



Sociological Study of the Policy Approaches of the Ninth and Tenth Governments of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Field of Urban Women

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Abstract:

The presence of women in society and their rights within the family has consistently been a challenging subject throughout the political, social, and cultural history of Iran. The significance of women's demands in Iranian society is such that many political movements have managed to sway women's votes by claiming to be responsive to these demands during election campaigns. The escalating demands of women and inadequate responsiveness to these aspirations have raised concerns, revealing the government's limitations in addressing women's issues. This research delves into the sociological study of the policy approaches of the ninth and tenth governments in the realm of women, given their prominence as the most influential political forces in Iran. The data for this study were extracted through document analysis of official reports from the Women and Family Affairs Deputy of the mentioned governments and the Fifth Five-Year Economic, Social, and Cultural Development Plan approved by the parliament. The content was analyzed using thematic content analysis, identifying five policy approaches: prescriptive policies, supportive policies, attention to economic participation, top-down policymaking, and cultural groundwork in the policies of the ninth and tenth governments. These administrations exhibit a minimalistic view of women's roles, with motherhood being the most emphasized and highlighted female role.

Keywords: *Women, Ninth and Tenth Governments, Family, Policy-making, Female Roles.*

Introduction

The onset of modernization and reformist movements in Iran during the Qajar era can be considered a historical moment when the "other," in the form of the "foreign woman," emerged against the backdrop of the "native woman." This foreign woman presented a different manifestation of "being a woman," challenging familiar perceptions of women and introducing a serious confrontation with well-established norms. This marked the beginning of what is known as the "women's issue" in Iranian history, dating back to the 13th century A.H. and the 19th century A.D. (Moussavi, 2021: 55). The unveiling decree by Reza Shah later introduced another dimension to the problematic presence of women. The gender issue persisted until the 1979 Revolution. The idealized woman sought after by the 1979 Revolution was one based on Islamic values, standing against traditional constraints and injustices towards women, while simultaneously rejecting the Western woman. The idealized cultural context promoted by the family and society aimed to provide a platform for the comprehensive advancement of women within the framework of Islamic values. The active participation of women alongside men in the scenes of the revolution and the 8-year war demonstrated that religious spheres were more extensive than traditional frameworks that confined women to the home. Nevertheless, the post-revolutionary government, despite its special attention to the cultural sphere, failed to provide a

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proper response to the increasing demands of women. Subsequent political movements held varying perspectives on this matter.

The increasing demands of women across different social strata and the formation of sometimes contradictory positions regarding these demands by various ideological movements in different periods indicate that the issue of women is more political than cultural and social. For example, the Ministry of Women faced strong opposition in the seventh and eighth governments, while after the ninth and tenth governments, representing the same political movement, came to power, the first female minister was appointed. Thus, it seems that the relationship between governments and political movements can significantly impact various aspects of culture and daily life, especially for women.

The significance of culture for policymakers lies in its potential "as a means to implement known policies and what is politically necessary for society, driving society toward what is desirable for policymakers while simultaneously encompassing the elevation and promotion of cultural values" (Sharifi & Fazeli, 2012: 56). "For this reason, cultural changes in societies are heavily influenced by the discourse of various governments and their ideologies" (Yassini, 2020: 90). This paper is part of a larger study examining the approaches of various governments to the issue of women. The study of the approaches of the ninth and tenth governments in the field of women is significant due to their alignment with the ideologies of institutionalized thinking, which holds a significant portion of Iran's political power and can largely represent the dominant discourse in cultural policymaking.

Literature Review:

Numerous diverse studies have been conducted on cultural policymaking in Iran, and in the following, we delve into some of the most relevant ones on the subject.

Shiri and Hasan Ostad Ali (2014) in their article titled "Factors Influencing the Performance and Cultural Policymaking of the Ninth and Tenth Governments" conducted a survey-based research. They explored variables such as the recruitment of efficient managers in the country's major cultural decision-making, the policymaking approach of cultural management, the plurality of responsible institutions, the presence of cultural monitoring bodies, the enforceability of guidelines and memoranda, the expeditiousness in major cultural decisions at the national level, the systematic nature of decision-making, and the quantitative and qualitative coordination of cultural goals. The findings revealed a significant relationship between the performance and cultural policymaking of the ninth and tenth governments.

Research by PourAli and Feirahi (2016) in the article "Analysis of the Discourse of Cultural Policymaking in the Ninth and Tenth Governments of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Higher Education" indicates that cultural policymaking in higher education should not be incompatible with the dominant discourse in the field of science and university institutions. They argue that the discourse of the ninth and tenth governments, centered around Islamicization of universities and emphasis on an executive and managerial approach to achieve it, despite its accessibility, failed to garner the necessary credibility within the university. Jalali (2022), in the article "Incompatible Worlds: Analysis of Cultural Policies in the Areas of Women and Youth in Iran," examines the incompatibility of cultural policies in the areas of women and youth with the attitudes of the audience and the contexts of their formation in Iran. The study attempts to demonstrate which subcultures and groups are aligned with the hidden biases in these policies. Comparing the official authority of culture with unofficial social authorities indicates incompatibility between policies and audience attitudes in three selected research topics: "women's clothing," "lifestyle," and "marriage style." The policies emphasize traditional lifestyle, neglecting other existing styles in society. Abaei Fijani and others (2022) state in their research article "The Impact of Globalization on the Transformation of the Concept of Citizenship Discourse in Hashemi to Ahmadinejad Governments" that during the Hashemi era, due to the necessities of post-war reconstruction, the Islamic Republic system moved towards accepting the imperatives of globalization.

The Khatami government elevated the pragmatism discourse of the Hashemi era to its peak and achieved the best international relations for the Islamic Republic governments. However, with Ahmadinejad coming to power, a return to anti-Western idealism in foreign policy and acceptance of the imperatives of globalization returned to the agenda. In the ninth and tenth governments, we witness the breakdown of differentiations and distinctions approved by the political modernity essence, an authoritarianism type, an expansion of government intervention, further limitation and weakening of citizens' political rights, and a backward step in the field of citizenship rights to some extent. This point indicates that the Islamic Republic system, due to its ideological foundations, cannot move towards consolidating modern citizenship rights. Zargham Afshar, Sheikhi & Gheidarlou (2023) in their article "Pathology of Policy-making in Iran with Emphasis on Social Affairs," focusing on social governance, aim to revitalize social governance using a functional approach and employing an institutional model in social policymaking. They analyze and refine the conceptualization of social governance and distinguish it from other domains. With an emphasis on social governance, they highlight the main theoretical reasons and approaches that relegate social governance from the theoretical domain and marginalize it from the position of policymaking. Finally, by presenting a defined mechanism, they demonstrate how considering social dimensions in policymaking can lead to the formation of social governance by utilizing the capacities of the public domain, streamlining the bureaucratic system, reducing the gap between government and the people, and coordinating tangible and mental patterns in the cultural sphere.

In this regard, there are also other foreign studies that we will explore:

Kugo (2020), in an article titled "General Principles of Cultural Policy until 2020," criticizes the national cultural principles in Estonia and proposes new cultural policies to preserve and sustain the existing culture on the one hand and innovate and open up cultural perspectives on the other. The results of this research suggest that Estonia, to achieve greater success in cultural policymaking and its implementation, should steer cultural policymaking towards addressing not only Estonian culture but also the cultures of other ethnicities residing in Estonia. According to the findings of this research, the general principles of cultural policy are based on the belief that culture is one of the main factors in achieving many goals at the local and national levels.

Ahmed and Mohiuddin (2022), in an article examining the role of women members of the Prishad Union, the lowest unit of local government in Bangladesh, investigate the reserved seats. The number of women representatives has increased several times over the years, with most of them being elected from reserved seats. Officially, a member with a reserved seat has a larger electoral constituency than a member with a general seat and almost has similar powers and responsibilities. However, in practice, there is a significant gap between what the laws state and what happens on the ground. Despite their increased presence, women elected from reserved seats for the Prishad Union often find it challenging to feel their presence due to various reasons, especially being ignored by their male colleagues.

Goldfinch, Yamamoto and Aoyagi (2023), in their research, examine the importance of participation, performance, and the process in local government in Japan. They conducted an online survey with 3,100 respondents in Japan to investigate the level of trust in three levels of local government. They found that political participation is not accompanied by trust in local government, and civic participation is associated with the lowest level of government. Satisfaction with services has no direct relationship with trust in local government. However, positive perceptions of procedures and policies play a more critical role in building trust. As previous studies suggest, policymaking in the cultural sphere can face various challenges and changes that can affect the position of women. On the other hand, all Iranian and foreign governments are seeking to understand the realities and upcoming policies to prevent the creation of gaps or an increase in disparities between policymakers and policy recipients. In the following, this research examines the approaches of the ninth and tenth governments in the women's field.

Method:

Documentary methods fall into the category of non-intrusive and non-reactive methods because, unlike other methods such as observation and interviews, the fundamental problem in collecting

information is eliminated when using documentary methods since the information is already available. Moreover, this method is exempt from significant problems that arise in experimental research or even interviews (Saroukhani, 2007: 254-255).

In this study, the fifth five-year development plans for economic, social, and cultural development were initially examined as strategic documents and policy guidelines of the ninth and tenth governments. All articles and clauses directly or indirectly related to the women's domain were extracted. Subsequently, the government's performance, according to official government reports, under the institution related to women's affairs, known during Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's government as the Deputy for Women and Family Affairs, responsible for policymaking in the women's domain, was investigated.

Data were analyzed using content analysis method. Initially, for the categorization of each action under investigation, a primary code was assigned. To enhance the credibility of coding, the data were reviewed by two other coders. After confirming the similarity of coding, the final themes were determined.

Findings:

To examine the government approaches of Mr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, first, the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1390-1394), approved on 15/10/1389, was examined, and all matters directly or indirectly related to women were extracted. This law consists of 235 articles and 192 clauses in 9 chapters. The first chapter is about Islamic-Iranian culture, the second chapter about science and technology, the third chapter about social issues, the seventh chapter about defense, political, and security issues, the eighth chapter about legal and judicial matters, and the ninth chapter about the budget and oversight, where in the fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters, there is no mention of the role or impact on women. As is evident in the order of chapters, the conservative government gives special attention to Islamic-Iranian culture, considering it even more important than science and technology and other policy areas. The table below illustrates the set of related laws and clauses.

Table (1) The Articles of the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan related to the issue of women

Related Contents in the Text	Subject of the Law Article	Law Article
non-Islamic, immodesty, decadence	Presenting the Islamic-Iranian Development Model	3
Role of Girls	Gender Role Differentiation through Education	15
Family	Comprehensive and Universal Health Services System	23 j
Household, Needy Classes	Basic Health Insurance Rights for Households	38
Women as Heads of Household	Empowerment of Individuals in Need	39
Family	Social Security Insurance for Families	42
Marriage, Strengthening the Family Foundation	Organization and Accreditation of Counseling Centers Aligned with Islamic-Iranian Culture	43
Mother, Wife, and Children of Veterans	(Preserving Dignity: Prioritizing the Provision of Financial Resources, Opportunities, Facilities, and Privileges to Veterans	44
Culture of Chastity and Hijab, Strengthening the Family Foundation	Support for Resistance Ranks of Women in Community Mobilization	196
Chastity and Hijab	Implementation of a Comprehensive Plan for the Culture of Modesty and Veiling	209
Families of Poor Prisoners	Addressing Livelihood Issues of Impoverished Families of Prisoners	211
Women, Family and Women's Affairs Center	National Document for the Security of Women and Children in Social Relationships	227
Family Foundation, Women, Family and Women's Affairs Center	Comprehensive Development Program for Women's Affairs	230

As shown in Table 1, Article 3, Clause 2 of the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (2011-2015) prohibits the design, production, distribution, and provision of cultural, artistic, cinematic, and media

services and products, as well as handicrafts that promote non-Islamic, immodesty, and decadence. In this regard, femininity is represented in the context of non-Islamic, immodesty, and decadence. Article 15, Clause b, emphasizes the formulation and improvement of qualitative indicators, especially in the fields of humanities, specifically in the fields of Quran, tradition, and interdisciplinary studies, with a focus on incorporating the role of girls and boys. It is foreseeable that, instead of relying on academic institutions, the religious seminaries may be utilized in other cases, as will be mentioned. Articles 23, 38, and 42 do not directly refer to women and girls, addressing households and families, placing women under the government's support in the health domain within the framework of the family concept. Article 39, Clause c, particularly emphasizes women heading households, aiming to empower individuals and groups in need, especially women heading households and people with disabilities, addressing their social and family-oriented programs using public budget resources and public assistance to ensure the social security rights of women heading households, orphans, and people with disabilities during the program's implementation years.

Article 43, concerning the organization and accreditation of counseling centers in line with Islamic-Iranian culture, emphasizes facilitating the marriage of young people and strengthening the foundation of the family. It requires obtaining a license based on the approved regulations by the Council of Ministers for the establishment and provision of any psychological-social counselling services. This clause aims to limit existing paradigms in scientific fields to Islamic-Iranian criteria, especially in the field of humanities, considering women in the context of marriage and family. In Article 44, the government focuses on the continuation, development, and promotion of the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom, prioritizing the allocation of financial resources, opportunities, facilities, and privileges to martyrs, fathers, mothers, spouses, and children of martyrs and veterans, prisoners, and individuals under guardianship. Naturally, mothers, women, and daughters of martyrs receive attention. In Chapter 7, Defence, Political, and Security Affairs, under Defence Affairs (Article 196) and Political-Security Affairs (Article 209), women are addressed within the context of chastity, hijab, and the strengthening of the family foundation, reflecting the security and political perspective on women's issues. In this regard, the Basij, not only as a cultural and popular institution but also as a quasi-military organization, is utilized. Article 211, Clause n, focuses on addressing the livelihood problems of low-income families of prisoners in collaboration with the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee, the Welfare Organization, and other relevant institutions. The term "destitute," which was included in the previous document, is removed. The Fifth Development Plan addresses women's issues with a minimal approach. In Chapter 9, Budget and Oversight, Article 227 obliges the government to prepare and formulate the "National Document on the Security of Women and Children in Social Relations" in collaboration with relevant organizations and institutions. This document aims to strengthen the family institution and the position of women in social fields, ensuring the legal and religious rights of women in all areas. Article 230, in collaboration with organizations and relevant agencies, requires the government to develop the "Comprehensive Development Plan for Women's and Family Affairs," covering the areas of family reinforcement, review of relevant laws and regulations, prevention of social harms, development and organization of economic-livelihood matters, with priority given to organizing home-based jobs for women heading households and disadvantaged women. Legal action is taken for the empowerment of women managers and elites, the development of the capabilities of grassroots organizations, the enhancement of the capabilities of women managers and elites, the development of international interactions, deepening religious beliefs, and reforming the administrative structure of women and family organizations. Clauses 227 and 230 are two provisions that explicitly address women's issues, and it is expected that the Women and Family Affairs Center will organize around the concepts of these two legal provisions.

In the next step, we will examine the government's performance in the Women and Family Affairs Center. In the previous government, this institution was called the Center for Women's Participation. With the advent of the ninth government and the presidential decree based on an idea rooted in the cultural and social beliefs and the central role of women in strengthening family relationships, the scope of this center expanded to cover women and family affairs as its primary focus. In this regard, on the 22nd of September 2005, Dr. Nasrin Soltankhah was appointed as the advisor on women's

affairs and the head of the Women and Family Affairs Center. Considering Dr. Soltankhah's membership in the Islamic Council of Tehran and her dual roles, Dr. Zahra Taebzadeh Noori was selected as her advisor and head of the Women and Family Affairs Center by the President on the 21st of February 2006.

In the tenth government, Maryam Mojtahedzadeh became the advisor on women and family affairs and held this responsibility from October 2009 to 2013. On the 14th of July 2013, the Women and Family Affairs Center was promoted to the Deputy for Women and Family Affairs of the President's Office, and the appointment decree changed, designating Maryam Mojtahedzadeh as the Deputy President in Women and Family Affairs.

The Women and Family Affairs Center considers the primary goals of the ninth government as "returning and relying on divine teachings and the saving grace of Islam as the most fundamental and effective way of societal growth." Changing the approach from global recommendations to high divine concepts is considered one of the foundational goals of the ninth government and, consequently, the fundamental principles in the policymaking of the executive domain related to women's issues. This is evident in the review of the ninth government's recognition of the prominent role of women in preserving the cultural foundations of the country. With the introduction of the blessed title of "Family" to the name and scope of activities of the Women and Family Affairs Center, the pursuit and discussion of honoring the personal and family identity of women became a supported and dignified matter. Following this approach, the field of activity in the area of women and family, with new duties described compared to previous responsibilities, has expanded, and in correspondence with these responsibilities, this institution has pursued a broad performance in the mentioned area (Women and Family Affairs Center, 2011: 16).

Table (2): Extracted Themes from the Performance of the Ninth and Tenth Governments

Themes	Number	Sub-themes	Number	Codes	Number
prescriptive policies	11	Attention to Religious and Revolutionary Values	10	Organization of Fashion and Clothing	1
				Deepening Religious Beliefs	5
				Attention to Modesty and Hijab	4
		Population Policy	1	Population Policy	1
Supportive Policies	21	Legal Support for Women	21	Reform of Women's Rights	2
				Reform of Women's Rights in the Family	19
		Attention to Various Classes	57	Support for Working Women	20
				Support for Mothers	17
				Support for Vulnerable Women	18
				Support for Elites	1
Support for Housewives	1				
Cultural Development from the Top	62	Attention to Women's Position in Society	53	Promotion of Civil Society Organizations	1
				Institutional Attention in the Government	23
				International Interactions	24
				Attention to Women and Family Affairs	1
				Examination of Women's Issues	1
				Increase Public Awareness	3
		Knowledge Generation in the Women's Area	9	Publication of Magazines	1
				Establishment of a Women's Information Bank	2
				Attention to Research	6
				Facilitation of Women's Employment	1
Attention to Women's Economic Participation	11	Attention to Women's Employment	11	Elimination of Gender Discrimination in Employment	1
				Attention to Women's Livelihood	4
				Support for Women's Employment	5

Themes	Number	Sub-themes	Number	Codes	Number
Cultural Infrastructure	25	Enhancement of Women's Empowerment	3	Enhancement of Women's Empowerment	۳
		Strengthening the Family Foundation	13	Strengthening the Family Foundation	۱۳
		Women's Awareness	3	Legal Support	1
				Legal Counseling	1
				Counseling Services	1
		Attention to Women's Leisure Time	6	Attention to Women's Health	2
				Attention to Women's Sports	2
Attention to Leisure Time	1				

The approach of prescriptive policies refers to a set of actions in which policymakers, instead of providing services to citizens in a one-sided relationship and intervening in their affairs, obligate them to a certain course of action. The comprehensive plan for the culture of hijab and chastity, as well as the executive regulations for organizing fashion and model clothing, are examples of such initiatives. The ninth and tenth governments, without presenting a comprehensive and practical definition, focus solely on the second part of it, aiming to establish social order and coherence through the management of women's bodies.

Population policies and increasing childbirths are among the measures falling under the duty-oriented policies. In this regard, incentive policies were proposed, but the challenge of financing these incentives presented a significant obstacle. Duty-oriented policies are mainly faced with long-term challenges. The persistence of the issue and the increase in challenges in these two specific areas testify to this claim.

Supportive policies are one of the most common policies in the Islamic Republic of Iran's governments. This section includes legal support through proposing amendments to laws and supporting various segments of women. Support for women heads of households, considered vulnerable segments of society, is the most prominent part of these policies. The most important actions of the ninth and tenth governments in this area are related to the establishment of the Comprehensive Empowerment, Employment, and Entrepreneurship Center for women and families and the approval of the Social Welfare Safety Umbrella regulation on 12/6/2005. Support for mothers, especially working mothers, is prominently addressed in the ninth and tenth governments. A clear example of this approach is the proposal to reduce working hours for working women in government offices from 44 to 36 hours per week without a reduction in salary and benefits, which was approved by the Council of Ministers in 2013.

Cultural shaping from above is another approach of the principled governments. This is accomplished by focusing on the status of women in society and generating knowledge in the field of women. The promotion of grassroots organizations, institutional attention in the government, such as the promotion of the Family Working Group to the National Women and Family Headquarters, and the promotion of the Women and Family Affairs Center to the Deputy for Women and Family Affairs, as well as international interactions, particularly among Muslim countries, are initiatives in this regard.

The issue of women's employment, one of the important demands of women after the 1979 Revolution, has received less emphasis in the ninth and tenth governments compared to other approaches. Most of the actions in supporting working mothers and providing facilities to increase women's presence in the family aim to support women's employment.

The main focus of the cultural infrastructure approach in the supporters of the principled government is attention to strengthening the foundation of the family. This is pursued through education and emphasis on religious teachings, including the Family Support Plan, which includes the National Mercy Plan, the National Informed Kindness Plan, and the Damaged Family Restoration Plan. The National Education Plan on Mahdaviat, with chapters covering Mahdaviat doctrines, fundamental

issues in various Imamate topics, the role of women in the government of Imam Mahdi (AS), and fundamental issues in Imamate studies, is an example of this approach. An noteworthy point in the cultural infrastructure approach in this period is the fading importance of the university institution and more utilization of seminaries (Tahora and Taloo), the Basij Resistance Force (Balagh and Basij Ambassadors programs), and the Revolutionary Guard (Saba and Shamim training courses).

Attention to sports and leisure time for women, as well as raising awareness among women through legal and family counseling and enhancing women's capabilities, are policies that have been addressed at the grassroots levels of society in line with cultural changes.

Discussion:

One of the significant examples of the distinction between the traditional and modern worlds is the issue of human rights in general and citizenship rights in particular. For instance, today, talking about concepts like "human rights" is highly esteemed and well-recognized in the new world, while in the old world, such concepts did not exist, not only globally but also nationally (Navabakhsh, 2019: 1-2). In the present world, a transformation has occurred in the relationship between rights and duties compared to the past. Essentially, we are witnessing two distinct paradigms in this area: one that considers humans as obligated or pre-modern and the other that considers humans as entitled or modern. Today, humans are not only seekers of understanding and discernment of their duties but also seekers of understanding and discovery of their rights. In the current era, even liberal governments, which advocate minimal intervention in social affairs, consider themselves obligated to the people. Therefore, what is expected in cultural policies related to women is more responsiveness to their demands rather than obligating them.

The ninth and tenth governments, supported by the principled movement, have adopted five major approaches in their policies: duty-oriented policies, supportive policies, top-down cultural shaping, attention to women's economic participation, and cultural infrastructure development. Duty-oriented policies, although encompassing 11 issues quantitatively, represent one of the most important approaches in these governments, as it is observed implicitly in the other four approaches. In this approach, the family-centered roles of women and the central role of women in the family, as well as strengthening the foundation of the family through chastity, hijab, and adherence to Islamic values, are emphasized. Women's presence in society is considered with the condition of preserving the foundations of the family, and any form of women's presence outside the family is perceived as a threat to the foundations of the family. The observance of chastity and hijab by women has allocated a significant portion of financial resources to this aspect.

In the summer of 2008, the law enforcement forces announced a budget of 103 billion Tomans for the chastity plan. This plan, approved by the highest legal authorities, including the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, was communicated to the presidency. The ninth and tenth governments directed all their budget and policies towards chastity and hijab to strengthen the family foundation. However, according to the statistics from the Deputy for Women and Family Affairs, the divorce rate has continuously outpaced the marriage rate from 2001 to 2016. The Fifth Development Plan, with a gender-biased view towards women and reducing women's issues to chastity and hijab, interprets hijab and chastity as feminine matters and only addresses the governance duties of women. The security, supervisory, and controlling gaze on women increasingly stands out in this document.

The excessive emphasis on traditional roles for women, such as household management, serves as an escape from women's social presence, especially women's employment. This is a consequence of the government's failure to create employment opportunities for youth and eliminate half of the population's demand in the job market. While the government emphasizes women's family-centered roles, supportive laws for women within the family are also facing challenges. In September 2008, a proposal to amend civil laws was submitted to the government. However, after more than two years of final approval, the issue was excluded from the agenda because it was deemed inappropriate to amend some of the current provisions. In conclusion, the ninth and tenth governments have approved and

supported traditional roles for women, particularly motherhood, neglecting other aspects of women's identity.

Conclusion:

The ninth and tenth governments, based on their non-conciliatory stance on tradition and modernity, emphasize the traditional position of women, and they view the "change of perspective from global recommendations to divine ideals" as the "sole key" to solving the problems of Iranian women. This perspective calls for a profound reconsideration of the social sciences. The religious and military institutions become supportive arms of the government in the cultural field. International relations are increasingly moving towards Asian and Muslim countries.

In the major policies and actions considered for women, an independent position for women has not been seen, and they are perceived under the umbrella of family and household. Women are directly addressed by the government only in vulnerable and supportable situations, such as social issues or women heads of households. The government considers itself authorized to enter the private sphere of individuals to achieve its goals. Individuals are expected to align themselves with the government's objectives.

The growth trend of non-governmental organizations active in the field of women, which increased from 500 to 1100 cases by the end of the ninth government and remained the same until the end of the tenth government, indicates that Ahmadinejad's government, like the ideals of the utopian city planners, prefers a populist approach to cultural planning for the masses. The term "mass society" refers to a society in which organizations and groups that act as intermediaries between the people and the ruling elite are eliminated (Khashei, 2018: 32). On the one hand, since this government saw itself as responsive to the demands of the weaker segments of society, intellectuals and the middle class were neglected. Nevertheless, in terms of institutionalizing women in the government, important and appropriate actions have been taken. However, since the approach in these governments shifts from being women-centric to being family-centric, the question arises: where exactly is the field of women's agency? How is the independence and autonomy of women defined? Given the questioning of the female body in recent years, how is the concept of presence in the public practically defined?

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