core belief which is a basic policy position, strategies and causal perceptions for obtaining the deep core belief in a given policy subsystem, and the secondary aspects related to delivering policy goals and implementing policy core (Cairney et al, 2015; Kubler, 2001).

(Kukkonen et al, 2017) argue that core deep beliefs are a very general and too broad a criteria as a basis of coalition formation, therefore, the crucial factor that glues a coalition together is the policy core belief around an issue. Such advocacy coalitions are consisting of individuals from a diverse set of positions such as elected figures, non-elected agents, researchers, interest groups leaders, and so forth, who share a set of perceived problem definition, cause and effect factors, and some basic values in a belief system as well as demonstrating a set of crucial and coordinated actions in a period of time (Kukkonen et al, 2017).

The advocacy coalition framework stemmed from a positivist position indicates an explicit interest in the role that "scientific evidence" plays in the policymaking, as it is described as providing a theoretical lens on the role that technical information and scientific evidence play in political discourse (Sabatier et al, 2014). In the interactions within and among coalitions scientific data plays an important part in providing reliable tools for measuring the scope of the problem and causal mechanisms objectively, however advocacy coalition framework recognizes that research and scientific evidence on its own is not a sufficient condition to account for policy

change (Ritter et al, 2018). It rather travels through the filtering of belief systems and if it stands in contradiction, then such evidence may be ignored (Ritter et al, 2018). Rather the change can be observed gradually in the belief system which may occur through external shock or policy-oriented learning (Weible, 2008).

2.2. Advocacy Coalition Framework in Foreign policy

Initially introduced by Sabatier and Jerkins-Smith, the advocacy coalition framework is also applicable to the study of foreign policy analysis. Scholars of public policy have demonstrated and developed a wide range of theoretical approaches to explain the behavior of policymakers and how policy change occurs in qualitative case studies. However, public policy scholars have not paid much attention to foreign policy as an area of study for testing and application of their concepts (Hirschi & Wimder, 2010).

From the 1980s onwards, this framework has been applied and tested on more than a hundred case studies; as a result, the framework has witnessed many revisions over time such as an adaptation of the framework for application to non-US political systems (Hirschi & Wimder, 2010). Although, the original work of Sabatier and Jerkins-Smith on advocacy coalition framework were on the role of technical information in the political process (Hirschi & Wimder, 2010). Recent studies have applied the framework to other policy areas such as the drug policy in Switzerland Kubler, 2001), nuclear energy policy in Sweden (Nohrstedt, 2008), smoking control in Japan (Sato, 1999), and so forth.

However, some studies have applied this framework into the foreign policy analysis such as coalitions of foreign policy in postwar and cold war soviet union (Lee, 2015), US immigration policy (Shin, 2019), and Germany's learned lessons from its policy failure in Afghanistan as part of ISAF (Schröer, 2014).

2.3. Foreign Policy change and continuity

Some studies on foreign policy change offer decision units for identifying a diverse array of change agents in the foreign policy process (Hermann, 1990). Simultaneously, some leader oriented models point to the role of leaders in the change process such as the exploration of the

relationship between transition and change of leaders in the voting patterns of the United Nations (Mattes et al, 2015) and the role of elite framing and change (Bosold and Von Bredow, 2006).

Recent studies recognize such foreign policy restructuring as the product of a complicated domestic contestation and political processes (Brummer et al, 2019; Raunio & Wagner, 2017). Further studies on foreign policy restructuring are based on role theory (Wehner & Thies, 2014), loss-aversion theory (Welch, 2015), and constructivist approach to international norms (Brazys, 2017). This study argues that literature on advocacy coalitions in the field of public policy provide an interesting and compelling analysis of processes and agents of foreign policy change and continuity.

2.4. Actors, Expert knowledge, and Processes

Coalitions are made up of individual actors involved in contestation in different policy subsystems and they may include elected officials, non-elected agents, figures from inside the government, experts, lobbying and interest groups, and other non-governmental organizations (Jerkins-Smith et al, 2014). This distinct array of actors within coalitions as policy specialists develop specific stance towards a policy issue based on their core policy beliefs and contest for the domination of their perception of problems and solutions in the policy decision-making, while some actors in this process may be more influential not only in terms of their political position and legal authority but also due to their skillful deliberation and articulation of causal factors and solutions to sway powerful individuals and find allies (Sabatier & Weible, 2007).

Swaying more powerful actors to a coalition would help in the domination of their policy beliefs in the contestation process, In this manner, the aggregation of different actors within coalitions and contestation of coalitions around a policy issue can explain how policy issues and problems are addressed within institutions (Pierce 2011; Sabatier, 1988). Furthermore, the advocacy coalition framework focuses on the role of belief system and common belief structures that play a significant role in the formation of coalitions among individual actors (Pierce, 2011). "who share a particular belief system—i.e., a set of basic values, causal assumptions, and problem perceptions—and who show a non-trivial degree of coordinated activity over time" (Sabatier, 1988; 139).

Common policy beliefs create understandings of issue eminence among individuals which helps in the initiation of the network structure of coalitions and that is because "actors from different coalitions are likely to perceive the same information in different ways" (Sabatier & Weible, 2007; 194). Sabatier and Weible assert that due to the complexity of the model, it is sufficient for the characterization of different advocacy coalitions to probe for two or three such policy core beliefs (Sabatier & Weible, 2007).

Sabatier and Weible argue that policy and even belief changes are possible through policy-oriented learning, and one precursor of policy change is the extent to which belief change occurs among the policy actors or the replacement of the dominant coalition by the minor coalition (Sabatier and Weible, 2007). It works through external shocks or policy-oriented learning, where external shock as a necessary but not sufficient condition for policy change could be socioeconomic changes, regime change, a disaster, and so forth, in which agendas shift and redistribution of resources and alteration of venues produce opportunities for minor coalitions or changes in core policy belief (Sabatier & Weible, 2007).

Policy learning is a relatively persistent change in the behavioral intentions and thoughts due to experiences or the emergence of new evidence and information concerned with the revision of the policy objectives (Sabatier & Weible, 2007). Weible argues that such changes within the coalition's policy beliefs are facilitated through the utilization of expert knowledge and that expert-based information affects policy by incrementally and indirectly changing the beliefs of actors in the policy-oriented learning process.

"Expert-based information is content generated by professional, scientific, and technical methods of inquiry. Expert-based information is usually based on accepted analytical approaches as defined by the professional community of peers with sources including the social and natural sciences, policy analyses, government reports, and research coming from universities, think tanks, and consulting firms. Likewise, the term "expert" includes policy analysts, scientists, consultants, and researchers in government and non-government organizations" (Weible, Sabatier & Pattison, 2010; 525).

Weible further asserts that expert-based information provides a valuable resource for argumentation with opponents and mobilizing allies, and learning across coalitions occurs when conflict is at an intermediate level and both coalitions have access to technical information and institutional forums, where science influences policy indirectly through learning and belief change which is conditioned on the level of conflict and availability of institutional forums for debate among coalitions (Weible, 2008). Sabatier and Weible argue that coalitions need to possess an intermediate level of expert information to engage in discourse and compete for their policy domination (Sabatier & Weible, 2007).

Expert-based knowledge and information in the policy process can serve three distinct purposes, the learning purpose, political purpose, and instrumental purpose (Weible, 2008). For the learning purpose, although a single research study or report may not significantly impact policy decisions or political actors' beliefs; research evidence rather works indirectly and gradually accumulating decision-makers around a coalition and changing their beliefs on the causes of problems and desired solutions (Weible, 2008).

The political use of expert information is for legitimizing already made decisions by governments and rally support for those decisions such as selective use of information for counter-arguments with opponents or convincing allies in a coalition to mobilize around a policy decision (Weible, 2008). Instrumental use follows a rational approach to problems where in order to find the most appropriate and science-based solutions for a policy issue, research is conducted and the policy decisions are informed by the research findings such instrumental use in advocacy coalitions most probably occurs in professional forums where coalitions work in close cooperation with scientists (Weible, 2008). (Amara et al, 2014) note that all three uses of expert knowledge within the policy process are possible at any point in time, but in different situations, one might dominate the other.

To influence and achieve policy goals coalitions seek to accumulate more resources and formal authority over the policy issue (Sabatier & Pelkey, 1987). Sabatier and Weible also note that "One of the most important features of a dominant coalition is that it has more of its members in positions of formal authority than do minority coalitions. Major strategies for coalitions include

placing allies in positions of legal authority through elections or political appointments, as well as launching lobbying campaigns to sway officials with legal authority," (Sabatier & Weible, 2007; 190). Therefore, policymakers join hands with other individuals with the same policy beliefs and share resources, probe for allies, and develop strategies for achieving preferred policy goals (Jerkins-Smith et al, 2014).

However, Haas's argument is still valid and applicable to this argument that the influence of experts and expert knowledge on policy decision making is still conditioned to the extent that coalitions with the use of expert knowledge can install its members in the concerned decision-making institutions (Haas, 1992). In other words, the majority and minority of a coalition in a policy domain depend on how much the coalition can install its members in the powerful positions or sway powerful individuals through policy learning with the help of expert knowledge.

2.5. A Foreign Policy continuity and Change Model of Advocacy Coalition Framework

This paper extends on the above foundations for the examination of advocacy coalition and competition as a mechanism that explains how foreign policy continuity and change takes place and to what extent and conditions do expert and evidence-based knowledge can play a role in this process. Here, the explanatory utility of the advocacy coalition framework is examined to account for the US foreign policy on engagement with Iran on nuclear crisis and towards climate change for a period of a decade for each case.

Informed by the above literature, coalitions can be formed before or during any session of congress or administration. Selecting the policy subsystem as the primary unit of analysis permits for a wider perspective for comprehension of the constellation of actors in a coalition and their engagement in discourses and contestation to influence in the policy subsystem. (Lantis, 2019) advances a three-stage process model for the study of foreign policy through the advocacy coalition framework of coalition formation, rivalry for dominance, and policy decision making process and outcome of change.

2.6. Coalition Formation

In the advocacy coalition model of foreign policy, coalitions are assumed to form in response to an emerging condition such as policy dilemma or opportunity (Lantis, 2019), and policy participants attempt to translate parts of their belief system into the actual policy before their opponents succeed in doing so (Sabatier & Weible, 2007). Advocacy coalition in this model is characterized as a network or group of individual actors both inside and outside the US government with influence to seek government resources and allies within the policymaking apparatus and outsider concerned individuals committed to a particular policy issue.

As noted above, such individuals may have their own perceptions about the components of the problem and causal factors, but the policy core beliefs combining them is so strong that it keeps them in convergence around a policy issue with the unitary policy belief. The gathering of different actors in a coalition can be determined as a function of issue framing and problem definition and interpretation to seek allies and rally support around a specific definition of the problem and policy issue as well as to challenge the norms, beliefs, and positions of the rival coalitions, thus the formation of coalitions should indicate principals of bounded rationality (Lantis, 2019). This is more evident in the democracies where transparency and power-sharing require debates, constructive discourses, and deliberation of ideas among decision-makers (Risse, 2000).

The earlier perception of the advocacy coalition framework that all coalition members interact is not realistic anymore, however, it is still admissible and consistent with the advocacy coalition framework to assume the varying levels of coordination among members of a coalition based on the centrality of the policy issue to the members' resources and beliefs (Weible, 2008). In this regard, members of a coalition can further be classified into principal and auxiliary members, where principal members coordinate most of the activities and are central to the coalitions because they possess more resources and the policy in hand is compatible with their policy beliefs (Zafonte & Sabatier, 2004).

However, auxiliary members are peripheral to the network of a coalition (Zafonte & Sabatier, 2004). But the point is that some actors are the anchor and central to the coalition than others

(Weible, 2008). "Experts will become members of a coalition based on shared beliefs and because their information will likely buttress a coalition's arguments" (Weible, 2008: 627). Experts join coalitions in different types of subsystems, to make sure their information is not ignored otherwise (Weible, 2008).

Coalitions would seek experts to legitimize their policy decision-making and implementation; while experts can be matchmakers in a coalition between the beliefs of scientists and the beliefs of other coalition members to help them identify coordinating partners, allies, and resources (Weible & Sabatier, 2005). Given the highly technical and complex nature of both cases of the nuclear crisis and climate change which require for highly scientific and expert knowledge as a weapon of coalitions and as these policy domains due to their highly technical nature are central to experts' beliefs and resources, therefore with the concepts of policy advisory, framing and expert knowledge utilization this thesis establishes the first and second expectations.

Expectation 1: In the policy domains of Iran nuclear crisis and climate change, experts as principal members provide information and cause and effect arguments to strengthen coordination of policy beliefs within a coalition in the coalition formation stage
Expectation 2: The provision of information and cause and effect arguments by experts legitimizes the arguments of a coalition forming around a policy issue in the coalition formation stage.

2.7. Coalition Competition for Dominance
The advocacy coalition framework recognizes coalition creation around a specific policy issue with a policy belief and may compete for dominance to translate their perception of the problem and preferred solution into the actual policy decision. The advocacy coalition framework emphasizes on change in policy beliefs. Such change occurs through external shocks or knowledge-oriented learning (Sabatier & Weible, 2007; Sabatier, 1987; Weible & Sabatier, 2005).

Some studies focus on constructive and deliberative exchanges between actors and groups engaged in discourses for policy learning. This study focuses on the competition phase as a

mechanism by which coalitions attempt to gain influence and steer US foreign policy and to what extent and how expert knowledge plays in, to ensure such influence for dominance in the course of the policy process. Once the coalitions are formed and the role of different actors are determined policy processes and the role of experts within and across coalitions notice different dynamics. Coalitions install or seek members in authoritative and formal positions to facilitate competition, so contestation is a key dynamic for coalitions' influence on a policy, while literature also points to constructive exchanges and policy learning (Sabatier & Weible, 2007). Thus, coalitions play a central role in policy design and implementation, negotiation, interaction, and policy learning which are the main drivers of the policy change in political processes (Weible, Sabatier & McQueen, 2009).

As Weiss asserts that a single research may not have a significant impact on the beliefs of actors; the impact rather accumulates incrementally and over time altering the belief system of political actors in a policy process (Weiss, 1979). Such policy-oriented learning happens in two types, inter-coalitions (between coalitions) learning and intra-coalition (within coalition) learning; while the former challenges existing beliefs of coalitions, the later tends to reinforce existing beliefs (Sabatier, Weible & Pattison, 2010). (Weible, 2007) argues that in different subsystem types different learning processes and different roles of experts are evident, and in this regard in the multi-coalition subsystems, he introduces adversarial subsystems.

Adversarial subsystems are assumed to have high within coalition convergence on a policy belief and high competition between coalitions with high divergence in policy beliefs across coalitions (Sabatier, Weible & Pattison, 2010). Experts within different coalitions express disagreement on data, theory, and methods while they remain principal members within their coalitions (Sabatier, Weible & Pattison, 2010).

In competitive coalitions, individuals with decision making authority and resources are fragmented between coalitions, and usually, coalitions are anchored by a few powerful (Principal) members from inside and outside the government who have access to sufficient resources and venues of decision-making to challenge other coalitions and framing the policy image. A competitive coalition attempting to change the status quo would try to politicize the issue and increase the scope of conflict for seeking the attention and support of actors from other

coalitions with authority and resources over a policy issue and accumulate grassroots support (Pralle, 2006).

(Sabatier, Weible and Pattison, 2010) assert that in adversarial subsystems coordination of policy beliefs among coalitions would be the lowest because competing coalitions would present competing approaches for a counter-argument. Therefore, in the adversarial subsystems, experts would remain the principal actors in coalitions due to increased pressure of legitimizing counter-arguments and drawing scientific research into the arguments. The adversarial subsystem type as suggested above would use frames as a strategy for competition as (Frantzich, 2016) suggests that elected officials in democratic politics engage with the public in a series of debates where they commonly use frames to carry political meaning. "Frames may be metaphors or symbols raised in political discourse to" facilitate audience with the course of problem definition, figuring cause and effect argument and pointing to preferred solutions (Entman, 1993; 53). So strategies of issue framing would help coalitions attacking perspectives of rival coalitions and building macro-political and grassroots support.

Expectation 3: Experts in competing coalitions would present scientific research and frame a policy issue from different perspectives to rally support for their policy beliefs from actors with authority and resources, within and outside of the US administration.

Expectation 4: Experts in coalitions compete to install its members or swaying key actors with authority within the decision-making institutions for the purpose of dominating a policy subsystem.

2.8. Policy Decision-Making Outcomes

This final stage of the model recognizes that the formation of coalitions and competition among them may contribute to the outcome of foreign policy decision making. This study expects that the process of rivalry among coalitions would produce a dominant coalition whose policy belief would dominate policy decision-making. Dominance is assumed as both means and end, so when coalitions frame arguments by employing expert knowledge in the competition phase, it is expected to succeed to rally support for installing its members with the same policy beliefs or to

sway authorities and key players in the macro-political arena by changing their policy beliefs and then the changed policy beliefs would derive their preferred policy choices in the decision-making phase (Pierce 2011; Sabatier, 1988). Furthermore, dominant coalitions would carry support from governmental and non-governmental actors who can allocate resources and have access to decision-making venues (Sabatier & Pelkey, 1987).

"One of the most important features of a dominant coalition is that it has more of its members in positions of formal authority than do minority coalitions. As major strategies for coalitions include placing allies in positions of legal authority" (Sabatier & Weible, 2007; 190). In this manner, the role and extent of the impact that experts and expert knowledge can have in the rivalry phase would impact the dominance of a coalition in the policy subsystem to translate into foreign policy change, but Haas's argument is still valid, applicable, and complimenting to this argument that the influence of experts and expert knowledge on policy decision-making is still conditioned to the extent that coalitions with the use of expert knowledge can install its members in the decision-making institutions (Haas, 1992). From the above argument, it can be concluded that the impact of experts and expert knowledge on the foreign policy change is not unrestricted, but it is still conditioned to the extent that coalitions with the use of expert knowledge and framing can install its members or sway key decision-makers in the decision-making institutions (Haas, 1992). The above argument leads to the fifth expectation.

Expectation 5: The impact of experts in a coalition accounting for a policy change is conditioned to the extent that a coalition can install more of its members or sway key actors with authority within decision-making institutions compared to other coalitions.

3. Research Design

This study will follow a positive, empirical and explanatory research goal with a deductive logic of the Small-N comparative research based on the foreign policy model of advocacy coalition framework, and studies two case studies of the US foreign policy of Iran nuclear crisis and the US foreign policy on climate change (withdrawal from Paris Agreement). The positive, empirical and explanatory research goal with a deductive logic of the Small-N comparative design starts with a theory and development of expectations to study the impact of a variable x on the outcome y, and from all available cases, the ones that satisfy the conditions of controlling (blocking) approach of confounders to causal inference is selected, then collects data and analyze the data to either confirm or disconfirm the expectations (Toshkov, 2016). The most similar research design is used for deductive research of theory testing with a set of Expectations (Toshkov, 2016).

Both policy positions deal with the basic concern of diplomacy and cooperation against unilateral action and change of course in related foreign policy decision outcomes. Both foreign policy developments traced in this study have occurred between the 2007-2017 time period and under the Obama and Trump administrations. Considerations as well as the situations in which advocacy coalitions formed around policies suggesting preferences of change and continuity of policies. The dependent variable for this study is foreign policy change. Selecting the policy subsystem as the primary unit of analysis permits for a wider perspective for comprehension of the aggregation of actors in a coalition and their engagement in discourses and contestation to influence the policy choice in the policy subsystem. The evolution of major advocacy coalitions for both case studies over a period of a decade 2007-2017 is examined.

The independent variable for this study is the ability of experts in a coalition to sway or install key members favoring policy change in the decision-making institutions. In other words, the ultimate impact of experts is measured by their ability to sway or install powerful actors in the decision-making institutions. The presence of experts as principal members in coalitions, the formation of more than one competing coalition around both policy issues employing experts as

a framing tool, the Republican Majority in Congress, and the time frame and administrations within which these foreign policy decisions were taken are kept constant as controlled variables in this study.

While both policies were following similar patterns, the Trump administration could withdraw from the Paris Agreement on climate change immediately after assuming office, but the JCPOA agreement continued through the initial year of the Trump administration. Therefore, to analyze the data Keeping the controlled variables constant, this study would probe for variation in the independent variable in both cases using the logic of causal process tracing and covariation, which is expected to account for the policy change. The generalisability of this study would be limited to the US policy decision-making process given the distinct configuration of the policy process and institutional settings of the US.

3.1. Case Selection

The case selection is informed by the logic of most similar systems design in which cases are selected on the value of the independent (explanatory) variable and not on the value of the dependent variable because the researcher is interested in explaining the causal influence of the independent variable, so it is important to make sure that there is a variation in the independent variable between two or among many selected cases (Toshkov, 2016). The case selection process should also take into account the blocking (controlling) of the possible confounders and other variables that could produce the outcome (Toshkov, 2016). In other words, to keep the possible variables that could produce the outcome constant across selected cases. The rationale is that by keeping other variables constant across cases, it can be argued that the observed causal influence is produced by the independent variable (Toshkov, 2016).

This study will employ Small N comparative design with the logic of most similar design system because the Iran nuclear crisis and climate change policies are very similar in many dimensions. Therefore, the presence of experts as principal members in coalitions, the formation of more than one competing coalitions around both policy issues employing experts as a framing tool, the Republican Majority in Congress, and the time frame and administrations within which these foreign policy decisions were taken are kept constant as controlled variables. In other words, the

values of these controlled variables are kept constant across both cases, so the variation of the independent variable can be observable and detectable as a condition of the most similar design system.

3.2. Data Collection

To study both cases this study draws on primary and secondary data sources and archival research. The external events that created opportunity and need for a foreign policy response in the first place are the leading condition for this study. To facilitate process tracing, this study would utilize numerous sources of data related to both policy domains. The sources would include the documents from the Obama White House archive of documents and statements and the Trump's White House published speeches and documents, documents from the US Congress such as reports, analysis, and recommendations, published documents such as memos, reports, analysis and policy statements from the White House, the US department of state, US congressional research services, as well as articles published by the former advisors and aides to the US government.

Reports, analysis, and recommendations produced by experts in the US think tanks regarding both foreign policy issues will also be used. This study would also use the documents and reports produced by related international organizations such as the UNFCCC and the international atomic energy agency (IAEA). Reports and articles produced by experts within and outside of the US government would illuminate on the sources and nature of expert researched-based evidence incorporated in the coalition formation as well as competition stages. News articles and reports from the time period of developing events regarding both policy issues will also be used, and this study would attempt to triangulate among different sources and types of data to mitigate selectivity bias.

The data will be analyzed for tracing the process through developing events in both policy issues to understand the arguments and counter-arguments provided by experts in different coalitions and framing of those arguments in order to install or sway actors with authority in decision-making institutions as well as through the mechanism that they impact the foreign policy decision making in the US.

3.3. Research Method

In social sciences, Small N researches following causal processes have a significant role and the causal process technique is very often used as a complementing tool with co-variation analysis technique (Blatter & Haverland, 2012). Tracing a causal process to an outcome would enhance the internal validity of the study. This added value is more evident when similar cases are not as similar as they should be or in other words, one or more independent variables indicate co-variation with the dependent variable (Blatter & Haverland, 2012). While co-variational analysis with conditioning the effects of other possible variables on the dependent variables points to one or more variables that co-vary (Blatter & Haverland, 2012).

For explaining more general and abstract social phenomena causal process tracing is used for searching and identification of necessary and sufficient conditions leading to a specific outcome or for closely studying theory-driven mechanisms linking causal factors to an outcome (Blatter & Haverland, 2012). in other words, which set of conditions make a specific kind of outcome possible or through which underlying mechanism the cause creating an outcome is explained. A mere observation of co-variation of the independent variable between cases is not regarded as a sufficient proof of a causal relationship by scholars and researchers would also require to established a plausible connection between the cause and the effect (Blatter & Haverland, 2012).

Therefore, to enhance the confidence that the link between an independent variable and a dependent variable is a causal relation, scholars complement the co-variational approach with causal process tracing (Blatter & Haverland, 2012). Since the case selection is based on the logic of most similar system design in which the variation of an independent variable is tested between both US foreign policies of climate change and the Iran nuclear crisis, and according to the advocacy coalition framework which traces policies for a period of a decade, it allows for the use of causal process tracing and co-variation methods for an in-depth analysis of the evidence, tracing developing events and providing evidence of variation of the independent variable in both cases for this thesis. Therefore this study will employ the Small N comparative approach with the causal process tracing and co-variation methods to explain the variation of the independent variable between both cases and its effect on the dependent variable (policy

change), and also to explain that the relationship between the independent and dependent variables is a casual one through illuminating the underlying causal mechanism.

3.4. Operationalization

Operationalization is the process that provides less abstract dimensions of an abstract concept translating it into indicators that can be detected and measured in the empirical world (Toshkov, 2016). Direct operationalization is the process in which attributes of an abstract concept is directly translated into indicators such as measuring the intensity of war by the count of fatalities, but indirect measuring does not usually follow a precise measurement, it rather detects presence or absence such as a contested election followed by a peaceful government can be a good indicator of democracy in practice (Toshkov, 2016).

The expert influence can be operationalized in the direction that the expectations of this study follow since it is very difficult to measure the precise and direct influence of experts in the policy change process, this research will attempt to explain it through a three-step process. First, the presence and absence of experts as principal members within a coalition is measured by the active participation of experts in the policy subsystems by providing arguments and counter-arguments through participation in interviews, talks, and publications such as articles and op-eds. The second stage measures the swaying and installation of key members in the decision making institutions by the arguments and framings that the experts provide during the rivalry stage that is shared and found in the statements, interviews, or publications by the new members of the coalition echoing the same rhetoric. The third stage measures the extent to which experts influence can have a role in the policy change is measured by the extent that expert arguments and framing strategies can find new members in the decision-making institutions, the more and nearer the members to the decision-making institutions.

This study based on the above arguments utilizes the virtue of combining co-variation with causal process tracing approaches to analyze both cases of Iran nuclear crisis and climate change policies in the US. First, causal process tracing would be applied which is expected to indicate the causal configuration of necessary and sufficient conditions to explain the causal relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable of this study which is the foreign

policy change. Secondly, the covariation approach will be applied to the cases with the observation of the above-mentioned conditioned variables which is expected to indicate variation in the independent variable between both case studies which are very similar in respect to the conditioned variables.

4. Analysis

4.1. Climate Change Policy

4.2. Coalition Formation

The US climate change policy is characterized by the historical partisan between Republicans and Democrats, where traditionally Democrats are intuitive towards environmental issues, Republicans believe that the US economy and the economic interests of US corporations should prevail concerns over collective interests of the protection of the environment (Pavone, 2018). In light of traditional Republican hostility towards a multilateral climate change regime such as the withdrawal of President George W. Bush from the Kyoto Protocol, it is obvious that the economic concerned key actors within the previous US governments dominated this policy domain and no policy Dilemma or opportunity by their opponents challenged this dominance (Mooney, 2011). The Obama Presidency opened a new window of opportunity where the climate change concerned individuals and groups held the White House and Congress as well as the electorate's confidence in climate change measures besides other promises of President Obama.

The Obama administration from its first days started bringing experts with intensive experience in environmental protection, management, and advisory positions both from inside and outside the previous administrations and private sector to strengthen the climate change arguments and consolidate key actors within and outside US government to build a strong domestic coalition and bring a foreign policy change on climate change by reviving US leadership in the international climate regime.

In December 2008, President Obama with his environment and energy team started the efforts towards the US climate policy change, the team developed as the appoints were announced one after another and consisted of academics, researchers, and scientists with bureaucratic experience within the Clinton administration such as Dr. Steven Chu an academic physicist with intensive research background and noble prize winner as Secretary of Energy, Lisa Jackson with many

years of working in Environment Protection Agency's regional offices as Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator, Nancy Sutley with an energy advisory background to many mayors of states and EPA as well as a member of many regional water management departments as Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality (EENews, 2010). Also, Carol Browner being principal of Albright group providing advice on climate change, environmental protection, and security, and formerly has served as administrator of the EPA as well as the former secretary of Florida state's Department of Environmental Protection as Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change, and Heather Zichal who has previously served as legislative director to numerous Senators and her work has been targeted to climate change, creating green jobs, and reducing dependency on oil as Deputy Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change, just to name a few (EENews, 2010; The American Presidency Project, 2008).

Outside of the government think tanks also became key members in endorsing the environmentalist coalition's cause and effect arguments regarding climate change such as Brookings Institution, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Council on Foreign Relations, and Atlantic Council (Bonds, 2016).

While on the other hand, the convergence of climate change denying individuals and groups in a coalition to deter the Environmentalist coalition's actions commenced post-legislative defeat of the cap and trade bill in the US Senate (Graciela & Roberts, 2013). Conservative individuals and groups with hostile opinions towards climate change started joining the fight alongside Republicans against climate change measures (Brulle, 2013: Bonds, 2016). later a group of scholars already intervening in the public arena out of the academia for conservative causes intensified their outreach to the public through different mediums and aligned their narratives with the climate change denialism rhetoric (Swartz, 2020). Nonetheless, some conservative think tanks also joined the denialist coalition and promoted their rhetoric through their in house experts and at a point led this coalition as experts in the public arena which includes Cato Institute, Heritage Foundation, and American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research (Bonds, 2016).

4.3. Coalition Competition

4.4. Pro-Climate Change Coalition (Environmentalist)

Since the beginning of the Obama Administration, the administration had to deal with two different camps involved and rigorously fighting in favor and against climate change measures, leave alone the international calls for action (Graciela & Roberts, 2013). Both, the environmentalist coalition calling for climate change measures to safeguard the planet and the denialist coalition dismissing scientific research on climate change, competed for dominance by bringing forward opposing arguments (Graciela & Roberts, 2013). The climate change rhetoric peaked in 2009 by the election of President Obama in 2008 due to his popularity as well as the fact that the Democratic Party held both houses of Congress and the White House (Graciela & Roberts, 2013).

In his presidential campaigns as well as in the inauguration day, President Obama recalled and emphasized the importance of policy change towards a long-held policy of climate change ignorance by his predecessors and pointed that "We'll restore science to its rightful place, and wield technology's wonders … We will harness the sun and the winds and the soil to fuel our cars and run our factories" (Macon, 2009). Immediately, after assuming office President Obama started to build his environmental and energy policy team to build a strong coalition to take legislative action before the UNFCCC conference in Copenhagen by the end of that year (Graciela & Roberts, 2013).

With combining a team of academics, researchers, and other experts with bureaucratic experience in the energy and climate change sectors, he seemed poised to lead a drastic shift in the climate change policy of the US in 2009 as well as re-engaging in international negotiations on climate change (Graciela & Roberts, 2013). A few days after the elections President Obama while addressing the Governor's Global Climate Summit expressed that "My presidency will mark a new chapter in America's leadership on climate change that will strengthen our security and create millions of new jobs in the process" (Graciela & Roberts, 2013). On the other hand, despite the climate change issue, in the first term, the Obama administration had to deal with the

post-shocks of the 2008 economic recession. Therefore, the Obama administration while framing the debate attempted to link both policy issues and emphasized that cutting carbon emissions and apply stricter standards on fossil fuel while investing on clean energy by using wind, solar and geothermal energy the administration can create new industries and green jobs (The White House, 2013).

To justify curbing carbon emissions measures to mitigate climate change effects, the Obama administration since the first election campaigns emphasized on the urgency of addressing potential climate change threats such as increased natural disasters, conflict over basic resources, the influx of refugees, storms, and increasing sea level threatening coastal regions as well as its effects in the artic and midwest which would also make the economy suffer and ultimately presented this argument as a national security threat (White House, 2015). that would intensify its importance and creating a perception of urgency to address this threat in the climate policy debate in the US.

The Obama administration's energy and climate change team attempted to have a legislative achievement before the Copenhagen conference by looking forward to the cap and trade bill which was aimed at a rigorous reduction in carbon emissions and the production of greenhouse gases (Graciela & Roberts, 2013). The 2010 mid-term elections ended to the cap and trade bill as the Democratic Party lost its majority and presidency of the House of Representatives and its unified control over the congress making it much difficult for the environmentalist coalition ambitions for passing carbon emission cutting bill (Graciela & Roberts, 2013). Post this defeat and in the wake of the economic downturn, economic and job concerns preceded the climate concerns making it a hard to sell product (Graciela & Roberts, 2013). In 2011, The Obama administration changed its rhetoric of tackling climate change by bringing forward the concern of lack of proper energy policy and framing it as a major campaign issue (Graciela & Roberts, 2013). To gather more support and back climate change threats as a national security matter the Obama administration ordered the in-house experts in the security agencies to evaluate the impact of climate change. US intelligence and defense sectors also presented reports and emphasized on the immediate threat of climate change as a matter of national security, in the

form that it affects military readiness, humanitarian crisis, global stability, shortage of food and water as well as rising sea levels pose a high-security risk (NRCM, .n.d).

The Quadrennial Defence Review published by the US Department of Defence in 2014, while confirming the immediate dangers of climate change and treating it as a national security matter emphasized that "Climate change poses another significant challenge for the United States and the world at large. As greenhouse gas emissions increases, sea levels are rising, average global temperatures are increasing, and severe weather patterns are accelerating…threat multipliers that will aggravate stressors abroad such as poverty, environmental degradation, political instability, and social tensions – conditions that can enable terrorist activity and other forms of violence" (Department of Defense, 2014: 8; NRCM, .n.d). Despite many efforts of the Obama administration in its first-term, the campaign pledge to institutionalize and pave way for a policy change in the climate change policy could not gain much momentum (Graciela & Roberts, 2013).

Some of the rigorous efforts towards cementing a policy change through legislative action and gaining international leadership on climate change took momentum in the second term of Obama's presidency(Graciela & Roberts, 2013). On the one hand, some of the highly reputed US think tanks advocating for both coalitions on the climate change matter intensified as the Obama energy and climate change team presented an ambitious plan for carbon emissions cut in 2013 (Bonds, 2016). Through their expert talks, interviews, and publications these think tanks supported both coalitions of environmentalists and denialists with cause and effect arguments of climate change effects (Bonds, 2016). At least 14 prominent think tanks such as the Council for Foreign Relations, Brookings Institution, the Atlantic council and Center for Strategic, World Resources Institute and International Studies supported the environmentalist coalition by recognising the same concerns over the effects of climate change and presented it in the same manner as the experts in the Obama administration as a national security matter and called for administration's immediate action to counter security threats due to climate change (Bonds, 2016; Brookings, 2016; Busby, 2007; Engelke & Chiu, 2016, Waskow, 2015).

Experts in these think tanks also testified in front of US Senate committees on climate change issue while promoting the Obama energy and climate change team's strategy of approaching climate change issue through energy policies. David Waskow from the World Resources Institute testified in a US senate hearing that "increased threats posed to national security by the effects of climate change, including massive population displacement, conflicts due to food and water scarcity" (Waskow, 2015). David Goldwyn a Brookings Institution expert testified in front of the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations' Subcommittee on International Development and Foreign Assistance, Economic Affairs, International Environmental Protection, and Peace Corps that "I believe we can harmonize our interests in mitigating global climate change – a national security risk itself – and advancing our energy security." (Goldwyn, 2014).

On the other hand, in 2013 the energy and climate change team of the president published the President's Climate Action Plan in which President Obama emphasis on the role of proper energy policy to mitigate climate change adverse effects saying that "We will respond to the threat of climate change, knowing that the failure to do so would betray our children and future generations. Some may still deny the overwhelming judgment of science, but none can avoid the devastating impact of raging fires and crippling drought and more powerful storms…The path towards sustainable energy sources will be long and sometimes difficult. But America cannot resist this transition, we must lead it. We cannot cede to other nations the technology that will power new jobs and new industries, we must claim its promise. That's how we will maintain our economic vitality and our national treasure" (White House, 2013). This document portrayed the competition in the climate change policy subsystem in 2013 as a critical point in the American energy and climate change policies and indicated ambitious detailed plans towards cutting carbon pollution causing climate change which affects public health as well as its advantage to spark business innovation to modernize the power plants to produce American made clean energy which would create jobs and diminish dependence on foreign oil (White House, 2013).

Following the presentation of this new plan, the Obama administration appoints Gina McCarthy as EPA chief who was assistant administrator for air and radiation in the EPA and gives the EPA one year time to set concert regulations and standards (White House, 2013). In 2015, President

Obama and Gina McCarthy announced the Clean Power Plan which was a set of first-ever national standards to cut carbon pollution from power plants as an attempt to institutionalize the trend of acceptance and addressing climate change effects (White House, 2015). In Order to concrete the Obama climate legacy and to revive the US international leadership on climate change, the Obama Administration joined international negotiations for an ambitious carbon emission cut agreement, and the US and China the two giant producers of carbon emissions engaged in talks on climate change which resulted in an agreement between President Obama and China's Xi Jinping (Pavone, 2018; Somanader, 2016).

The 2015 Paris agreement committed to keep the rising global temperature below 2 Celsius and the US pledged to decrease carbon emissions by 26-28 percent below 2005 levels, but the commitments of the US in Paris agreement was required to be ratified by the US Senate held by the Republican majority (Pavone, 2018). The US delegation engaged in the negotiations on climate change deal were facing the challenge of how to bypass the Senate deadlock on the climate deal, because the Senate with Republican majority was posed to reject such a deal on climate change, since the House of Representatives passed a resolution already approved by the Senate to counter EPA rules for cutting carbon emission from coal based plants, which President Obama announced to veto (Leiserowitz, Maibach, Roser-Renouf, Feinberg & Rosenthal, 2016). During the Paris agreement Senator John Barrasso said that "The president's promises cannot be relied on" because the congressional action for blocking EPA rules was just one reason for foreign leaders not trusting Obama's commitment (Herszenhorn, 2015).

President Obama using the President's executive agreement power bypassed the Senate to prevent blocking of the US participation in this international climate regime (Pavone, 2018), but since this deal was not ratified, it stayed a mere agreement by the Obama administration and not legally binding treaty under the US constitution (Feldman, .n.d). An unaccomplished foreign policy change attempt.

4.5. Coalition Denying Climate Change (Denialist)

The Obama Presidency and Congress majority by Democrats with the aim of a legislative achievement in the climate change policy and reviving the US leadership in the international

climate regime became an alarming signal and a matter of persuasion for the conservative climate change denialist coalition to converge and hinder any change. Since the defeat of clean air and security act to establish cap and trade bill policy on the federal level in the Senate, the denialist coalition regrouped and commenced its attempts for polarising the beliefs concerting climate change effects (Rabe, 2010; Dunlap and McCright, 2015).

The coalition consisting of Republicans, fossil fuel industry backed lobbyist, think tanks. Researchers, conservative foundations, academics and individual experts. Think tanks became a connecting hub for the conservative climate change denialists to keep the coalition unified and moving in concert (Brulle, 2013: Bonds, 2016). By employing climate denial experts and providing them with credibility through the prestige of their institutional affiliations, These experts created a strong climate denial literature as well as finding communicating platform through media and giving congressional testimonies (Bonds, 2016).

The denialist coalition rejected the environmentalist coalition's rhetoric of climate change effects by calling it a hoax that does not impose any practical implications on the environment (Pooley 2010; Greenberg et al. 2011; Farrell 2015, 2016; Kukkonen, 2017). Given the economic crisis of 2008, the denialist coalition presented an economic perspective to the debate as another rationale to discredit any attempts to turning carbon emission cuts into legislation, because measures to cut carbon emission would impose high prices on US industries, resulting in lost jobs and further economic downturn (Oreskes & Conway 2010). While the US was just emerging from the aftershocks of the 2008 economic crisis, the denialist coalition framed it as a threat to the US economy. (Oreskes & Conway 2010; Pooley 2010; Greenberg et al. 2011; Farrell, 2016; Kukkonen, 2017).

Cato Institute and Heritage Foundation at the forefront of these institutions led this rhetoric of climate denial claiming that "The natural climate of the U.S. includes all manner of extreme weather events—hurricanes, tornadoes, droughts, floods, heatwaves, cold outbreaks, Derechos, and virtually every other type of bad weather you can dream up. This is true now, just as it was 100 years ago before greenhouse gases were being emitted to the atmosphere in large quantities from human activities—primarily the burning of fossil fuels to produce energy" (Knappenberger

& Michaels, 2013). and "Fossil Fuels Will Help Us Confront Climate Change…the true believers, who see in global warming an existential threat to humanity. They want to slow the rise in temperature as soon as possible, and as much as possible. Their policy prescriptions focus on the curtailment, or even elimination, of the use of fossil fuels, no matter the costs in terms of slower economic growth and increased poverty" (Miller, 2017).

Another member of this coalition the American Legislative Exchange Council went even further promoting that "Carbon dioxide is a naturally occurring, non-toxic and beneficial gas, and it poses no direct threat to public health" (Davis, 2014). These counter-movement attacks intensified from 2012 onwards through the second term of the Obama Presidency. As these organizations employed actively framing of the issue and pursued advocating economic threat scenarios and projecting scientific uncertainty to politicize climate change policy and shape public perceptions towards climate change in the US in their favor (McCright and Dunlap 2011; Brulle et al. 2012: Kukkonen, 2017). With the aim of installing members of their coalition within and near to the decision-making institutions, in that time, held by the environmentalist coalition to reverse changes and prevent climate policy change from institutionalizing and becoming legislation. Through the second-term of Obama administration, public opinion on climate change issue became massively polarised along the coalitions' ideological lines (Leiserowitz et al. 2016: Kukkonen, 2017).

On the other hand, a group of conservative academics and researchers who besides teaching and conducting researches in American colleges and universities also "give talks, participate in public forums, associate with conservative think tanks, or write trade books" (Swartz, 2020: 505). Many of these academics were associated in leadership roles with institutions beyond academia, designed for promoting conservative political public policies in the form of societies producing newsletters, reports, conferences, journals as well as forums for the general public and public officials (Swartz, 2020). Among these scholars, a group of experts has also been involved in promoting the denialist coalition's beliefs and presenting climate change as a hoax, such as Fred S. Singer from University of Virginia, Brian Domitrovic from University of Sam Houston State University, James Trifle from Goerge Mason University, Jan Breslow from Rockefeller, just to name a few (Swartz, 2020).

When President Trump started his republican primary campaign to run for president at least 177 individuals among these academics signed the "Scholars & Writers for America: Statement of Unity" supporting president Trump on his policies including his denial of climate change (Swartz, 2020: 499). This list was organized by Francis H. Buckley professor of law at George Mason University which appeared online in 2016 (Swartz, 2020). As one of the main Trump campaign promises was to revive jobs and the economy and scattering Obama made EPA rules and walking out of the Paris Agreement (Davenport, 2016).

4.6. Policy Outcome

All the attempts by the Obama energy and climate change team and the environmentalist coalition could not sway or install powerful members in the law-making institutions or later in decision-making institutions to ensure the cementing of the climate change policy legacy of the Obama Administration in the form of legislative achievement. In other words, while holding the White House support the environmentalist coalition could not find support in the US congress or in the Trump administration to make it difficult for the rival coalition gaining office to reverse Obama climate policies or prevent the policy change from becoming institutionalized. Since even the EPA efforts to cut carbon emissions during the Obama administration were based on the already in place legislation, because the Obama administration could not achieve any big legislative achievement on climate change and curbing massive carbon emission throughout its both terms in office (Graciela & Roberts, 2013; Bookbinder, 2017).

When President Donald Trump took office in January 2017, he had all the support he needed to fulfill his campaign promise to reverse the Obama legacy on domestic and foreign policy levels on climate change issue. He even claimed that climate change is a Chinese made conspiracy "created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing non-competitive" (De Pryck & Gemenne, 2017:124).

Since the Inauguration of President Trump, his cabinet and chief advisor positions in the white house, priorly held by scientists and environmentally concerned individuals, were replaced mostly by the members of the denialist coalition. The appointment of Sam Clovis came after the

inauguration as the White House senior adviser to the US Department of Agriculture with a background in academia and a vocal denier of climate change who also challenged the consensus of scientists that human activity is a primary driver of climate change (Eilperin & Mooney, 2017).

Other denialists in the top positions are Steve Bannon chief strategist, Reince Priebus chief of staff, Mike Pompeo Director of CIA calling president Obama ignorant for counting climate change as a major threat, and Scott Pruit EPA administrator a major denier of carbon emission as a major contributor to climate warning (Kahn, 2016; Henry, 2017). These are the very first appointments in positions near or in the White House in the initial year of the Trump administration with the majority of hard critics of climate change measures (Eilperin & Mooney, 2017; Kahn, 2016; Henry, 2017).

The Denialist coalition with its experts as principal members active in the climate policy subsystem proved to be the dominant coalition for many reasons. First, the denialist coalition was able to bring partisan in public opinion on climate change along the coalitions' ideological lines (Leiserowitz et al. 2016: Kukkonen, 2017).
Second, by the election of President Trump and his first year in office, Republicans still had the majority control in US Congress (U.S. Congress, 2019).

Third, the very election of a climate science denier to the top office of a major carbon and greenhouse gas emitter indicates that framed arguments by experts on both coalitions polarised the electorate opinion and attempts by the denialist coalition diminished the climate change priority for the electorate, resulted in installing members of the denialist coalition in the decision making institutions such as the White House and the Congress (U.S. Congress, 2019). Fourth, although the Paris agreement was a good attempt to change the US foreign policy on climate change, the inability of the environmentalist coalition to sway or install members near or in the decision making institutions proved to be insufficient as the Paris agreement remained a mere non-binding commitment in the form of an executive agreement and not a treaty since it was not ratified by the Congress (U.S. Congress, 2019). After the first two year of his presidency,

President Obama losing his party majority in the Congress relied on the regulation based on legislations already in place and executive orders (Lavelle, 2016).

The Denialist coalition with their experts as principal members in the rivalry stage could install its member in decision-making institutions which eliminated any major restrictions for the Trump administration to roll back on Obama's foreign policy on climate change and international climate commitments. Therefore, in a series of announcements and executive orders, President Trump in March 2017 singed an executive order aimed at rolling back on Obama climate policies such as the curbing of carbon emission from electricity plan (DiChristopher, 2017; The White House, 2017). Later, he could trigger a foreign policy change on climate issue in his first year in office as he announced in June 2017 the withdrawal of the US from the Paris Agreement.

4.7. Iran nuclear Crisis Policy

4.8. Coalition Formation

The US foreign policy towards Iran is also characterized by and signals a divide between pro-diplomacy and against the diplomatic approach to Iran coalitions, at least starting from the Bush administration, traces of such a divide can be seen in the White House and the Congress as well as experts and lobbyists within non-governmental organizations such as liberal and conservative think tanks.

In the second term of the Bush administration this divide can be seen between the Condoleezza Rice and Dick Cheney's advisors as well as between democrats and republicans in the Congress (Cooper, 2007; Kornacki, 2007), where Secretary Rice was supporting diplomatic approach, Cheney's aides were publicly advocating for tougher measure including a military strike on Iran (Cooper, 2007). During the Obama administration the pro-diplomacy coalition including representatives of government agencies and White House national security and foreign policy experts and advisors who on regular basis communicated with congressional leaders and testified in committee hearings (Weisman & Gordon, 2015; Shannon, 2016) in the meantime, they started to expand the coalition among Democrats in the House (Dixon and Everett 2015; Hurst 2016).

Out of the government, liberal Think tanks and non-governmental organizations came forward in support of diplomatic engagement including the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, The Brookings Institution, The Atlantic Council, The Ploughshares Fund, The Iran project a non-profit group, The Rockefeller Brothers Fund (Fallows, 2015). Also, faith-based organizations such as J Street a pro-Israeli group, and Friends Committee on National Legislation (Williams, 2017).

Foreign policy and many arms control experts in Washington within numerous organizations played an active role in the pro-diplomacy coalitions including some 100 former US ambassadors and foreign policy experts also joined this coalition later (Kopan & Walsh, 2015; Sprusansky, 2015). The pro-diplomacy coalition's members in the Trump administration were Secretary Rex Tillerson, Secretary James Mattis, head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph Dunford, National Security Advisor HR McMaster as well as some high and mid-level officials at the Department of Defence, Energy and the Department of State (Hayes & Warren, 2017; Slavin, 2017; Lantis, 2019).

The Coalition against negotiations with Iran started to form even before the engagement with Iran was initiated by the Secretary of State John Kerry through a backdoor channel, which includes the opponents in the Congress, some non-governmental organizations, and conservative think tanks (Samore 2015; Wright, 2015). The members of the coalition against diplomatic negotiations with Iran in the congress backed by the lobbying groups such as America Israel Pubic Affairs (AIPAC) and led by Senators Robert Menendez, Chuck Schumer, and Senators, Ben Cardin were actively demanding for ratification by Congress in case of any deal reached with Iran (Rosenberg, 2015). Other NGOs and lobbying groups opposing negotiations with Iran were The Republican Jewish Coalition, Anti-Defamation League, the Zionist Organisation of America, and the Emergency Committee for Israel (Drew 2015). The most prominent figure of foreign policy advisors and former ambassadors inside the Trump administration were Steve Bannon chief strategist to President Trump, Sebastian Gorka deputy assistant to the president, US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley, and Director of CIA Mike Pompeo (Tabatabai 2017).

Some former ambassadors and retired general emerged in support of the coalition against the diplomatic approach to Iran participating in interviews and discussion as well as writing op-ed such as John Bolton who published his roadmap for withdrawal from the Iran deal and later joined the Trump administration as national security advisor (Bolton, 2017).

4.9. Coalition Competition

4.10. Pro-Diplomacy Coalition

For a presidential campaign interview in 2007, then-Senator Obama expressed his plan that he would "engage in aggressive personal diplomacy" with Iran if elected president and that entering into a new relationship with Iran is essential for the stabilization of Iraq, and that emphasized that Iran's support for terrorism and its nuclear program is seriously concerning (Gordon & Zeleny, 2007). In 2009, the newly elected president Obama expressed his concerns about the violence aimed at protestors amid allegations of rigged presidential elections in Iran in which Ahmadinejad was declared the winner but also pointed that the US would monitor the situation carefully and should not be seen as interfering in Iranian's internal politics as part of Obama administration's new policy of engagement with Iran (Nicholl & Johnstone, 2009).

President Obama accused the Iranian government of reluctancy to engage in diplomacy and that they rejected a diplomatic approach on its nuclear program, so President Obama started pushing world leaders for new UN sanctions on Iran to pressurize the country for engaging in talks (Pomeroy, 2010). while Ahmadinejad rejected the US call for a diplomatic approach calling the approach a continuous policy of hostility since the US had not lifted any sanctions (Pomeroy, 2010). In late 2011, John Kerry helped in opening a backchannel for diplomatic talks through Oman which gathered momentum when President Rouhani was elected in 2013 and the US signaled to accept a limited retainment of the Iranian domestic enrichment program as an interim Joint comprehensive Plan of Action, and parties commenced negotiations on a comprehensive deal (Wright, 2015).

The US State Secretary John Kerry and the Deputy National Security Council of White House Ben Rhodes argued in favor of engagement in negotiations with Tehran as a good opportunity where moderates along with President Rouhani in power are able to convince and persuade the hard-liners in Iran for a policy of openness to talks (Samuel, 2016). The Pro-diplomacy coalition's argument simply emphasized on the negotiations and engagement as a policy tool to curb the Iranian nuclear program and counter the threat of Iran developing nuclear weapons. As President Obama made a strong case that a deal can impose actual limitations on Iran's nuclear ambitions, and claimed that such a deal with Iran would effectively "cut off every pathway for Iran to develop a nuclear weapon" (Friedman, 2015). While he emphasized that the deal may not stand on the grounds of trust, but a verifiable mechanism shutting all the pathways to a nuclear weapon off (Friedman, 2015).

The White House officials of the Obama administration strongly supported this rhetoric along with NGOs such as the nonprofit group of Iran project and the United Nations Association of United States to name a few (Fallows, 2015). During the negotiations many think tanks including Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Brookings Institution, The Atlantic Council heavily endorsed the diplomatic negotiations arguing that in a no-deal situation the Iranian government would anyways continue its uranium enrichment program even faster and a deal would put a leash on the Iranian nuclear program and on the one hand extends the time period of enrichment, on the other hand, a good deal would benefit US middle east foreign policy which would maintain a balance of power in the region by the US (Shapiro, 2015; Wehrey & Sokolsky, 2015; The Atlantic Council, 2014).

The contestation of pro-diplomacy and against diplomacy with Iran coalitions intensified in 2015 when the negotiations of P5+1 countries with Iran took pace and the rhetorical conflict and expert argumentations from both sides largely took place in public when the pro-diplomacy coalition consolidated the support of foreign policy officials, nuclear scientists, former US ambassador to Israel, member of Congress, Retired Generals (Kopan & Walsh, 2015; Sprusansky, 2015). They publicly argued in favor of the diplomatic settlement as the most desirable outcome (Kopan & Walsh, 2015).

During the Obama Administration, the pro-diplomacy coalition created two coordination centers for coordinating the public engagement and lobbying for their cause, the first centers established in the White House, a war room where the representatives of several governmental agencies from the department of state to intelligence and treasury to national security council (Samuel, 2016). On the other hand, experts and other members of the pro-diplomacy coalition outside of the US government established another coordination center in the conference room at the Ploughshares Fund International in Washington DC which is a not for profit organization working towards the eradication of nuclear weapon (Fallows, 2015). They coordinated with many other allies such as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and The Iran Project, just to name a few (Fallows, 2015).

Some Members of Congress pointed out that any deal agreed upon with Iran would be subject to ratification so the deal should preserve a balance between Iranian interests and western security concerns (Clapper, 2015). J Street, a liberal advocacy group launched a $5 million campaign to deploy experts of middle east affairs such as former ambassadors and military officials to sway members of the Congress and convey the message of the Pro-diplomacy coalition (Williams, 2017). According to Ben Rhodes, the pro-diplomacy coalition facilitated the emergence of a group of arms-control experts at think tanks and appearing on media becoming key sources for feeding talking points and framed arguments, as he admits that "We created an echo chamber" (Samuel, 2016).

On July 14, 2015, the United States and its western allies of P5+1 countries reached a deal with Iran and President Obama announced the deal claiming that "Today, because America negotiated from a position of strength and principle, we have stopped the spread of nuclear weapons in this region. Because of this deal, the international community will be able to verify that the Islamic Republic of Iran will not develop a nuclear weapon" (Kopan & Walsh, 2015). Following this announcement a storm of support came in favor of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, some 100 national security experts and former ambassadors, nuclear and non-proliferation experts, religious leaders, retired military officials through statements and letters to President Obama applauded and praised the deal emphasizing that the deal can stop Iranian nuclear

ambitions without putting American soldiers in danger (Kopan & Walsh, 2015; Sprusansky, 2015).

In the face of Republicans and some Democrats in the Congress against the diplomatic approach to Iran and the JCPOA, the Obama administration was left with the dilemma of whether to give the Congress a role in the deal in an attempt to ratify the deal as a treaty or to move forward with the deal as an executive agreement. Meanwhile, the framing and persuasion efforts of the pro-diplomacy members in the war room and outside the White House in order to sway members of Congress in favor of the deal indicated some effects. when Chairmen of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Bob Corker along with other Republicans in the house tried a new strategy of persuading the White House and supporters of executive agreement that the deal needs congressional review (Katzman & Kerr, 2016). As a result, a compromise legislation was introduced in May 2015, as the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA) (Katzman & Kerr, 2016). the INARA required the executive branch to certify to the Congress every 90 days that Iran was in full compliance and that the deal remained in the US national security interests. Which the Obama administration began certifying in 2016 and appeared in the hearings on the Iran deal and re-certified the deal throughout the year (Davenport, 2017).

4.11. Coalition Against Diplomatic Approach to Iran

During the P5+1 countries negotiations with Iran, the coalition opposing diplomatic approach to Iran were actively attacking, arguing that Iran could not be trusted to comply with any deal reached and the Obama administration was not likely to reach the best possible deal (Kopan & Walsh, 2015). Some former US generals and admirals accompanied by Israeli diplomates claimed that the deal would evolve to become appeasement and that the Obama administration has crossed the limitations of its authority in negotiating the deal, and has to seek advice and consent of the Senate in order to draft a deal aligned with the US and Western security interests (Clapper, 2015). Republican majority Congress held four hearings on the Iranian deal negotiations in the first six months of 2015 (Lantis, 2019). The coalition against diplomacy with Iran also politicized the possible deal and took the battle to the public to gain grassroots and public support as well as to lobby in the congress to deter the efforts of the pro-diplomacy coalition (Samuel, 2016). Experts in some conservative think tanks played a vital role in the

attempt to discrediting the negotiations with Iran such as the American Enterprise Institute claiming that the deal will not stop Iran's research facilities and despite the deal, the country would have everything ready once the restrictions are lifted Iran can sprint for making its nuclear weapon and even framed the debate of diplomat approach accusing Obama administration's efforts that it brings Iran out of the cold, to "break through (their) isolation" and help them become a "very successful regional power." Instead of restricting its increasing military ambitions (Goldberg, 2015: 1; Mclnnis, 2014).

The resistance of the coalition against diplomacy increased when the outlines of the negotiated agreement between P5+1 and Iran came out in 2015, the main concerns were about the executive authority of President Obama in case the ratification fails and some clauses of the agreement which would allow Iran to restart its centrifuge enrichment after the ten years of the deal (Rosenberg, 2015). The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) an influencing pro-Israeli lobby also intensified its campaign, while being very critical of the negotiations claimed that Iranian leadership has always called for the elimination of Israel and negotiations would favor Iran, so AIPAC could sway some skeptical Democrats and many Republicans already critical of negotiations (Rosenberg,
2015).

Donald Trump, from the initial days of the Iran deal and during the presidential campaigns in 2016 expressed his criticism to the deal and calling it a "disaster" and "the worst deal ever negotiated", and that it could lead to a "nuclear holocaust." (Torbati, 2016). He also claimed that he could have negotiated a better deal and announced that his "Number-One priority" would be to "dismantle the disastrous deal with Iran." (Torbati, 2016). The coalition against diplomacy with Iran was heartened by the Trump victory in the US presidential elections as he was already very critical of the deal, and he drew support from foreign policy experts, the conservatives resentful of the diplomatic approach who joined his campaign and after Trump victory became his top advisors in the White House (Tabatabai, 2017). Including Sebastian Gorka, deputy assistant to President Trump who tagged Iran as a major terrorism sponsor state, Nikki Haley later US ambassador to the UN, Steve Bannon his chief strategist, and Mike Pompeo CIA director (Tabatabai, 2017).

Meanwhile, other members of the coalition outside the government such as AIPAC and Foundation for Defence of Democracies alongside key Republican Senators and interest groups continued to voice opposition to the development and implementation of the deal. Nikki Haley emerged as a key member of the coalition criticizing the deal on many occasions publicly calling it unfairly advantageous and one-sided deal in favor of Iran (Tabatabai, 2017). Other former military and foreign policy experts as members of the coalition against diplomatic approach with Iran were yet to get on board in the Trump team. But in the meantime continued to discredit the deal publicly such as former US ambassador to the UN John Bolton calling the deal a "threat to US national security interests" and he adds that "Accordingly, we must explain the grave threat to the U.S. and our allies, particularly Israel. The JCPOA's vague and ambiguous wording; its manifest imbalance in Iran's direction; Iran's significant violations; and its continued, indeed, increasingly, unacceptable conduct at the strategic level internationally demonstrate convincingly that the JCPOA is not in the national security interests of the United States" in a published op-ed while presenting a five pages exit plan from the deal (Bolton, 2017).

In August 2017, Nikki Haley traveled to Vienna to press the officials of the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) regarding Iranian compliance with the deal and later in a speech at American Enterprise Institute in Washington she aired her concerns and doubts publicly in regard to the deal (Johnson, 2017). Mike Pompeo also called Iran a "thuggish police state" and a "despotic theocracy", that could not be trusted (Morello 2018). On the other hand, lobby groups and experts from the Foundation for Defense of Democracies directly aligned their efforts with the Trump administration in 2017 to redefine its Iran strategy describing the Iran deal as Strategically and morally absurd" and "wishful thinking" of the Obama administration (Gerecht, 2018).

Between January 2017, since President Trump assumed office and July 2017, the momentum on JCPOA was shifting and the coalition against the deal was emerging rigorously as President Trump in an attempt to frame the deal told the leaders of the US Congress that despite Iran's compliance, a serious question remains that whether engagement with a state sponsor of terrorism would be in US national security interest (Winter, Gramer & Luce, 2017). He also

ordered the in-house experts of an inter-agency review on the future of the deal by advisors sympathetic to him in the National Security Council (Winter, Gramer, & De Luce, 2017).

4.12. Policy Outcome

Despite the coalition against diplomatic engagement and JCPOA occupying the white house and the Congress, but the pro-diplomacy coalition during the Obama presidency showed a consistent and rigorous coalition-building effort and made a very strong coalition that they could even find members in the Trump cabinet pushing for recertification of the JCPOA. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in April 2017, publicly confirmed in a report to the Congress that Iran has remained in compliance with the JCPOA, also confirmed by the IAEA, but simultaneously, members of the coalition opposing the deal testified in the Congress that the Obama administration was "too permissive and tolerant of Iran's violations of the deal, its exploitation of loopholes, and its avoidance of critical verification requirements" (Albright, 2017). But it was still certified by the Trump administration which provided the Trump administration and JCPOA opposition coalition some time for strengthening the coalition and to generate more focus on the Iran policy (Winter, Gramer & Luce, 2017).

The White House meetings before the next round of recertification in July 2017 further intensified the competition between both coalitions. Secretaries James Mattis and Rex Tillerson both once again publicly confirmed the compliance of Iran to the JCPOA and that it is in the National Security Interest of the US to remain in the deal, although deliberations leading to the July 2017 deadline for recertification became much contentious Joseph Dunford, James Mattis, and Rex Tillerson maintained their support for the deal (Lantis, 2019). In the meantime, Steve Bannon helped in sharing John Bolton's exit strategy with President Trump, but in the July meeting in the White House Secretary Tillerson who was tasked to present alternative policy options, he infuriated the President by presenting only one option of recertification which was questioned by many Trump advisors present (Winter, Gramer & Luce, 2017). While Mattis and Tillerson emphasized on their position, National Security Advisor HR McMaster advised for further study (Hayes & Warren, 2017; Slavin, 2017; Ali, 2018). In the end, the president expressing his anger mentioned that the support for the deal can not go indefinitely and he must be presented with an alternative policy (Schwartz, 2017). In the end, the White House announced

the recertification of the deal, however simultaneously attempted to toughen the enforcement of the deal and also to persuade Congress to increase sanctions (Deyoung, 2017).

From July to September 2017, The competition between both coalitions continued intensively, and members of both coalitions in the decision making institutions continuously attacking each other by emphasizing on their policy beliefs. President Trump frustrated of the deal and worried about the next recertification period which was due in October 2017, announced that he would no longer certify that the deal is in US national security interest nor he announced the termination of the deal or any increase of sanction (White House Press Office, 2017; Freidman, 2017). Instead, he referred the deal to Congress for an intensive review to probe for flaws that could enable Iran to threaten the world with a nuclear weapon (White House Press Office, 2017; Korb, 2018). Although the President failed to re-certify the deal, it still meant that the deal was in effect and reached a compromise outcome in which the US remained in the JCPOA and through 2017, the first year of President Trump in office, the US foreign policy towards Iran deal could not change despite of the coalition against diplomacy with Iran's tough battle over policy change and despite President Trump's election promise to end the deal within his first days in the White House.

5. Findings

In the US foreign policy on climate change, rival coalitions were formed employing experts as principal members for providing counter-arguments and issue framing, and the contestation happened during the Obama administration and the initial year of the Trump administration, while the congress for the majority of the period was held by the Republicans (Brulle, 2013; Bonds, 2016; Pavone, 2018; EENews, 2010). President signed the Paris Agreement and endorsed the deal throughout its second term in office but could not make it a treaty, the Trump administration also employing experts for counter-arguments and framing the climate change policy as well as the Paris Agreement, in absence of key actors from the rival coalition in support of climate change measures, stepped out of the Agreement changing almost a decade long policy favoring climate change measures in June 2017.

Cases	Independent Variable	Controlled Variable	Controlled Variable	Controlled Variable	Controlled Variable	Dependent Variable
	Swaying or Installing key Actors in Decision-Making Institutions Favoring Policy Change	Republican Majority in Congress	Presence of Competing Coalitions and Framing Strategy	During Obama-Trump Administrations 2007-17	Experts as Principal Member Present in Coalitions	Foreign Policy Change
Paris Agreement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
JCPOA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

(Table: 1.1) Co-variation table

On the Other hand, the US foreign policy decision towards the Iranian nuclear crisis and in particular the JCPOA deal between the P5+1 countries and Iran also happened during the Obama administration and the initial year of the Trump administration. Coalitions were formed in favor of negotiations and against negotiations with Iran in the US foreign policy subsystem of Iran nuclear crisis (Dixon and Everett 2015; Hurst 2016; Williams, 2017). both coalitions actively employed experts as principal members for providing argument and counter-arguments utilizing framing of the issue as a strategy to sway and install key actors in the decision making institutions (Kopan & Walsh, 2015; Sprusansky, 2015; Shapiro, 2015; Wehrey & Sokolsky, 2015; The Atlantic Council, 2014). the coalitions supporting negotiations with Iran throughout the Obama administration were successful to find members in the Trump cabinet and the rival coalition, so President Trump could not withdraw or trigger a change in the US foreign policy towards the Iranian nuclear issue in his initial year in the White House.

Table 1.1, indicates that while the controlled variables were kept constant in both policy domains, a variation is evident in the independent variable which is the ability of expert arguments and framing strategy to sway or install key actors in the decision-making institutions, so is the variation also evident in the dependent variable (the outcome).

6. Discussion

This study with the support of the pieces of evidence presented has drawn support for the arguments made in the Expectations in favor of the role of experts in the advocacy coalitions and the mechanism through which the expert influence plays in, in the policy subsystems of both US foreign policy domains of Climate Change and the Iran Nuclear Crisis. The paper has provided a sufficient amount of evidence to demonstrate that policy advocacy coalitions play a significant role in the foreign policy debates in the United States.

The first two expectations argue that experts as principal members in coalitions present cause and effect arguments to policy issues to strengthen policy beliefs within coalitions and to legitimize the arguments of coalitions. In the First case of climate change policy, the coalition in favor of climate change measures emerged and consolidated around the experts within and outside of the Obama administration including think tanks, non-profit organizations, and former foreign policy and climate science experts. On the other hand, the coalition denying climate change also emerged and consolidated around experts from within and out of the Trump administration including the conservative think tanks, nonprofit organizations, academia, and individual experts later assuming key positions in the Trump administration.

In the second case study of the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA), also both coalitions of pro-diplomacy and against diplomatic approach united around experts on both camps providing arguments for and against the consequences of a nuclear deal with Iran and later through the end of the second term of the Obama administration both coalitions gained new members which intensified the competition for the dominance upon the US foreign policy on Iran nuclear deal.

The third and fourth expectations assert that experts in the competition coalition provide expert knowledge and frame the policy issue from a different perspective to install its members or sway key actors in decision-making institutions. In the first case study, both coalitions engaged in an intensive competition mostly attacking each other publicly by framing the arguments and presenting different arguments to discredit the opposition coalition. While the environmentalist coalition emphasized on the scientific findings of climate change concerns, the experts in the

denialist coalition rejected the scientific consensus on climate change, calling it a hoax. The evidence shows that the public opinion on the climate change issue became polarised which favored the coalition denying climate change. Although the Paris agreement was a good attempt by the Obama administration in the array of attempts intended to change the US foreign policy and also to cement this change by a legislative approval on the agreement, but the dominance of the denialist coalition hindered this effort. As the environmentalist coalition could not install more of its members or sway key actors in the Congress as well as later in the Trump administration.

In the second case study, also both coalitions framed the arguments through their experts in the public domain, the pro-diplomacy coalition operating from two coordination centers, the White House war room and the Ploughshares Fund International office in the Washington D.C promoting the diplomatic benefits against military approach and the against diplomatic approach coalition's arguments rejecting Iran honesty on the deal and discrediting the deal as not able to stop Iranian nuclear ambitions.

The fifth expectation argues that the impact of experts in coalitions on policy change is conditioned to the extent that a coalition can install its members or sway key actors in decision-making institutions compared to other coalitions. In the first case study, the situation which emerged from the competition phase resulted in installing mostly the members of the denialist coalition in the decision-making institutions, in the White House as well as in the Congress. While the environmentalist coalition could not install a significant number of its members within the decision-making institutions to prevent any change in the US climate change foreign policy which resulted in the withdrawal of the Trump administration from the Paris agreement as well as from the US international commitments on carbon emission cut. Triggering a drastic change in the US foreign policy on climate change.

In the second case study, In the competition phase experts within and outside of the Obama administration including liberal think tanks, non-profit organizations, former ambassadors, foreign policy experts, and retired generals intensively supported the engagement strategy with

Iran. While on the other hand, the coalition against the diplomatic approach with Iran including Trump advisors, conservative think tanks, and non-profit organizations continuously and publicly argued against the deal. The pro-diplomacy coalition became so dominant that even after the Trump election as the President and assuming office the coalition against the diplomatic approach could not roll back on the deal in the first year of the Trump administration unlike the climate change policy (the Paris agreement). Because the pro-diplomacy coalition could sway actors in key positions in the White House and among Trump key advisors as well as members of the Congress which prevented rejection of the deal in the Congress in the first place and resulted in a compromise agreement in the form of INARA act, and the policy continued through the first year of the Trump administration.

7. Conclusion

The Findings from both case studies support the expectations of this research which indicate that the experts were key members of both coalitions in both policy domains and were also directly involved in the competition phase providing arguments and framing policy debates, but in the first case study, the denialist coalition could install most of its members near or within the decision-making institutions such as the Trump White House and the Congress pursuing its policy beliefs resulting in a policy change and withdrawal from the Paris agreement within the first year of the Trump administration. While in the second case study of the Iran nuclear deal, the coalition against the diplomatic approach could not install most of its members within the decision-making institutions, while the pro-diplomacy coalition could sway key actors in the decision-making institutions such as the Congress and the White House which resulted in the failure of the coalition against diplomatic approach to make sure the withdrawal from the JCPOA deal in the first year of the Trump administration.

The findings of both case studies indicate that the struggle of both competing coalitions in both case studies for dominance could influence foreign policy change as well as continuity, which can be concluded that experts are indeed influential in the foreign policy subsystems either favoring policy change or continuity, but their influence is not absolute but restricted to the extent that they can install more key members of their coalition or sway actors with authority within the key decision-making institutions.

The findings and discussion sections emphasize and enhance the confidence in the validity of the findings; however, the generalizability of this research findings is limited to the US policy decision-making process given the distinct configuration of the policy process and institutional settings of the US. The findings indicate that the theoretical lens of the foreign policy change model of advocacy coalitions framework is useful for studying the influence of experts in the foreign policy change process. This also implies for the understanding of the role and the extent of the influence experts can have in a foreign policy change in the US foreign policy decision-making process.

The comparative research method employed for this study has indicated the potential for observation of the variation in both case studies used in this study, but the possibility of another influence such as the difference between climate change and Iran nuclear policies in terms of other countries' (P5+1) direct involvement with the US on the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA) and not on the climate change policy can not be ruled out. which can be a good topic for further research in this domain. Such a research would require collecting primary data such as conducting interviews, while this research has relied mostly on documents because due to the scope of this research it is not possible to interview all of the members of different coalitions involved in both policy domains inside and outside the Obama and Trump administrations to have their insights.

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