



Framing as Lobbying with Limited Resources: A Conceptual Discussion On Contemporary Ethnic Lobbying in The US

Sınırlı Kaynaklarla Bir Lobicilik Yöntemi Olarak Çerçeveleme: ABD'deki Güncel Etnik Lobicilikle İlgili Kavramsal Bir Tartışma

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ABSTRACT

Due to the main characteristic of the American society as well as its political system, ethnic lobbying has become an important concept and activity in order to influence the domestic and foreign policy of the United States. By providing a conceptual discussion on the contemporary ethnic lobbying in the US, this article aims at demonstrating the importance of framing strategy for ethnic lobbying groups which have limited resources to promote their interests. The article reviews the existing literature on ethnic lobbying in the US by specifically considering the recent studies regarding the relatively new lobbying groups. Consequently, it argues that framing strategy can become an effective lobbying strategy not only for the lobbies that have access to the United States' system with an institutional existence in its capital but also for those attempting to gain access to the policymaking communities in this country. Additionally, in order to achieve their specific purposes, ethnic lobbies can apply to the methods of strategic framing and normative framing during their lobbying campaigns.

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ÖZ

Amerikan toplumunun kendine has toplumsal yapısı ve siyasal sistemi etnik lobiciliğin bir kavram ve eylem olarak önemini arttırmış ve ülkedeki etnik lobilerin bu yolla ABD'nin iç ve dış politikasına etkide bulunmalarına olanak sağlamıştır. Bu makale çerçeveleme (framing) yönteminin özellikle kısıtlı kaynaklara sahip etnik grupların lobi faaliyetlerindeki önemine dikkatleri çekerek kavramsal bir tartışma ortaya koymaktadır. ABD'deki etnik lobiciliğe dair mevcut literatürü yakın zamanda yapılan çalışmalarını da göz önünde bulundurarak inceleyen makale, çerçeveleme (framing) yönteminin sadece ABD'nin başkentinde fiziksel olarak bulunup politika yapım sürecine katılma imkânı elde edebilen etnik lobiler için değil aynı zamanda ülkeye giriş imkânı olmayan ve sınırlı kaynaklara sahip etnik lobiler için de önemli ve etkin bir lobicilik stratejisi olabileceğini iddia etmektedir. Bu kapsamda etnik lobilerin hedeflerine ulaşmak için hem stratejik hem de normatif çerçeveleme (framing) stratejilerini kampanyalarında kullandıkları görülmektedir.

1. Introduction

Ethnic lobbying is a concept and an activity mainly applied by ethnic groups to influence US foreign policy and involve in the domestic politics of the country. This is mainly because of the characteristic of the American society, which received many immigrants since its foundation and named as a "nation of immigrants" (Smith, 2000: 86). This has also brought the concept of multiculturalism due to the existence of different communities having divergent historical and ethnic backgrounds in the country (Çiftçi, 2020). Therefore, ethnic groups in the United States have an aim of interacting with the US governments in order to achieve the interests of their own

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communities or interests regarding their homelands through lobbying (Ambrosio, 2002a; Shain, 1994). This raises the question of what makes ethnic lobbying effective or successful in this country, and experts seek answers for this question.

Consequently, while some experts have constructed criteria for assessing the effectiveness or success of ethnic lobbies (Haney and Vanderbush, 1999), others have tested these criteria through the specific cases such as lobbying by the Hungarian Human Rights Foundation in the United States (Herner-Kovacs, 2013). However, these studies have a tendency to focus on the campaigns of ethnic lobbies that have plenty of resources, and have already access to the policymaking communities of the United States with their institutional existence in Washington D.C. (Ambrosio, 2002b). Recent studies have indicated that there are relatively new lobbying groups having no access to the policymaking communities until recently and they have gained access as a result of some unexpected developments i.e. conflict, civil war and the rise of existential security threats to the United States through their limited resources and lobbying strategies such as framing (Demir, 2023).

The aforementioned developments require reconsidering the question of what makes ethnic lobbying successful in the United States by paying attention to the new lobbying groups, and particularly their lobbying strategies since some of them have very limited resources and strategies. Therefore, this article approaches the question of what makes ethnic lobbying successful in the United States from a broader perspective by prioritizing the utilization of framing strategy. In other words, the article attempts to explain how framing strategy can become an only and important tool for ethnic groups which have limited resources and no access to the policymaking communities in the United States. By reviewing the existing literature on ethnic lobbying in this country and taking into consideration of the recent studies with regard to the relatively new lobbying groups, the article argues that framing strategy can become an effective lobbying strategy not only for lobbies that have access to the United States with an institutional existence in its capital but also for those attempting to gain access to the policymaking communities in this country.

Accordingly, the following section will provide definitions with regard to the concepts of ethnic lobby and ethnic lobbying. Then, factors for successful ethnic lobbying in the United States will be discussed in accordance with the existing literature on ethnic lobbying. Afterwards, the article will have a specific focus on framing as a lobbying strategy. Therefore, the concepts of frame and framing will be accounted for and the utilization of framing in the context of ethnic lobbying campaigns will be shown by sharing some successful examples from the existing and recent studies in this field. This will help to show that framing can become a strategy and effective tool for lobbies, which have limited resources or have no access to the policymaking community in the United States.

2. Ethnic Lobbying in the United States

Studies regarding ethnic lobbying mainly prioritize the analysis of lobbies and their lobbying campaigns in the United States by focusing on the political system and social fabric of the country. Before providing a definition for the concept of ethnic lobbying, there are two significant points to be known or addressed. First, concepts such as ethnic group, ethnic minority group, ethnic interest group, ethnic identity group and diasporic communities are generally used to describe ethnic lobbies (Rubenzer, 2008). Second, definitions over ethnic lobbying are pertinent to the approaches of experts to the term itself. Some experts, for instance, acknowledge ethnic lobbies as political organizations, ethnic interest or ethnic minority groups (Ambrosio, 2002a; Ambrosio, 2002b; Dietrich, 1999; Rubenzer and Redd, 2010; Smith, 2000), while others see them as diasporic communities (Herner-Kovacs, 2013; Shain, 1994).

In this regard, we can see definitions, which treat ethnic lobbies as “*political organizations established along cultural, ethnic, religious, or racial lines that seek to directly and indirectly influence U.S. foreign policy in support of their homeland and/or ethnic kin abroad*” (Ambrosio, 2002a, p.2). Another prominent definition of ethnic lobbies is based on communities; “*people with common national origin who reside outside a claimed or an independent home territory. They regard themselves or are regarded by others as members or potential members of their country of origin (claimed or already existing), a status held regardless of their geographical location and citizen status outside their home country*” (Shain, 1994: 814). As a result, ethnic lobbying refers to activities, strategies or methods that these lobbies applied to interact with the US governments (executive) or Congress (legislation) (Zarifian, 2018).

In spite of the existence of different definitions, there is a consensus among experts over two significant points regarding ethnic lobbies. First, ethnic lobbies or diasporic communities maintain important links with their home countries and they often have an aim of impacting US foreign policy on behalf of their own interests or the interests of their homelands (Ambrosio, 2002a, Deitrich, 1999; Garrett, 1978; Kirk 2008; McCormik, 2012; Shain, 1999, 1994;). Second, there are two types of lobbies in the United States. There are established lobbies such as pro-Israeli, Armenian, Greek and Irish lobbies and there are growing ones like the Cuban, Turkish, Mexican-American, African-American, Indian, Arab or Palestinian, and Eastern European lobbies since the end of the Cold War (Ambrosio, 2002a; Herner-Kovács, 2013; Marrar, 2009; McCormick, 2012; Shain, 1999; Zarifian, 2018).

Another significant debate about ethnic lobbies in the United States is whether the influence of ethnic lobbies is beneficial or harmful to the national interests of the country. Two points of views prevail in this debate. On the one hand, one group advocates that influence of ethnic lobbies on US foreign policy is harmful to national interests of the country (Huntington, 1997; Mearsheimer and Walt, 2007; Smith, 2000; Vanderbush, 2009). This group has three arguments. The first argument approaches the influence of ethnic lobbies from the perspective of foreign policy-making and its cohesiveness and it defends that ethnic lobbying prevents a coherent US foreign policy (Smith, 2000). The second one focuses on the topic of whose interests are more significant, whether the US or ethnic lobbies. In this regard, the second argument underlines that ethnic lobbies defend the interests of their own countries or the interests of people outside the United States, but not national interests of the United States (Huntington, 1997). The final argument defending the harmfulness of ethnic lobbies for the interests of the United States emphasizes that policies advocated by ethnic lobbies are not only potentially harmful to national interests of the country but also to the homelands of ethnic lobbies (Mearsheimer and Walt, 2007).

On the other hand, another group believes that ethnic lobbies are, indeed, beneficial to the interests of the United States (Ambrosio, 2002a; Garrett, 1978; Shain, 1999; 1994). This is the case, first, because the US can use its interaction with these communities to penetrate into their homeland politics (Garrett, 1978; Shain, 1994). Second, the influence of these communities on the US foreign policy depends on their embracement of American values such as pluralism, democracy, human rights and free-market economics. It means that these communities can play a role in presenting these American values in their homelands; and thus, contribute to the creation of democratic or pluralist countries (Shain, 1999). However, this article does not take a certain position on the harmful-beneficial debate regarding the influence of ethnic lobbies on the United States or its foreign policy. Instead, it attempts to explain the factors affecting successful ethnic lobbying by revising the existing literature and considering the new lobbying groups. Then, it aims at demonstrating that framing can provide lobbying opportunities not only for those having an

institutional existence in the country but also for ethnic groups which have limited resources and even have no access to the policymaking communities in the United States. Therefore, it is significant to identify factors affecting the effectiveness or success of lobbying campaigns in the United States.

3. Factors for Successful Ethnic Lobbying in the United States

Through the review of the existing literature on ethnic lobbying in the United States, Haney and Vanderbush (1999: 344-346) have constructed some criteria for the effectiveness of ethnic lobbies. They have encapsulated the organizational strength of an ethnic lobby and unity among its members, placement, participation in voting (or voting behaviour), access to the government, characteristics of mutual relationship between ethnic lobbies and US governments, and salience or resonance of the message conveyed or propagated by ethnic lobbies (Haney and Vanderbush, 1999, pp.344-345). Although these are highly significant criteria for successful ethnic lobbying, they mainly prioritize lobbies that have already access to the foreign or domestic policymaking communities and processes of the United States by having institutional existence in Washington D.C. (Ambrossio, 2002b).

However, there are relatively new lobbies, such as the Syrian Kurdish one, which had no access to the American policymaking circles until the fourth (March 2015) year of the Syrian civil war (Demir, 2023). It means that the aforementioned criteria need a proper revision by considering new lobbies or the ones attempt to access US politics by seizing some opportunities or moments depending on recent developments i.e. conflicts or civil wars. This article, therefore, provides a new conceptual debate on ethnic lobbying by introducing framing as a lobbying strategy for lobbies having limited resources and strategies in the context of factors affecting successful ethnic lobbying in the US.

As a consequence of the aforementioned review, the article has identified four main factors to be considered while discussing effective or successful ethnic lobbying in the United States. These factors are the impacts of international developments in the country (Ambrossio, 2002a; Deitrich, 1999; Pienkos, 2011; Shain, 1999; 1994; Swart, 1995), domestic factors such as the structure of society or political system (Smith, 2000), internal characteristics or organizational structures of ethnic lobbies (McCormick, 2012; Oswiecimski, 2013; Smith, 2000) and lobbying strategies (Dietrich, 1999; Garrett, 1978; Haney and Vanderbush, 1999; McCormick, 2012; Oswiecimski, 2013; Smith, 2000).

In the context of the first factor, there are two important periods in the aftermath of two serious international developments, the World War I and the Cold War, which impacted the effectiveness or success of ethnic lobbies in the United States. For instance, the announcement of the Fourteen Points of the President Woodrow Wilson, which included self-determination to all nations across the world following World War I encouraged the Eastern European communities and Irish groups and they commenced lobbying in the United States (Shain, 1999; Swart, 1995). The Eastern Europeans lobbied for recognition and support from the United States for independence of their countries (Pienkos, 2011, Shain, 1999). Similarly, the Irish movements/groups used the Fourteen Points, specifically the idea of “*self-determination*”, to influence the 1919 Peace Conference of the League of Nations on behalf of the utilization of the right of self-determination by Ireland (Swart, 1995).

Experts on ethnic lobbying agree that there were some opportunities for ethnic lobbies in the United States after the end of Cold War, which played a role in their effectiveness or successful campaigns (Ambrosio, 2002a; Dietrich, 1999; Shain, 1999; 1994). In this regard, Shain (1994: 812) draws attention to three factors that provided opportunities to ethnic lobbies in their attempts to

influence the US foreign policy-making process in the post-Cold War period. The first factor is the complicated situation in terms of distinguishing between friends and enemies of the United States with the collapse of the Soviet Union. The second one is the decline of the traditionalist US policymakers, who played key roles in the foreign policy-making during the Cold War. The last one is the support of the diasporic communities in the US for their homelands, particularly for the demands such as independence, self-determination or democratic changes in their homelands within the context of a drive towards democratization (Shain, 1994: 812).

Ambrosio (2002a) supports Shain's (1994: 812) idea that how the collapse of the Soviet Union increased the impact of ethnic lobbies in the policy-making process of the United States. He argues (2002a, p.8) that although there were mutual interests between ethnic communities and the United States against the Soviet Union, ethnic lobbies had limited impact on US foreign policy during the Cold War. However, in the wake of the Cold War, ethnic lobbies had an unparalleled chance to influence the US foreign policy, specifically on behalf of the targets in their home countries. There is also a consensus between experts that in the aftermath of the Cold War, ethnic lobbies managed to gain access to the policymaking communities and processes in the country (Ambrosio, 2002a; Dietrich, 1999; Shain, 1994). This has been explained through two facts; the new and flexible foreign policy reflexes of the United States towards other countries and the decline in the united foreign policy vision following the collapse of the Soviet threat (Dietrich, 1999).

The second factor affecting successful ethnic lobbying in the United States prioritizes the focus on domestic facts such as the social fabric or societal structure and political system of the United States. First of all, the American society has a special/distinctive characteristic, which is described as "*a nation of immigrants*". Therefore, this characteristic accelerates the participation of ethnic groups in policymaking due to the requirements of the rights for democratic citizenship afforded to them (Smith, 2000: 86). Additionally, the political system plays a crucial role in affecting successful ethnic lobbying in the country. The United States has a Presidential system, which includes the mechanism of checks and balances as well as the system of federalism (Storey, 2010). As a result, the United States Presidency shares power with the House of Representatives and Senate and this power sharing offers more access to different groups to influence the policy-making process (Coxall, 2001). Such a power sharing also strengthens the role of the individual Congressmen and Congresswomen, and by conducting direct relationship with these strong people, ethnic groups could also gain access to the policy-making process in US Congress (Shain, 1994).

The third factor impacting successful ethnic lobbying in the United States is associated with the organizational structures of ethnic lobbies. In this regard, the prominent example is the pro-Israeli, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). There is also a consensus among experts that AIPAC is one of the most effective lobbies in the United States. Therefore, its organizational structure has been taken as a model by experts to discuss the organizational structures of other ethnic lobbies (McCormick, 2012; Oswiecimski, 2013; Smith, 2000). This is because the organizational structure of AIPAC covers "*legally separate entities*" and these entities allow the lobby to divide its resources among educational activities and lobbying ones. In this way, it has been taken as a model in terms of its organizational structure for the foundation of the Cuban-American lobby (Haney and Wanderbush, 1999: 349), which is acknowledged as an ethnic lobby whose effectiveness in the United States is on the rise (Oswiecimski, 2013).

Some ethnic lobbying experts, for instance, approach the organizational structures of ethnic lobbies from the perspective of institutionalization by referring to the existence of "*specialized institutions*" (Smith, 2000: 109). These institutions require regulations, which detail the process of the election of leadership of the lobby and provide an atmosphere for a consensus on general policy

of the lobby during the discussions. Ultimately, such an institutionalization would provide organizational unity to a lobby. The organizational unity is also significant impression for ethnic lobbies in terms of becoming an effective part of the policymaking process, mobilizing members (voters), gaining organizational strength in the eyes of US policymakers and maintaining such impression/perception (Smith, 2000:110).

Some experts underline that group membership is another important criterion in the context of organizational structure. The size of a community or an organization, population and inhabitancy of this population, participation in political discussions and activism of groups are specified as characteristics of the organizational structure of a lobby (McCormick, 2012: 85). However, size might not always be a proper or meaningful criterion for effective or successful lobbying. This is because compared to the size of pro-Israeli lobbies, Armenian lobbies are relatively small. However, they are one of the most effective lobbies in the United States because of their motivation for taking position in policy discussions (McCormick, 2012: 78). In relation to the distribution of the roles among separate entities in a lobby and cooperation between these entities over a foreign policy discussion or participation in the discussions are important examples of an effective organizational structure for a lobby. In this regard, the size and the inhabitancy of the population of a lobby can become a significant matter when its population stays in a strategic place for the elections of the United States (Oswiecimski, 2013). As far as it has been seen, the institutionally well-organized lobbies can be effective or successful at influencing the policymaking process in the United States.

The fourth factor for effectiveness or success of ethnic lobbies in the United States pertains to their lobbying strategies. Ethnic lobbies apply a variety of lobbying strategies. In this regard, scholars in this area could focus on different lobbying strategies. For instance, Oswiecimski (2013: 48-49) classifies ethnic lobbying strategies into three categories. The first one is a lobbying based on elections. This includes voting and participation in election campaigns via financial support to the candidates. The second one is called indirect lobbying. This refers to mobilization efforts of ethnic lobbies to let their communities to interact with policymakers by writing letters or emails, sending petitions, visiting policymakers and organizing demonstrations or boycott campaigns. The last one is direct lobbying, which aims at convincing policymakers through face-to-face meetings.

From Garrett's standpoint, "*economic reprisal*" and using the potential votes of community members as "*a power of ballot box*" are other ethnic lobbying strategies (Garrett, 1978: 311). Each strategy could have weaknesses and strengths and, to some extent, affect the effectiveness or success of ethnic lobbies. According to Smith (2000: 95-129), voting, financing campaign, coalition building and agenda setting, monitoring policies and organizational body are key strategies for the effectiveness or success of ethnic lobbies. He specifically focuses on the organizational body because of three reasons. First, organizational body reflects the unification of the community as a coherent or powerful voice for strategic voting or insisting on a policy. Second, it helps with monitoring the policy-making process. Finally, organizational body offers a chance to an ethnic lobby for collaborating with other ethnic or social groups having similar interests (Smith, 2000: 109).

Cooperation between different ethnic lobbies or lobbying groups, which have similar interests, is also acknowledged as one of the significant lobbying strategies for successful ethnic lobbying. Ambrosio's (2002c:143) research has indicated that the agreement, which signed between the Turkish and Israeli governments in the 1990s, brought the cooperation between the Turkish and pro-Israeli lobbies in the United States. Such a cooperation helped the Turkish lobby to stand against the genocide claims of Armenian lobbies with the help of pro-Israeli ones and also contributed to the Turkish efforts over defending the position of Azerbaijan regarding the Nagorno-Karabagh issue between Azerbaijan and Armenia. In other words, such cooperation increased the effectiveness of Turkish lobby and brought some positive results for Turkey and Azerbaijan

(Ambrosio, 147-159). Likewise, there were some examples in which Armenian and Greek lobbies cooperated against the interests of Turkish lobby, which increased their effectiveness or success in terms of affecting the United States policies toward Turkey (McCormick, 2012). These examples indicate that having cooperation or forming a coalition with more effective lobbies in the United States might also overcome the problems such as capacity or size of ethnic lobbies.

There are also other lobbying strategies such providing information, policy analysis and framing, which could increase the chances of ethnic lobbies in terms of having successful lobbying campaigns in the United States. In general, ethnic lobbies have some experts regarding specific foreign policy issues and these experts generally prepare policy analysis papers or reports for policymakers as a way of grabbing their attention (McCormick, 2012). Through providing information and policy analyses to policymakers, ethnic groups share their knowledge regarding the developments in their homelands or issues root from these developments, which might be related to foreign policy of the United States since policymakers do not have enough time to follow these developments and issues due to their busy schedules (Ambrosio, 2002b). But ethnic lobbies could use these strategies to manipulate the reality regarding the issues in their homelands as seen through the case of Armenian lobby over the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict, which presented the Armenian aggression against Azeris as the aggression of Azeris (Ambrosio, 2002b: 32).

The aforementioned strategies also help ethnic lobbies observe the policy-making process in the United States. In this process, ethnic groups could disseminate supplementary information, organize letter-writing campaigns, and they could be followers of legislation process and could support or oppose candidates during elections (Ambrosio, 2002a: 2). In this way, ethnic lobbies involve in the policymaking process and operate as feedback mechanism by providing some opinions to Congress regarding the concerns of ethnic lobbies over the US policies (Dietrich, 1999). Ultimately, ethnic lobbies could establish direct relations with members of Congress, they could gain access to the policymaking processes and they could build close relations with the media (Shain, 1994). Particularly, construction of close relations with the media provides an opportunity to influence US public opinion (Shain, 1994). This is helpful to ethnic lobbies in terms of amplifying media coverage of their issues. For example, the pro-Israeli lobbies take great efforts to shape the US public discourse about Israel “*in the media, think tanks and academia*”. They work to “*ensure that public discourse about Israel echoes the strategic and moral rationale*” and “*convince the public that America’s and Israel’s interests and values are one and the same*” (Mearsheimer and Walt, 2007: 168). There is also another example about this point. For instance, the Cuban and Iraqi lobbies worked with the conservative officials of the government in order to convince the US public regarding the policies of the Bush administration toward Cuba and Iraq. These lobbies campaigned against the leaders of their countries and wanted to show these leaders as unwanted dictators even by their own citizens and as threats to the United States and its public via publishing papers or taking part in political debates regarding their homelands (Vanderbush, 2009: 291-300).

In addition to the above-mentioned points, Stephen Garrett provides insights regarding the analysis of US State Department on what makes a lobbying organization effective. The analysis emphasizes that, first, there should be an alignment between the national interests of the United States and aims of the lobbying organization. Second, the interests of the lobbying organization have to point out multiple aspects of international relations. In this regard, the lobbying organization has to have a media power to disseminate knowledge regarding the matters of international relations. Finally, the lobbying organization has to have a reputation or credibility in the eyes of State Department or similar US organizations (Garrett, 1978: 309).

So far, four main factors affecting success or effectiveness of ethnic lobbies in the United States have been discussed. It has also been addressed that the organizational structure (Oswiecimski, 2013; McCormick, 2012; Smith, 2000; Haney and Wanderbush, 1999) strategic voting (Oswiecimski, 2013; McCormick, 2012; Smith, 2000; Garrett, 1978), financial election campaigns or financial resources (Oswiecimski, 2013; Smith, 2000), mobilization of the public to interact with policymakers (Oswiecimski, 2013), cooperation between ethnic groups or lobbies for similar purposes (Ambrosio, 2002a; Smith, 2000) and observation of the policymaking process (Ambrosio, 2002a; 2002b) are used as ethnic lobbying strategies. However, ethnic lobbies could also apply framing as part of their lobbying campaign either inside or outside the United States (Demir, 2023). Additionally, framing can be utilized for some lobbying groups which do not possess plenty of resources and lobbying strategies for their campaigns. The further section, therefore, will pay a particular attention to framing by discussing the concepts of frame and framing and its utilization for ethnic lobbying campaigns as a strategy.

4. Framing as an Ethnic Lobbying Strategy

In general, ethnic lobbying and framing are two separate concepts and fields of research. However, framing can be used in the context of ethnic lobbying not only as one of the lobbying strategies but also as a process of frame or argument creation, particularly for the lobbies having limited resources (Demir, 2023). This is because there is a close relationship between framing and its utilization in ethnic lobbying. This study aims at indicating the importance of framing for ethnic lobbying in the United States, particularly for the lobbies having limited resources and no access to the country. Therefore, it is significant to address the relationship between framing and lobbying and how framing can be located in ethnic lobbying even though they are different concepts and fields of research.

Generally, lobbying elites apply framing as one of their main strategies to create their agenda over their issues for addressing the targeted audiences and to increase the visibility of issues that they want to be solved by the targeted policymakers (Princen, 2011). In this regard, framing can become a convincing issue-description method and lobbying elites might be named as frame producers (Baumgartner, 2007). Similarly, frames can play a central role in establishing an agenda for the political purposes of lobbying elites because of their capacity to draw attention to an issue, particularly by making it interesting or building credibility regarding it in the eyes of policymakers (Princen, 2011). Framing can also become the only strategy or method for lobbying groups which have no access to the foreign policymaking communities of the United States as seen through the case of the Democratic Union Party (PYD, Partiya Yekitiya Demokrat)¹ Lobbying. For the PYD, lobbying began outside the United States through framing, then, factors such as the rise of Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham (ISIS) contributed to access of this lobby to the policy-making communities of the US as a result of the interaction between members of the People's Protection Units (YPG, Yekineyen Parastina Gel) and US officials in the context of the counter-ISIS strategy of the United States (Demir, 2023). In this regard, this section will demonstrate how framing can become an effective tool for ethnic lobbying as well as for lobbies having limited resources or strategies both as a facilitator of successful ethnic lobbying and as an only strategy of relatively new lobbying groups in the United States.

First of all, framing is an interdisciplinary concept which is used by studies over psychology (Kahneman and Tversky, 1984), linguistics (Pluwak, 2011), media and communication (Entman,

¹ The PYD (Democratic Union Party, Partiya Yekitiya Demokrat) is the Syrian affiliate of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party, Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan) in Turkey which is listed as a terrorist organization by Turkey, European Union countries and the United States.

1993; Gamson, 1992), environmental conflicts (Gardner and Burgess, 2003; Gray, 2003; Kaufman et al., 2013), sociology (Goffman, 1974), and social movements (Benford, 1988; Benford and Snow, 2000; Snow and Corrigan-Brown, 2005; Snow et al., 2014; Snow and Benford, 1992; Snow et al., 1986). Theoretical debates over the concepts of frame and framing trace back to Erving Goffman's study, *Frame Analysis*. This was also the first systematic analysis of these concepts. Goffman (1974, p. 21) defines the frame as a "*schemata of interpretation*" and framing as an action "*to locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences*". Generally speaking, the happenings/events taking place around us have no ability to speak and explain themselves within a coherent context. Therefore, they have to be embedded into a systematic framework by someone to let them make sense to others (Gamson and Wolsfeld, 1993). In this regard, frame becomes a systematic interpretation of happenings around the public, and as a result of such an interpretation, framing turns into an action which put happenings/events into a context for making them meaningful to the wider public (Aldikacti, 2001) or targeted audiences (Demir, 2023).

There are some cases in which framing is applied as a lobbying strategy with other strategies by ethnic lobbies that had already access to the policymaking processes of the United States through their institutional existence. For instance, Reese and Ramirez's (2002) research has analyzed the successful domestic ethnic lobbying campaign in California for the improvement of welfare rights of legal immigrants. In this case, success of the lobbying campaign depended on three factors. They were the high-level mobilization of defenders, having effective allies within the Californian state legislation and strategic counter-framing of the claims of opposition regarding legal immigrants, particularly in relation to their detrimental effects on the economy of California (Reese and Ramirez, 2002: 52-53). Likewise, Kirk's (2008: 296) research has indicated that framing played an important role in the success of Indian-American lobby in reaching a nuclear agreement with the US government with other factors. These factors were the strength of organizational structure of the lobby with professional lobbyists, particularly the highly mobilized second generation Indian-Americans, and the consolidation of economic capacity of the lobby via the recruitment of new members (Kirk, 2008: 297-298).

There are also recent cases, such as PYD lobbying which used framing as its only method and managed to gain access to the United States by seizing some opportunities of the Syrian civil war (Demir, 2023). This case has demonstrated that lobbying groups could also apply strategic and normative framing. Strategic framing is a pragmatic and goal-oriented method for lobbying elites so as to achieve their specific purposes (Benford and Snow, 2000). In this regard, ethnic lobbies try to align their interests or policy objectives with those of the United States in order to achieve their own purposes (Demir, 2023). The PYD lobby had no access to the policymaking communities in the United States until the rise of ISIS. However, after the emergence of ISIS, the PYD lobby strategically framed the civil war by putting the ISIS threat at the centre of its framing and emphasising its military wing, the YPG's fight against ISIS through "*protection of Europe/West*" and "*only effective force against ISIS*" frames (Demir, 2023: 95-100). Then, the PYD leadership managed to grab the attention of the US media and public, and have access to the policymaking communities in this country (Demir, 2023:199).

Strategic framing is a common strategy among lobbying groups in the United States. It was utilized by the Indian-American lobby for a nuclear deal between the US and Indian governments. Lobby framed the US-India strategic partnership by emphasising its economic and geopolitical advantages for the US. Specifically, the US foreign policy of "*war on terror*" following the 9/11 terror attacks was perceived as a political opportunity and exploited to underline the geopolitical importance of India for the US policy in Afghanistan against Usame Bin Laden in the case of having

a nuclear deal with the Indian government (Kirk, 2008). Similarly, the Iraqi and Cuban communities applied strategic framing by presenting leaders in their home countries as illegitimate dictators and as threats to the US national security, which was parallel to the framing of these leaders by the US government at a time (Vanderbush, 2009). In this way, these groups cooperated with the officials of the Bush administration to prepare US public opinion for the invasion of Iraq and the maintenance of economic embargo toward Cuba by undermining the legitimacy of the leaders of their home countries.

Finally, there are studies showing how Lebanese and Albanian communities in the United States connected their demands of sovereignty for Lebanon and independence for Kosovo with the US foreign policy purposes in the Middle East and Balkans (Koinova, 2011). As other examples of strategic framing in the context of ethnic lobbying, elites of the Lebanese community underlined that Lebanon was ready to cooperate with the United States in the context of its policy of war on terror, particularly against Syria. Likewise, the Albanians strategically argued that the independence of Kosovo would bring the stability to the Balkans which was also the desire of the United States, which aimed at leading the support of the US policymakers to the idea of independence of Kosovo. This study has also indicated that although strategic framing could not help lobbying elites of both communities in term of achieving their purposes, it helped these groups to be perceived, at least, as moderate people of the conflict-generated communities within the eyes of US policymakers and public (Koinova, 2011: 542).

Another framing strategy applied by ethnic lobbies is normative framing. It is mainly about the instrumental utilization of values or principles such as democracy, human rights, and morality by lobbies during their campaigns (Demir, 2023). Since the Woodrow Wilson administration, one of the main purposes of the US foreign policy has become spreading of the American values to the World. Especially, the Presidents and policymakers of the Democrat Party have prioritized moral values and human rights as crucial traditions (Donnelly, 2017; Mead 2001). It has been addressed by experts on ethnic lobbying in the United States that lobbies which advocated pluralism, democracy and human rights or, at least, used them in their lobbying campaigns succeeded in drawing attentions of US policymakers (Herner-Kovacs, 2013; Shain, 1999; 1994) and public to their own issues (Vanderbush, 2009).

For example, the African-American lobby used the US values like freedom and democracy in order to frame the anti-democratic implementations of Apartheid regime for declining the legitimacy of the regime in the eyes of the US government and policymakers (Shain, 1994). Such a strategy functioned at the level of public too, since the Apartheid regime was presented as an anti-democratic one. As a result, the lobby managed to draw the attention of US policymakers to a problem in their homeland and challenge the legitimacy of the Apartheid regime (Shain: 834-841). Another example of normative framing is about the lobbying campaign of the Hungarian Human Rights Foundation. The lobby framed the allegations regarding the human rights abuses and mistreatment against Hungarian minorities by the Ceausescu regime in Romania to challenge the legitimacy of the regime in the United States. This is because democracy and human rights are the advocated values in the context of the US foreign policy from a normative perspective. In this way, the lobby managed to draw the attention of Congressmen to the issues in the homeland and challenge the legitimacy of the Ceausescu regime both in the eyes of Congressmen and at the public level (Herner-Kovács, 2013). Finally, the PYD lobby utilized normative framing in order to appeal to the US foreign policy discourse and its foreign policy, promotion of democracy in the Middle East through “*regional role model*” and “*defence of human values against ISIS*” frames (Demir, 2023: 81-93). Particularly, the “*defence of human values against ISIS*” frame managed to grab the attention of US policymakers and media because of the location of the PYD-YPG Kurds by the US media as an anti-thesis of ISIS in Syria (Demir, 2023: 158-162).

5. Conclusion

This research has aimed at prioritizing and demonstrating that framing strategy can become an important device for ethnic lobbies which have limited resources and no access to the policymaking communities in the United States. The article has argued that framing strategy can become an effective lobbying strategy not only for lobbies that have access to the United States with an institutional existence in its capital but also for the ones attempting to gain access to the policymaking communities in this country. In this way, the article has provided a conceptual contribution to the debates regarding what makes ethnic lobbying effective or successful in the United States.

As a consequence of the review of the existing literature on ethnic lobbying in the United States, the article has demonstrated that there are four important factors to be considered which could affect the success or effectiveness of ethnic lobbies. They are the impacts of international developments such as the World War I and the Cold War, domestic factors in the United States like its social fabric and political system, internal factors of ethnic lobbies such as their organizational structures and lobbying strategies. The article has followed a holistic approach and has combined the most common lobbying strategies applied by ethnic lobbies for their specific purposes such as organizational structure, strategic voting (or voting behaviour), using financial resources for election campaigns, mobilization of public, building coalition between lobbies having common interests and observation of policymaking process through policy analyses, and framing.

This article has also paid a specific attention to the concept of framing as a lobbying strategy. By considering the contemporary studies, the article has indicated that framing is a common strategy among the established lobbies, and particularly for the relatively new ones. In this regard, the framing strategy could become an only mechanism for relatively new lobbies which have limited resources for gaining access to the United States. In this way, the article has shown how framing strategy has been utilized by lobbies either through strategic framing or normative framing during their campaigns.

Consequently, the article suggests that the criteria constructed by Haney and Vanderbush (1999) and focused on the internal factors of lobbies and the US politics in assessing the effectiveness or success of ethnic lobbies may not be merely enough to assess potential success or failure of relatively new lobbying groups. There might be other important factors, particularly the external ones such as unexpected developments i.e. an internal conflict or civil wars and framing can be utilized as an only lobbying strategy by lobbies which possess limited resources and no access to the United States.

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