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**Original Research**

# The Logical Relationship Between National Interests and Ideology in the Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran

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This article is fundamentally rich in concepts, as it encompasses more than one conceptual variable. On the one hand, it addresses the two concepts of ideology and national interests, and on the other hand, it examines their relationship in foreign policy, focusing specifically on the logical relationship between them. Moreover, the article is based on the methodology that, on the one hand, there exists an "otherness" between the concepts of ideology and national interests. Without this distinction, the question of their relationship would lack substance. On the other hand, this relationship requires exploration and clarification to resolve the challenges arising from ambiguity, both theoretically and practically. Furthermore, within the decision-making system, this relationship will become the criterion for legitimacy, because if a logical conflict or contradiction is established between these two, continuing the current state of foreign policy in the Islamic Republic of Iran will not be wise. More importantly, the logical relationship does not refer to attachment, association, or connection, but rather to a proximity and a stable, eternal, and substantive relation that even scientific upheavals cannot distort or undermine. Additionally, the logical relationship overshadows other relationships governing the two concepts of national interests and ideology in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, such as the relationship between concept and instance, desired and existent, whole and part, negation and affirmation, theoretical and practical, ideal and reality, as well as divergence and convergence. This is because the essential characteristic of the logical relationship is the negation of contradictions and conflicts. In fact, logical rules function similarly to mathematical laws, where relationships are defined, leaving no room for political bias or ideological orientations. The research methodology of this article is based on logical reasoning, the description of existents, and the analysis of thoughts. The logical result of the relationship is derived from its foundational premises, which involve the distinction of the four relationships. The variables in the article also include the concepts of national interests and ideology, with national interests serving as the independent variable. From this perspective, advocates of ideological foreign policy, proponents of interest-based foreign policy, and those advocating a combined foreign policy, are all confined by logical reasoning and philosophical laws. The hypothesis of the article, which emerges from the title—i.e., the nature of the logical relationship between national interests and ideology in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran—has been formulated by reflecting on the fourfold structure of formal logic, known as the four relationships: equal, contrary, general and specific absolute, and general and specific relative. It is as follows: "The multiplicity of relationships and the intertwined nature of the two conceptual constructs of national interests and ideology with the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran reflect a specific logical cohesion, namely, the general and specific relative, which is proven through the negation of the three other relationships and by the method of indirect proof."

*Keywords:* Foreign Policy, National Interests, Ideology, Logical Relationship, Islamic Republic of Iran.

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## 1. Introduction

The concepts of ideology and national interests become prone to separation or confrontation and conflict when the foreign policy of a political system is suspected of having an ideological bias. In other words, when there is a tendency for idealism to take precedence over realism in policy, the former nourishes or originates from ideology, and the latter relies on or is inspired by reality. From this perspective, the orientation of a country's foreign policy closely connects to the concepts and themes of ideology and national interests, and depending on the type and nature of a political system's foreign policy, these two terms may either coincide or diverge. In this sense, a realist foreign policy has a broad interpretation of national interests and takes a restrictive stance on ideology. Conversely, an idealist or ideology-driven foreign policy overlaps with ideology in its conventional sense and narrows the scope of national interests.

Moreover, a realist foreign policy is, methodologically, free from value judgments and is, in a sense, positivist or empirical. By rule, its benefits outweigh its costs, and it is continuously aligned with global and international standards in its interactions and efforts. On the other hand, an idealist foreign policy or an ideology-driven policy, first, negates the established order in the international system and the institutions governing it. Secondly, it aims to devise a new framework for world management and to change the prevailing values and norms. In this process, it prefers mental rules over objective laws. This means that a realist or development-oriented foreign policy is based on natural behavior, independent of will-driven, normative, ideological, absolute thinking, or dogmatism, as expressed by Morgenthau:

"The political competition scene is a struggle for power acquisition or preservation and display of power, all of which fall under the category of 'is' and not 'ought,' distinguishing between the spiritual desires and global realities in both domestic and foreign policy" (Sariolghalam, 2000). Therefore, both realists and neoliberals subscribe to four key hypotheses in foreign policy:

1. States are the principal or most significant actors in the international arena.
2. States are considered a unified and cohesive actor.
3. States are rational actors engaged in cost-benefit calculations.
4. National security and military power are paramount policies.

According to these assumptions, any country engaged in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy in the international arena must:

1. Have rational and wise decision-makers.
2. Pursue power and wealth in the form of national interests.
3. Possess a scientific and behavioral methodology.
4. Consider the global political environment as it truly is.
5. Define objective concepts such as power, politics, state, and interests.
6. Be guided by political ethics, though not necessarily moral or value-based politics (Ebrahimi, 2009).

However, an ideological and idealistic foreign policy follows a different path from a realist foreign policy, because, first, it is based on idealistic and imaginative doctrines, urging policymakers, politicians, and statesmen to adopt behaviors that are rooted in beliefs, values, and norms. Second, due to its persistence and durability, it is less flexible and fluid in foreign policy. Third, owing to political radicalism and the presence of untestable and irrefutable ideological motives, it suffers from a lack of transparency and free flow of information. This contrasts with democratic systems, where foreign policy, due to a multiplicity of opinions and scientific polling mechanisms, moves beyond semantic ambiguity and corrects its own mistakes. Additionally, in democratic systems, ideology is often a surface-level, facilitating, temporary structure derived from societal norms. In contrast, in non-democratic systems, ideology is a foundational, permanent, stable, guiding force that emanates from the minds and consciousness of the rulers.

Furthermore, in an ideological foreign policy, there is little belief in international organizations and institutions. These are seen as constructs of environmental necessity, tools in the hands of powerful states to exploit other nations and governments. Therefore, the goal is either to dismantle these

organizations entirely or, if necessary, minimize interaction and engagement with international institutions.

In this context, the concept of ideology and its role in foreign policy becomes a misleading one, as ideology is among the most ambiguous concepts found in the social sciences. This ambiguity arises from the existence of multiple theoretical approaches that ascribe various functions and meanings to ideology, and because it is deeply intertwined with fundamental societal themes (Legrand, 2019). From one perspective, ideology can be seen negatively as a concept based on a form of false consciousness that distorts human understanding of social realities. From another viewpoint, it can be perceived positively as a translation of a society's worldview, built within a nation, giving them identity and defending their interests (Legrand, 2019). Ideology can also be understood as a mental construct, in which case it is a distorted form of consciousness incapable of grasping reality, or as an objective one, where it is seen as a deception that arises from the reality itself, misleading the perceiving mind.

The term "national interests," defined as the compass for delineating the goals and priorities of foreign policy, is similarly enmeshed in theoretical and practical complexities. The emergence of this concept is the result of three major transformations in European political and social history:

- The establishment of centralized and absolute monarchies.
- The rise of national sovereignty.
- The formation of the state as an institution independent of individuals and emanating from collective will.

Therefore, the concept of national interests, with its long history, has become a central issue in achieving the foreign policy goals of states through a historical back-and-forth. However, the nature of national interests is prone to differences and divisions. This disagreement not only dissolved the traditional forms of governance, whether monarchical or imperial, but also transformed the nature of power, placing the source of political power in national sovereignty. Pursuing national interests is the result of this transformation, which turned power into two forms: horizontal and vertical. The horizontal form limits governance to a specific territory and focuses power responsibility on that territory, while the vertical form decentralizes power from the top of the pyramid and recognizes the nation as the source of political power. From this standpoint, pursuing national interests is a result of a structural transformation in political power that has reshaped its roles and functions. Since then, national interests have become the goal of foreign policy for states (Ranjbar, 2007, p. 168).

In the case of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, this article adopts a form of synthesis, thus reaching the logical relationship of general and specific relative. In this sense, the relationship between ideology and national interests in the Islamic Republic of Iran does not present a contradiction, and in many cases, the two overlap. This is because, firstly, although values emerge from the mental and subjective realm and interests from the objective and material realm, values are not always fixed. In Islam and its political and social laws, change is the principle. Moreover, national interests and ideology should not be defined solely in affirmative terms but should also be considered in negative terms, i.e., understanding what ideology and national interests are not (Mahmoodi Kia, 2023; Mahmoodi Kia & Dehshiri, 2020).

Secondly, some believe that the core nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy is ideological, and the concept of national interests does not exist within it. They argue that the pragmatism observed in Iran's foreign policy arises from the presence of conflicting interests in the international system and the constraints imposed by the nation's power resources. In this case, the approach to national interests is not strategic but tactical. Therefore, the Islamic Republic of Iran uses ideology as a tool for identity formation in international relations and for safeguarding its core values (Bakhshi & Bayat, 2008).

Thirdly, from a structural perspective, the ideology of the Islamic Republic of Iran can be extracted from the text of its constitution. Provisions such as: the legitimacy of any law, contingent on its non-contradiction with Islam; support for liberation movements and the oppressed; ensuring human happiness and a transnational mission beyond political borders, all represent religious and ideological statements that impose significant costs on the system and society. In this framework, ideology itself becomes a facet of national interests, and no contradiction between the two is observed.

Fourthly, some, from the perspective of the universality of Islam, argue that ideology and national interests are unified in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. They maintain that Islam is a comprehensive religion with a program for both the world and the hereafter, encompassing everything from food, clothing, and marriage to war, governance, and judicial matters. In this sense, ideology contains the goal, method, tactics, program, and a certain intellectual standard governing thoughts and social actions, and only an ideology inspired by Islam is reliable and enduring (Hosseinizadeh, 2007).

In the discourse of the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the dominant view is one of synthesis, hybridity, and the lack of contradiction between national interests and ideology in its foreign policy. The leadership of the system explicitly noted that: "Some mistakenly speak of the need to separate diplomacy from ideology, while ideological diplomacy is not problematic, and the notion of a contradiction between ideology and national interests is neither correct nor logical... Ideology seeks to safeguard and secure national interests and is considered the identity of a nation" (October 5, 2013).

Thus, since the title of the article addresses the logical relationship between national interests and ideology in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and logic is inherently a mental and non-objective phenomenon aimed at resolving intrinsic contradictions based on second-order reasoning, the primary focus of the article is to understand the logical relationship between these dual concepts in Iran's foreign policy and to uncover their inherent inconsistencies. Therefore, political, factional, and ideological disagreements, as well as criticisms and counterpoints, are not reflected in this article. If, in the course of the article, references to foreign policy, financial interests, or ideology are briefly made, they serve to clarify the context and are not of inherent or essential importance. Accordingly, in the process of proving the hypothesis, the logical concepts and themes, including the definition of logic, the study of knowledge and perception, the concepts of judgment and belief (whether universal or specific), and the philosophical and logical secondary intelligibles, are redefined. Ultimately, by differentiating the four Aristotelian relationships and employing an indirect proof method through the negation of the three other relationships, the logical relationship between national

interests and ideology in Iran's foreign policy is manifested as a specific and general relative relation, and is regarded as a positive relationship.

## 2. Theoretical Framework and Findings

### 2.1. Definition of Logic

Logic is defined as a tool for measurement, a precursor for understanding, and a legal instrument that, when observed, preserves the mind from errors in thinking. In other words, logic teaches humans the general rules of correct thinking so that the mind can guide itself from present conceptions to absent matters in all sciences (Mozaffar, 1983).

### 2.2. Duality of Science in Logic

In logic, science or perception refers to the impression of the forms of objects in the mind, similar to the impression and reflection of the forms of objects in a mirror, and in this case, there is no difference between sensations. Therefore, science has also been described as the presence of the form of an object in the intellect. Based on this, it should be noted that science, in terms of classification, is of two types:

- **Present Science:** This means that an existing object, i.e., something known, is directly present to the intellect without the mediation and abstraction of its forms. For example, the science of psychology and human consciousness of one's own awareness.
- **Acquired Science:** This is obtained through the mediation of concepts and mental forms of objects. Since it is mediated, like the relationship between ideology and national interests, there is a possibility of error in it (Sasaniyan, 2018).

Therefore, according to logical criteria, acquired science and present science are distinguished from each other in three aspects:

1. Acquired Science is defined as the presence of the known form to the intellect, while Present Science is defined as the presence of the essence and the known reality to the intellect.
2. Acquired Science is divided into imagination and affirmation, but Present Science cannot be divided into imagination and affirmation.

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3. In Acquired Science, the objective existence of the known differs from its scientific existence, whereas in Present Science, the objective existence and the scientific existence are unified (Mozaffar, 1983).

An important point relevant to the subject and premise of the article is that both ideology and national interests, as well as their logical relationship, are of the category of acquired science and have no relationship with present science.

## 2.3. Duality of Imagination and Affirmation

Another topic closely related to the article's hypothesis is the subject of imagination and affirmation in logic. In logic, 'imagination' refers to a concept. That is, imagination is a mental concept that has the ability to represent something like the concept of fear, human, water, fire, profit, and loss, and 'affirmation' refers to a logical proposition whose perception requires confirmation and acknowledgment by the mind. In this case, if the mind receives the concept of a triangle, an individual's knowledge of that concept is called 'imagination.' Even the perception of the angles of the triangle is merely an imagination, but if the mind is placed in a position of judgment and acknowledges that the sum of the angles of the triangle equals two right angles, this becomes an affirmation and requires the mind's acknowledgment. In other words, the form that corresponds to reality, which is understood and perceived, is called 'affirmation' (Sasaniyan, 2018). Imagination itself is divided into two categories:

- **Particular Imagination:** This represents a single entity and is obtained through the senses. In this case, these are simple mental phenomena resulting from the interaction of sensory organs with the material reality. For example, what is heard by the ear or seen by the eye, or acquired through the faculty of imagination, which, although products of interaction with the external world, do not require the persistence of that interaction. For instance, the mental image of the sweetness of honey that has been tasted earlier.
- **Universal Imagination:** This is also called collective, conceptual, or quantitative meanings. For example, water, tree, and fire, which can be

applied to numerous individuals and instances. In this analytical and logical mental framework, ideology and national interests are separate and distinct, each being two 'universal' concepts that have the capability and capacity to correspond with countless instances. For this reason, they fall under the category of 'universal' conceptions, but establishing a relationship between them requires affirmation, and it is possible that their relationship corresponds with reality or not.

## 2.4. Second Intelligibles

Another logical topic related to the article's hypothesis is the subject of "primary intelligibles, logical second intelligibles, and philosophical second intelligibles." In second intelligibles, there are two terms: the term used by philosophers ("hokma") and the term used by logicians ("manteqi"). To understand these two terms, it is necessary to know that whenever something predicates another thing, two aspects are abstracted: one is "attributes" ("arz") and the other is "predication" ("etsaf"). When these two aspects are assessed with respect to two entities—external and mind—the possible forms become four, in the following way:

1. Both "arz" and "etsaf" are external, such as blackness and whiteness, which are attributes of objects. Just as their "arz" is external, the "etsaf" of those predicates is also external.
2. Both "arz" and "etsaf" are in the mind, such as universality and particularity. The "arz" of universality or particularity over a human is in the mind, just as the "etsaf" of humans to them is also in the mind because humans are external, not universal and particular, but rather individual and specific.
3. "Arz" is in the mind and "etsaf" is external, such as the "arz" of nobility and virtue over Zaid and Bakr, where the medium for "arz" is the mind because nobility and virtue are external entities not attached to Zaid and Bakr. However, the "etsaf" of Zaid to nobility and the "etsaf" of Bakr to virtue are external.
4. The opposite of the third case, which is imaginable but does not exist, because if "arz" is external, the "etsaf" of the predicate to the predicate subject must also be external.

In logic, the first category is called "primary philosophical intelligibles," the second is "logical second intelligibles," and the third is "philosophical second intelligibles" (Shanahan, 2015).

Second intelligibles are one of the types of imagination and refer to the intelligibles that are derived from observing primary intelligibles and with careful consideration of them, such as universality, particularity, essence, and attribute, for the mind. In fact, second intelligibles do not have external instances and exist only in the mind. After a large number of universal forms like human, horse, flower, tree, sweetness, sourness, blackness, and whiteness have been obtained by the mind, it progresses to a higher level and moves from primary intelligibles to second intelligibles, which are entirely abstract and pure. In this framework, to clarify the mind, the concept of "pigeon" can be used as an example. "Pigeon" is a universal concept that holds true in individuals, and any such concept is called a "type," which is more abstract from the instances of "pigeon," because a pigeon has external individuals and instances. Whereas a "type" is merely a mental concept and has no external instance. We can point to a pigeon, cat, or sparrow and say these are pigeons, cats, or sparrows, but there is nothing external to point to and say these are "types." Thus, "types" and similar concepts are called logical second intelligibles (Hasanvand, 2024).

Therefore, logical second intelligibles are not derived from primary intelligibles that are obtained from the external world, because they themselves are purely mental and their instances are also mental. However, logical second intelligibles differ from philosophical second intelligibles in that, in philosophical second intelligibles, the predication is external and the attributes are mental. For example, if Ali becomes ill, Ali externally is described as ill, and the illness predicates upon him. Since we have become aware of his illness, this predication and attributes are also obtained in our mind. That is, in our mind, Ali is described as ill and the illness predicates upon Ali. Here, the relationship between subject and predicate is called "predication," and the relationship between predicate and subject is called "attribute." In the case of philosophical second intelligibles, such as "essence," "possibility," and "necessity," the predication of objects to them is external. For instance, we say "a tree is a thing" or "a tree is possible in existence" or "the heat of fire is necessary and obligatory." This means that the external tree is described by essence or possibility, and the heat of fire is described by "necessity." These intelligibles, although they are not primary intelligibles, are true of objects in the external world. Therefore, philosophical second intelligibles are, on one hand, unlike primary intelligibles which are derived from perceptions, and on the other hand, unlike logical second intelligibles, which have their capacity for truth only in the mind, yet curiously, despite not being derived through the senses and not having independent external instances, they are true of objects (Khalilzad, 2024).

Primary intelligibles are concepts that are common among all people and their initial conception is of things that exist externally, such as humans and animals. Therefore, the characteristics of primary intelligibles are that their abstraction is from the external world, and their instances are external, and each of them, like humans and trees, are separate from one another.

Based on this, real concepts and primary intelligibles, unlike nominal concepts and secondary intelligibles, do not have their instances as either external existences, non-existence, or mental existence, and therefore, they can exist both externally and in the mind. In contrast, nominal concepts have their instances not from three external states and either have external existence, do not have external existence, or have mental existence (Tabatabaei, 2043, p. 314).

Thus:

- Ontological Concepts are conceptual frameworks that refer to the essence and being of objects and define their existence boundaries, whereas second intelligibles describe the manner of existence of objects.
- Ontological Concepts are concepts for which partial forms can be found in the imagination, and their relationship with external realities is one of "identity" and "sameness." However, second intelligibles are not associated with partial forms and do not have an identity relationship with external realities.
- Our Ontological Concepts have separate external instances. That is, for the number of primary intelligibles, there exist corresponding external realities, and it is not possible to find two primary intelligibles that exist in one being. For example, humans and trees have their

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separate existences, but second intelligibles do not have corresponding instances; that is, they do not have an independent existence in the presence of other objects, and it is not that the mind has found them and created their partial and universal forms in the mind (Hosseinizadeh, Pishin, 2004, p. 78).

Based on this, second intelligibles are always in the form of attributes and judgments of other objects, and the mind acts passively in the creation of primary intelligibles. In other words, the mind functions somewhat like a camera.

If the camera lens is closed, the film inside does not create any image on its own, and only when an object is placed opposite the camera lens does an image form on the film. In reality, the multiplicity of primary intelligibles is a result of the multiplicity of sensations, but in second intelligibles, the mind is active, and consequently, their multiplicity does not depend on the multiplicity of sensations. It is possible for the mind, upon encountering a single reality, to create multiple second intelligibles within itself (Ibid., p. 79).

### 2.5. Relationship Between Ideology and National Interests in Foreign Policy from a Logical Perspective

Firstly, it must be noted that the concept of "benefit" or "interest" is a general philosophical concept that can be applied to external objects. Although it may not have the capacity to be applied externally like logical second intelligibles, "benefit" or "interest" has the capacity for predication in the external world. On the other hand, the term "benefit" has the capacity for rational inquiry, unlike logical and even obvious concepts, because logical concepts can only be analyzed within the mind, and obvious concepts, such as inherent concepts, do not allow for derivation. Therefore, when "benefit" is mentioned, the mind is compelled to examine the subject rationally and to determine why and how it is beneficial. Also, within the framework of general philosophical concepts that can be applied to external objects, it should be noted that the abstraction of these concepts requires mental exploration and comparison of objects with one another. For example, the concept of cause and effect is abstracted after comparing two things where the existence of one is dependent on the existence of the other and, considering this relationship, is abstracted.

Philosophical concepts of this type are attributes of external existence, meaning existence outside the mind, and describe the mode of existence of external objects, unlike obvious concepts which consider the essence of objects. Therefore, concepts like "benefit" or "interest":

- **First,** they are formed in comparison with the concept of "harm."
- **Second,** they can be applied to multiple instances outside the mind.
- **Third,** the mind is capable of evaluating their costs and benefits both mentally and externally, but the relationship between "benefit" and "ideology" requires a form of general and philosophical epistemology.

Mohammad Reza Mazafar in *Logic* states that if the intellect considers the totality of the predicate and the subject, in such a way that the essence of the subject is not considered alone and without the predicate, but because it is described by universality, then the subject, being described by a universal predicate, is called a philosophical general concept. This is because the predicate is a logical attribute, and thus its existence is only within the intellect and mind, as anything existing outside the mind must be a real particular (Mozaffar, 1983).

In this context, concepts such as "benefit" and "ideology" are not like "type" or a philosophical universal, where their instances have completely separate boundaries in terms of both attributes and predications. As mentioned in the previous sections of the dissertation, these two concepts inherently possess definitional difficulties, and their instances are not easily subject to philosophical consensus. It is obvious that the relationship between the two concepts is extremely ambiguous and thus inherently problematic. Moreover, in the case of logical second intelligibles, which cannot be applied to external objects and only have processing capacity within the mind, the matter of correspondence and logical relation becomes even more difficult, because both predication and attribute are obtained within the mind, and thus they are purely mental meanings that have no place outside the mind. In this sense, the concept of "benefit," regardless of the angle from which it is viewed, is a philosophical universal and can be applied to instances like "profit." Furthermore, "benefit," despite its mental position in the external world, has the capacity for predication. On the other hand, this term has the capacity

for rational inquiry and, unlike logical and obvious concepts, has an analytical philosophical nature regarding how and why it is beneficial. Based on this, the concept of "benefit" is a dependent variable, and its independent variables are anthropology, ontology, and epistemology—concepts that form the epistemic foundation of ideology. In this sense, "benefit," being a general philosophical concept, arises from ideology. From this perspective, the relationship between ideology and national interests is a fundamental and superimposed relationship. The complexity of this relationship goes beyond the fundamental and superimposed relationship because if the philosophical nature of "benefit" is accepted, it no longer matters whether a person holds a metaphysical stance in ontology or not, whether they are able to explain the existential distinction between objects or not.

The reason is that ideology and individuals' worldviews do not hold special importance in determining whether something is beneficial or not; rather, the importance lies in the type of acquisitive benefits that an individual, group, or ideological movements seek. Therefore, benefits will differ depending on whether they are anthropological, religious, philosophical, empirical, or mystical, although they may share some commonalities. But fundamentally, "benefits" will not have an impact. Herein, in intellectual systems, based on epistemology and the specific work of epistemology, "national interests" will also be distinguished. Accordingly, in a logical analysis, "national interests" are dependent on "ideology," because the term "national" is an attribute of "benefits" and does not cause a fundamental change in their conceptual division. It only creates differences and distinctions in their inclusivity and environmental comparative and interdependent elements. It is obvious that in this mental framework and based on this premise, the analysis of the relationship between instances of national interests and ideology, although multi-step, ultimately ends fundamentally in ideology (Ebrahimi, 2009).

## 3.    Discussion and Conclusion

### 3.1.    Ideology Concept

The concept of ideology is one of the two most peripheral concepts found in the human sciences. This characteristic arises, on one hand, from the existence of numerous theoretical approaches that attribute various functions and meanings to ideology, and on the other hand, because ideology is a concept that is deeply intertwined with political objectives. Additionally, from one perspective, ideology can be perceived in an extremely negative way as a critical concept based on a form of false consciousness that distorts human understanding of social realities in every possible way. From another angle, ideology can be viewed positively as a translation of a society's worldview, constructed within a nation, giving it identity and defending its interests. Furthermore, ideology can be mental, in which case it is considered a distorted form of consciousness that is incapable of grasping reality, or it can be objective, where ideology acts as a deception arising from reality itself, misleading the perceiving or recognizing mind. Moreover, from the perspective of some, ideology is a limited concept that does not encompass all cultural subjects, whereas others consider ideology to be the constitutive foundation of all forms of social consciousness, including culture. Additionally, some view ideology as a system of manifestations that people act upon without recognizing it, thereby making ideology deeply unconscious. Conversely, others place ideology alongside science, defining it as a preconceived notion that creates obstacles in the path of scientific understanding of reality, alters the real image of objects, and creates an imaginary world. Others place ideology alongside utopia, believing that these two concepts distort realities because ideology hides reality while utopia goes beyond its limits. In this sense, utopia is a mode of thinking that is obsolete concerning the present time, and ideology is another mode of thinking that moves ahead of time; thus, these two concepts are not in balance with each other. Additionally, ideological foreign policy is much more extreme and severe than the goals of idealist foreign policies, because idealists at least believe in the natural alignment of interests, whereas ideological systems do not submit to international institutions or their theoretical foundations, believing that international institutions are built on force and power. In contrast, idealists believe that international

institutions result from the growth of human rationality and the democratic and peace-seeking characteristics of societies and nations. Ultimately, in the foreign policies of some countries like the former Soviet Union, ideology is foundational and directive, while in some countries like the United States, it is superimposed and facilitative.

### 3.2. National Interests

National interests serve as the connecting link between the policymaking and orientation processes of the state-nation system in the realm of international relations. This concept, which some refer to as "national will," is designed in today's world in such a way that no one can benefit at the expense of others. By this measure, Heidari Bol, a thinker of the English school, acknowledges that the standard of national interests does not provide any specific assistance in prescribing or interpreting state behavior unless it conforms to international norms. The application of this concept in international relations is such that Morgenthau regards it as an eternal and contemporary standard, considering it a sustainable criterion. Simultaneously, national interests are both a key measure for assessing the success of foreign policy and the fulfillment of the people's opinions regarding the decision-making institution's preference system. The problem arises when national interests differ in democratic and non-democratic systems, leading to international incoherence. This occurs because, in a democratic country, the meaning of national interests is largely the reflection of their implication. If we set aside the postmodern notion of the fluidity of meaning, this is not the case in a non-democratic government. In a democratic country, the multitude of opinions, polls, parties, and civil society aggregate national interests, whereas in non-democratic systems, due to the lack of these conditions, the meaning is not a clear reflection. However, in the Islamic Republic of Iran, national interests are a composite concept of national identity and Islamic identity, which cannot be separated. From this perspective, it is closer to constructivism, where material and non-material interests merge because they arise from the value system. In this framework, national interests will be synonymous with ideological interests, and consequently, foreign policy will be ideology-driven, duty-based, and goal-oriented.

### 3.3. The Relationship Between Ideology and National Interests

The relationship between ideology and national interests is not limited solely to the logical relationship between predicate and subject or to simple and conditional propositions. Instead, from various angles, these relationships can be examined, including: the relationship of idealism and realism, the relationship between concept and instance, strategic and tactical relationships, theoretical and practical relationships, mental and objective relationships, comparative and interactive or negation and affirmation relationships, desirable and existing relationships, whole and part relationships, and divergent and convergent relationships. Naturally, the multiplicity of relationships indicates the extensive interweaving of these two concepts in the field of foreign policy and, on the other hand, presents profound challenges that hinder the optimal understanding of ideology and national interests. One of these challenges is the lack of a meaningful understanding of national interests. It is natural that a multiple and multifaceted understanding of national interests leads to instability in foreign policy design.

### 3.4. Logical Discovery of the Relationship Between Ideology and National Interests in the Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The logical discovery of the relationship between ideology and national interests in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran requires delving into more fundamental aspects of logic, such as the study of terms, concepts, intelligibles, predicates, significations, imaginations, affirmations, propositions, and fourfold logical relationships. Particularly because, in logic, the impression of the forms of objects in the mind entails the grasping of the cognitive term and the semantic integrity of related concepts. In this framework, logic is an empirical and acquisitive science through which one can establish a logical relationship between imagination and affirmation and apply the concept to its instance. Without imagination, a predicate-subject relationship cannot be established, and without affirmation, a logical proposition cannot be constructed. Furthermore, the discussion of third intelligibles, especially logical second intelligibles aimed at understanding the predication and attributes of propositions and their abstraction and

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abstraction, found indispensable necessity. Otherwise, in the intellectual confinement, the hypothesis of the dissertation would become impossible and sterile due to the lack of evidence and criteria for measuring logical relationships, because logical second intelligibles are the ultimate criterion for distinguishing the inherent and internal contradictions of propositions, and the predicates, attributes, and judgments of objects all refer to the mind and have no relationship externally. Although the concepts of "benefit" and "ideology" are considered among general philosophical concepts and, despite their ontological complexity, are applicable to many. In the discussion of signification, since the concepts of ideology and national interests do not have inherent attributes, they fall outside the "rational" relationship of signification. Moreover, because they are of the nature of nominal perceptions, they fall outside "natural" signification as well. Furthermore, since they do not have a predication-indication relationship, logically, they fall outside "conditional" signification, and since they do not have any real meanings, they also fall outside "juristic" signification.

*3.5.  The Fourfold Relationships:*

The fourfold relationships represent the depiction of the four aforementioned conditions in the discussion of relationships, which, apart from fundamental logical discussions, have a meaningful relationship with the proof and alignment of the article's hypothesis.

**a) Equality:**
The relationship of equality is the relationship between two concepts whose instances are entirely common to each other. For example, "human" and "rational" have an equality relationship. In this situation, reverting these concepts to two logical propositions necessitates universality, meaning:

- Every rational being is human, and every human is rational.
- They are similar to two completely overlapping circles.
- The negation of two equal concepts is also equality, meaning "non-human" and "non-rational."

**b) Contradiction:**
This relationship exists between two concepts that have no common individual or instance. For example, "plant"

and "iron" have no commonalities and, in terms of similarity, are the exact opposite of equality—where their circles are perpendicular to each other, the circles in the relationship of contradiction are separate and do not overlap or intersect.

The negation of the contradiction relationship, similar to universality and particularity in essence, is partial contradiction. For instance, "existent" and "non-existent" have the negation of "non-existent" and "not non-existent." In some cases, it is similar to universality and particularity in essence, such as "human" and "stone," whose negations are "non-human" and "non-stone," establishing a universality and particularity in essence relationship because these two are separated in the concept of "horse" and distance themselves from each other in reality (Amiri, 1991).

**c) Universality and Particularity in Essence:**
Based on the relationships between predicates and concepts with external instances, the relationship of universality and particularity in essence is the relationship between two concepts where one encompasses all instances of the other, while the other includes only some instances of the first concept. In other words, according to Aristotle's interpretation and metaphorically referring to the concepts of "upper" and "lower" instead of universality and particularity in essence. For example, "walnut" and "nut" in the discussion of universality and particularity in essence can be expressed through several logical propositions:

- Every walnut is a nut. (Universal affirmation with a particular subject)
- Some nuts are walnuts. (Particular affirmation with a universal subject)
- Some nuts are not walnuts. (Negative particular affirmation with a universal subject)
- They are similar to two circles where one is smaller than the other, and the smaller circle is inside the larger circle.
- The negation of the relationship between universality and particularity in essence is the opposite of universality and particularity in essence, meaning the negation of "horse" and "animal" is "non-horse" and "non-animal," establishing a universality and particularity in essence relationship because these two are separated in the concept of "horse" and distance

themselves from each other in reality (Amiri, 1991; Bakhshi & Bayat, 2008).

**d) Universality and Particularity in Relation to Essence:**

The relationship of universality and particularity in relation to essence is the relationship between two concepts that have common instances only in some cases. In this case, each of them is universal from one direction and particular from another. For example, the relationship between "whiteness" and "pigeon" allows for the extraction of four logical propositions:

- Some pigeons are white. (Particular affirmation)
- Some pigeons are not white. (Negative particular affirmation)
- Some white things are pigeons. (Particular affirmation)
- Some white things are not pigeons. (Negative particular affirmation)

They are similar to two intersecting circles that overlap in some parts and do not overlap in others.

- The negation of the relationship between universality and particularity in relation to essence is partial contradiction. That is, the negation of "pigeon" and "whiteness" in the existing example is "not a pigeon" and "not white," making no universality imaginable.

Following the discussion of "concept" and "instance" and their relational and referential aspects, whether universal or particular or hypothetical or real, the "fourfold relationship" or fourfold ratios become a logically comprehensive topic addressed in the initial discussions of the conceptual framework. Regardless of the main proponent of this topic, namely Aristotle, the first to independently present this discussion—the types of relationships that two universal concepts might have with each other—was Abu Hamid al-Ghazali in "Meyar al-Ilm fi al-Mantiq." Subsequently, Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, Afzal al-Din Khonj, Najm al-Din Katibi, and Siraj al-Din Armawi elaborated on this topic in detail. Al-Ghazali, however, only referred to three relationships: equality, universality and particularity in essence, and universality and particularity in relation to essence, without mentioning the relationship of contradiction. The reason for this is al-Ghazali's explicit intention to describe the existing relationships between meanings that are compatible and share common instances. In contrast, the relationship of contradiction exists between two concepts that do not share any common instances, making their relationship one of non-relation. Consequently, after al-Ghazali, the relationship of "contradiction" remained enduring and, even in recent logic, the discussion of "partial contradiction" is processed in the context of negating propositions.

**Authors' Contributions**

Authors contributed equally to this article.

**Declaration**

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

**Transparency Statement**

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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The authors report no conflict of interest.

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In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

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