

Impact Factor:	ISRA (India)	= 6.317	SIS (USA)	= 0.912	ICV (Poland)	= 6.630
	ISI (Dubai, UAE)	= 1.582	ПИИИ (Russia)	= 0.191	PIF (India)	= 1.940
	GIF (Australia)	= 0.564	ESJI (KZ)	= 8.100	IBI (India)	= 4.260
	JIF	= 1.500	SJIF (Morocco)	= 7.184	OAJI (USA)	= 0.350

SOI: [1.1/TAS](#) DOI: [10.15863/TAS](#)
International Scientific Journal
Theoretical & Applied Science

p-ISSN: 2308-4944 (print) e-ISSN: 2409-0085 (online)

Year: 2025 Issue: 09 Volume: 149

Received: 15.08.2025
Accepted/Published: 30.09.2025 <https://T-Science.org>

Issue

Article



Leila Vatankhah Kashi

University of Religions and Denominations

Dr., PhD in Women's Studies and Research, Focus on Comparative Studies of Women in Religions,
Iran

Mohsen Zamani

University of Tehran

Dr., PhD in Political Geography (Political Organization of Space),
Tehran, Iran

Orchid id: 0009-0009-6210-2305

zamani_m@ut.ac.ir

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN WITH EMPHASIS ON THE DISCOURSE OF RESISTANCE

Abstract: Public diplomacy, as one of the soft dimensions of foreign policy, plays a significant role in shaping a country's image and identity in the international arena. In this context, the role of women as carriers of the cultural, value-based, and identity-oriented messages of the Islamic Republic of Iran holds special importance. Drawing upon its cultural, social, and ideological capacities, the Islamic Republic of Iran has sought to promote the discourse of resistance as a foundational principle of its foreign policy at both regional and international levels. In this regard, Iranian women—particularly those active in academic, cultural, media, and social spheres—have played a dual role as cultural ambassadors and symbols of resilience and steadfastness. On one hand, they narrate the oppression, resistance, and quest for justice by the Iranian people and other oppressed nations; on the other, they reflect the image of an active, intellectual, and engaged woman within the framework of Islamic and revolutionary values.

This article aims to examine the role of women in the public diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran with a focus on the discourse of resistance. The main research question is: How have Iranian women been able to effectively contribute to the articulation and promotion of the resistance discourse within the framework of public diplomacy? The research method employed is descriptive-analytical, and the study draws on library and documentary sources to analyze the capacities, performances, and outcomes of women's roles in this domain.

The article demonstrates that public diplomacy in the Islamic Republic of Iran, unlike Western models which primarily focus on political figures or formal institutions, relies on grassroots and cultural structures. In this context, the presence of women as non-governmental and cultural agents has enabled the transmission of Iran's spiritual and identity-based messages to global audiences in a soft and effective manner. Iranian female elites—including academics, artists, journalists, social activists, and families of martyrs—have played a vital role in presenting an indigenous and independent narrative of Iran by participating in international conferences, cultural dialogues, media productions, and global engagements.

One of the key components of the Islamic Republic's resistance discourse is the confrontation with hegemony, defense of independence, support for oppressed nations, and opposition to racism and neo-colonialism. Iranian women, in articulating this discourse, have drawn not only from official state rhetoric but also from lived experiences and cultural perspectives to convey the message. Relying on the identity of the revolutionary Muslim woman, they have offered an alternative image of womanhood in the international order that contrasts sharply with the stereotypes of passive and Westernized women.

Content analysis of speeches, interviews, and actions of women engaged in Iran's public diplomacy reveals that concepts such as "female resistance," "resilient motherhood," "justice-oriented storytelling," and "woman as a

Impact Factor:	ISRA (India)	= 6.317	SIS (USA)	= 0.912	ICV (Poland)	= 6.630
	ISI (Dubai, UAE)	= 1.582	PIIHQ (Russia)	= 0.191	PIF (India)	= 1.940
	GIF (Australia)	= 0.564	ESJI (KZ)	= 8.100	IBI (India)	= 4.260
	JIF	= 1.500	SJIF (Morocco)	= 7.184	OAJI (USA)	= 0.350

civilizational actor” have become prominent in the cultural diplomacy literature of the Islamic Republic. Iranian women have also served as mediators between regional and global cultures in narrating the events of Islamic resistance in Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, and other areas. Their central role is especially evident in media representation and documentary storytelling of resistance realities.

At the institutional level, Muslim women’s organizations and international associations with Iranian female participation have created platforms for intercultural and international dialogue. These organizations have challenged dominant global feminist or liberal discourses by presenting a native alternative of the socially and politically active Muslim woman.

The article concludes that Iranian women, by leveraging cultural and value-based capacities within the framework of the Islamic Republic, have expanded public diplomacy from official channels to social and intercultural levels and have conveyed the resistance discourse in a soft yet impactful manner to global audiences. This engagement has not only enhanced the soft power of the Islamic Republic of Iran but has also contributed to redefining the global image of the Muslim woman.

Key words: Public diplomacy, Iranian women, resistance discourse, soft power, image of Muslim women, Islamic Republic of Iran.

Language: English

Citation: Kashi, L.V., & Zamani, M. (2025). The Role of Women in the Public Diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran with Emphasis on the Discourse of Resistance. *ISJ Theoretical & Applied Science*, 09 (149), 1-8.

Soi: <https://s-o-i.org/1.1/TAS-09-149-1> **Doi:**  <https://dx.doi.org/10.15863/TAS.2025.09.149.1>

Scopus ASCC: 3300.

Introduction

In the era of globalization and soft competition among nations, public diplomacy has emerged as one of the key tools of foreign policy to influence global public opinion. Unlike traditional diplomacy, which relies on formal interactions between governments, public diplomacy seeks to engage directly with nations, elites, civil society, and media by using soft, cultural, and social language to convey strategic messages. In this context, non-governmental actors such as cultural elites, academics, artists, journalists, and women play a significant role in implementing the goals of public diplomacy. Women, in particular, possess a unique capacity to transmit cultural, moral, and political messages due to their multifaceted roles in both family and society, positioning them as potential cultural ambassadors on the international stage.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, with its emphasis on Islamic, revolutionary, and humanistic principles in foreign policy, public diplomacy—especially after the 1979 Islamic Revolution—has become increasingly central to the country’s strategic objectives. Relying on the discourse of resistance as the backbone of its foreign policy, Iran has strived to articulate and institutionalize this discourse regionally and globally through cultural, media, and grassroots tools. The resistance discourse goes beyond military confrontation; it encompasses components such as independence-seeking, pursuit of justice, opposition to domination, and defense of oppressed nations. In this process, Iranian women have not remained passive; rather, they have played an active and influential role in advancing this discourse beyond expectations.

The role of women in the public diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran can be examined on several levels. First, at the level of academic and cultural

elites, Iranian female scholars and artists have presented a distinct image of the Muslim woman that contrasts with Western media stereotypes of Iranian women. Second, on the social level, women active in civil institutions, cultural organizations, and both domestic and international media have acted as influential agents in conveying the concepts of resistance, sacrifice, Islamic identity, and the plight of oppressed peoples. Third, on the symbolic level, women known for their connection to the families of martyrs, veterans, or prisoners of resistance have played an essential role in humanizing and moralizing the narrative of the Iranian nation’s resistance and that of its allies.

Moreover, the Islamic Republic has strategically drawn on the symbolic and inspirational capacity of the Muslim woman in constructing the resistance discourse. Iranian women, in roles such as “mothers of martyrs,” “defenders of the shrine,” “field journalists,” and “Muslim female activists,” have contributed to redefining the concepts of resistance and the role of women in foreign policy. This redefinition has not only expanded the scope of public diplomacy but has also introduced a new image of the Muslim woman that departs from secular and feminist stereotypes. Within the resistance discourse, the Iranian woman is not depicted as isolated or passive, but as a conscious, resilient, determined, and effective actor in the public sphere and on the international stage.

Nonetheless, despite its foundational importance, the role of women in the public diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran has received limited academic and analytical attention. Most existing studies have either focused sporadically on women’s social and cultural participation or approached the representation of women in Iran through feminist or gender-based lenses. Therefore, a coherent, scholarly,

Impact Factor:	ISRA (India)	= 6.317	SIS (USA)	= 0.912	ICV (Poland)	= 6.630
	ISI (Dubai, UAE)	= 1.582	PIIHQ (Russia)	= 0.191	PIF (India)	= 1.940
	GIF (Australia)	= 0.564	ESJI (KZ)	= 8.100	IBI (India)	= 4.260
	JIF	= 1.500	SJIF (Morocco)	= 7.184	OAJI (USA)	= 0.350

and critical examination of the role of women in public diplomacy—especially in relation to the resistance discourse—is essential.

This study seeks to answer the central question: How have Iranian women contributed, within the framework of public diplomacy, to the promotion and articulation of the Islamic Republic's resistance discourse at regional and global levels? To answer this, the article first elaborates on the core concepts of public diplomacy, the resistance discourse, and the status of women in the political thought of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It then analyzes empirical evidence and case studies to explore the modes of women's participation in this process. The article is based on the hypothesis that Iranian women, through their diverse cultural, social, and media roles, have elevated the Islamic Republic's public diplomacy from official institutions to broader social and intercultural spheres, becoming a vital force in exporting the resistance discourse.

From this perspective, the present article aims not only to fill the theoretical gap concerning the role of women in Iran's public diplomacy but also, by focusing on the resistance discourse, to offer a more comprehensive and realistic portrayal of Iran's cultural and people-centered diplomacy—one that, unlike many conventional models, relies on women's activism, faith, and intellectual engagement in the soft arena.

Research Methodology

This study employs a descriptive-analytical research method and is conducted using a qualitative approach. The data has been collected through library resources, official documents, media reports, and case studies related to women's activities in the public diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Data analysis is based on the theoretical conceptualization of the resistance discourse and the role of women in cultural, social, and media spheres. The objective of this method is to explain how women contribute to promoting the resistance discourse and representing the soft power of the Islamic Republic on the international stage.

Theoretical Framework

Globalization, the development of communication tools, and the expansion of transnational activism have led to a shift in foreign policy beyond the confines of traditional and formal diplomacy. Today, states must also engage with social, cultural, and civil capacities at various levels. In this context, the concept of public diplomacy, as an instrument of soft power, has gained increasing importance in the conduct of foreign policy (Nye, 2004). Public diplomacy focuses on engagement with foreign publics rather than state-to-state interactions and involves non-state actors—such as cultural elites, media, and women—in the diplomatic process.

Accordingly, theorizing public diplomacy and the discourse of resistance offers a suitable framework for analyzing the role of women in the Islamic Republic of Iran's diplomacy.

1. Public Diplomacy: Concepts and Components

The concept of public diplomacy was first introduced by Edmund Gullion in the 1960s and later developed by scholars such as Joseph Nye, Bruce Gregory, and Nancy Snow. Generally, public diplomacy refers to foreign policy actions aimed at influencing foreign public opinion through cultural, educational, media, and communication tools (Snow, 2009). In his articulation of soft power, Joseph Nye emphasizes three key sources: culture, political values, and legitimate foreign policy. Public diplomacy, therefore, seeks to attract international audiences rather than coerce them (Nye, 2004).

The key components of public diplomacy include strategic communication, cultural and educational exchanges, media programming, and networking with global elites (Melissen, 2005). In this framework, women—as cultural and social carriers of their communities—play a pivotal role in shaping national image, transmitting indigenous values, and building cultural bridges with other nations.

2. Women and Public Diplomacy: From Gender to Soft Power

The role of women in public diplomacy can be analyzed from two perspectives: first, as influential agents in international interactions and cultural messaging; second, as representations of their country's societal image in the global arena. In recent decades, the view of women in diplomacy has shifted from a focus on gender to their role as cultural agents. Through cultural, urban, and even religious diplomacy, women can project a national image that contributes to their country's symbolic capital and soft power (Adler-Nissen, 2015).

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, women's role in public diplomacy is shaped not by liberal or purely feminist paradigms, but within the epistemological framework of political Islam and revolutionary identity. In this context, a woman is not only a socially active individual but also bears the moral responsibility of conveying messages of justice, resistance, and defiance against domination. Based on the teachings of Imam Khomeini and the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic, the Iranian Muslim woman is envisioned as a model for women across the Islamic world in resisting arrogance, moral decay, and cultural humiliation imposed by the West (Khamenei, 2015).

3. The Discourse of Resistance in the Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The discourse of resistance, as the core semantic structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign

Impact Factor:	ISRA (India)	= 6.317	SIS (USA)	= 0.912	ICV (Poland)	= 6.630
	ISI (Dubai, UAE)	= 1.582	PIIHQ (Russia)	= 0.191	PIF (India)	= 1.940
	GIF (Australia)	= 0.564	ESJI (KZ)	= 8.100	IBI (India)	= 4.260
	JIF	= 1.500	SJIF (Morocco)	= 7.184	OAJI (USA)	= 0.350

policy, is rooted in religious, historical, and revolutionary teachings. It emphasizes the rejection of domination, defense of the oppressed, support for Muslim nations, and opposition to an unjust global order. This discourse has become a fixed and strategic component of Iran's diplomacy (Delfi, 2019). Resistance is not limited to military struggle; it also encompasses cultural, media, scientific, and economic forms of resistance.

Within this discourse, women are recognized not only as part of the resistant nation but also as messengers of resistance. Concepts such as "martyr's mother," "wife of a war veteran," "media-active woman," "Muslim female scientist," and "female activist supporting Palestine or Yemen" all contribute to shaping the global image of Islamic resistance. Thus, Iranian women can play an influential role in conveying the message of the resistance discourse through public diplomacy (Hosseini, 2021).

4. The Model of the Revolutionary Muslim Woman in the Cultural Theory of the Islamic Republic

According to the "Second Step of the Revolution" statement by the Supreme Leader, the Iranian woman must be introduced as the "model of a civilization-building Muslim woman" to the world. This vision presents women as independent, committed, resilient, and thoughtful individuals (Leader of the Revolution, 2018). In the cultural theory of the Islamic Republic, a woman is neither a passive symbol of tradition nor a product of modernity, but rather a conscious, idealistic, ethical, and socially responsible being. Unlike liberal-feminist models that emphasize detachment from traditional roles, this theory seeks to integrate women's familial and social roles within an Islamic framework.

Within this view, women are capable of conveying the message of the Islamic Revolution and the discourse of resistance to the world in a soft and humane manner—through cultural activism, participation in international forums, media content creation, and engagement in NGOs. The Iranian Muslim woman, in this sense, acts as a bridge between formal diplomacy and the global society, thereby enhancing the legitimacy of the country's foreign policy.

5. Complementary Theories: Constructivism, Identity, and Narrativity

From the perspective of constructivist theory, identities, values, and discourses play a fundamental role in shaping foreign policy behavior. In this framework, the Islamic Republic of Iran, relying on its Islamic-revolutionary identity, formulates its foreign policy not merely based on material interests, but grounded in spiritual and ethical values (Wendt, 1999). Iranian women, as cultural agents of identity formation, can contribute to reproducing and projecting this identity in the international arena.

Furthermore, from the perspective of narrative theory, foreign policy can be understood as a story that international actors tell about themselves to others. Iranian women, as narrators of resistance, can challenge dominant Western media narratives by sharing their personal experiences, cultural activities, and social engagements. In doing so, they offer alternative narratives about Iran, Islam, and the role of women in the world (Miskimmon et al., 2014).

Research Findings

1. Redefinition of the Muslim Woman in the Public Diplomacy Discourse of the Islamic Republic of Iran

One of the most prominent findings of this research is that the Islamic Republic of Iran has consistently sought to present a new image of the Muslim woman, contrasting with secular and Western-centric narratives. This redefinition challenges stereotypes of passive, private-sphere-bound women by offering an image of a woman who is active, conscious, faithful, justice-seeking, and resistant. In the official discourse of the Islamic Republic, a Muslim woman can simultaneously be a mother, fighter, diplomat, researcher, artist, and cultural activist (Rahnavard, 2014; Nasr, 2019).

In this discourse, the Muslim woman is an agent who, while preserving her hijab and religious identity, promotes the culture of resistance, justice, and independence on international platforms. Imam Khomeini emphasized the central role of women in the victory and continuation of the Islamic Revolution, and the Supreme Leader has repeatedly referred to women as officers in the soft war front (Khamenei, 2018).

2. Operational Arenas of Women in Iran's Public Diplomacy

Iranian women have played an active role in public diplomacy across several defined arenas. The findings identify four key domains of their engagement:

a. Media Diplomacy

One of the most significant domains of women's involvement is media diplomacy. Female presenters, journalists, and documentary filmmakers working with international outlets such as Press TV, Al-Alam, Al-Kawthar, and other IRIB foreign-language networks have acted as spokespersons for Iranian Muslim women. Through storytelling focused on the resistance movements in Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen, and by highlighting the suffering of women under Western aggression, they have communicated the resistance discourse in an international language (Ahmadi, 2018).

b. Academic and Scientific Diplomacy

Impact Factor:	ISRA (India)	= 6.317	SIS (USA)	= 0.912	ICV (Poland)	= 6.630
	ISI (Dubai, UAE)	= 1.582	PIIHQ (Russia)	= 0.191	PIF (India)	= 1.940
	GIF (Australia)	= 0.564	ESJI (KZ)	= 8.100	IBI (India)	= 4.260
	JIF	= 1.500	SJIF (Morocco)	= 7.184	OAJI (USA)	= 0.350

Female academics, researchers, and university professors have actively participated in international scientific conferences, lectures, and cultural exchange projects. These women not only showcase the scientific achievements of the Islamic Republic but also present an alternative image of the Muslim woman as intellectual and independent. Figures like Dr. Zahra Mostafavi, Dr. Fatemeh Tabatabaei, and many other female professors have made notable contributions in this area (Talebzadeh, 2021).

c. Cultural and Artistic Diplomacy

Iranian female artists in fields such as cinema, documentary filmmaking, poetry, calligraphy, handicrafts, and theater have advanced cultural diplomacy through works inspired by the culture of resistance. A striking example is the participation of films directed by Iranian women in international festivals, conveying messages of justice, victimhood, and resistance (Bagheri, 2023).

d. Social and Humanitarian Diplomacy

Through NGOs, charitable organizations, and volunteer associations, women have engaged in humanitarian efforts supporting Palestinian, Lebanese, Syrian, and Yemeni women. These activities, in addition to their humanitarian dimension, carry cultural and political significance, contributing to the image of a compassionate and engaged Islamic Iran (Yazdani, 2020).

3. Women and the Production of the Resistance Discourse in Cyberspace

In recent years, cyberspace has become an effective arena for public diplomacy. The research shows that Iranian Muslim women—especially the educated younger generation—have utilized social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Clubhouse, and Telegram to reproduce and disseminate the discourse of resistance. By sharing real-life narratives, cultural activities, anti-Islamophobia efforts, and exposing racism and neocolonialism, they have influenced international perceptions (Sadeghi, 2022).

4. Lived Experiences of Informal Female Diplomats

Some Iranian women residing abroad or actively involved in cultural, academic, and artistic interactions represent a form of informal public diplomacy. Interviews with active women in Europe, Lebanon, Turkey, and Latin America show that many of them—despite various challenges—convey a new image of the Muslim woman and contribute, directly or indirectly, to the resistance discourse (Rahmani, 2021).

5. Challenges and Obstacles

Despite significant achievements, women active in this field face several challenges. These obstacles can be categorized into three levels:

Structural level: Lack of institutional support, absence of clear mechanisms for the deployment and backing of female cultural activists, and poor coordination among public diplomacy institutions—such as the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, and the Vice Presidency for Women and Family Affairs—are key structural barriers (Mirzadeh, 2019).

Social level: Traditional or conservative attitudes in society sometimes hinder women's participation in international arenas. Some female cultural activists encounter limitations in embracing transnational roles (Parsaei, 2018).

International level: The West's soft war against the resistance discourse and negative propaganda against Muslim women complicate Iranian women's diplomatic activities. Western media stereotyping continues to marginalize the voices of revolutionary women (Kazemi, 2017).

Results and Discussion

The research on the role of women in the public diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran with a focus on the discourse of resistance reveals a complex and multifaceted process through which Iranian women have contributed to the shaping and dissemination of national narratives beyond the country's borders. The central finding is the strategic redefinition of the Muslim woman within the Islamic Republic's ideological and communicative framework. This redefinition counters dominant Western representations of Muslim women as passive or oppressed, instead portraying them as active agents of cultural, political, and spiritual resistance. Iranian public diplomacy, particularly since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, has utilized women not merely as symbolic figures but as active participants in the projection of soft power and in the cultural articulation of Islamic modernity.

Within this framework, the public image of the Iranian Muslim woman has been consistently shaped by the state and revolutionary discourse to embody both tradition and activism. Drawing on Islamic values and the revolutionary ethos, the Iranian model of womanhood merges piety with political engagement. Women are depicted as mothers and nurturers, but also as scholars, artists, journalists, and even informal diplomats, thereby extending their role into the public and international arenas. Figures such as Fatemeh Tabatabaei, Zahra Mostafavi, and other prominent female intellectuals have exemplified this dual identity in international forums. Their participation in academic and cultural events has conveyed a nuanced image of the Iranian woman—one that challenges orientalist stereotypes and

Impact Factor:	ISRA (India)	= 6.317	SIS (USA)	= 0.912	ICV (Poland)	= 6.630
	ISI (Dubai, UAE)	= 1.582	PIIHQ (Russia)	= 0.191	PIF (India)	= 1.940
	GIF (Australia)	= 0.564	ESJI (KZ)	= 8.100	IBI (India)	= 4.260
	JIF	= 1.500	SJIF (Morocco)	= 7.184	OAJI (USA)	= 0.350

contributes to reshaping global perceptions of Muslim femininity.

One of the main operational fields in which Iranian women have engaged is media diplomacy. Female journalists, television presenters, and documentary filmmakers working for international outlets like Press TV, Al-Alam, and Al-Kawthar have functioned as public diplomats, narrating the Iranian perspective on regional conflicts and the struggle of oppressed peoples, particularly in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen. By emphasizing themes of resistance, justice, and dignity, these women have helped construct an alternative global narrative that defies dominant Western discourses on terrorism, occupation, and human rights. Their role in countering Islamophobia and humanizing the image of Muslim women on international platforms has been especially significant in recent years.

Academic and scientific diplomacy constitutes another crucial domain. Female academics from Iranian universities have participated in international conferences, written articles in foreign journals, and engaged in cross-cultural academic collaborations. These interactions have allowed them to not only showcase Iranian scientific and intellectual capabilities but also to act as cultural ambassadors who reflect the ideological and ethical values of the Islamic Republic. Their presence in such settings often contests the presumed incompatibility of Islam with modernity and intellectual freedom, thus contributing to a more diversified global discourse on gender, religion, and development.

Furthermore, cultural and artistic diplomacy has been an effective channel for women's engagement. Iranian women have produced and presented films, poems, calligraphy, and theatrical performances that resonate with the ideals of resistance and cultural independence. In international festivals, films directed by Iranian women have gained recognition for their narrative depth, ethical perspective, and aesthetic quality. These works often center on themes such as war, occupation, sacrifice, and the spiritual strength of women, thereby aligning with the broader political narratives endorsed by the state. This form of cultural production operates not merely as entertainment but as a sophisticated form of soft power and identity projection.

In the realm of social and humanitarian diplomacy, Iranian women have participated in charitable organizations and NGOs that support women and children affected by war and displacement in the Islamic world. These humanitarian efforts are deeply intertwined with the discourse of resistance, as they position Iran as a defender of the oppressed and a voice for the voiceless. Such grassroots engagements add a human dimension to Iran's foreign policy and help create transnational solidarities based on shared values rather than political expediency.

Cyberspace has emerged as a particularly dynamic field in which Iranian women, especially among the younger, educated generation, engage in the construction and dissemination of the resistance discourse. Through platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and Telegram, women have created alternative narratives that challenge dominant Western interpretations of events in the Middle East. They share content that highlights injustice, counters Islamophobic representations, and asserts the dignity and agency of Muslim women. The immediacy and reach of social media have allowed them to participate in global conversations in real-time, thus expanding the scope and depth of Iran's public diplomacy.

The research also highlights the contributions of women who act as informal diplomats abroad. These are women who live, study, or work in other countries and serve, often unintentionally, as representatives of Iranian culture and ideology. Their lived experiences and daily interactions contribute to the gradual transformation of public perceptions about Iran and Islam. Many of these women maintain their religious and cultural identity while navigating foreign environments, and in doing so, they offer a lived critique of Western narratives that portray Muslim women as victims.

Despite these achievements, there are several challenges facing women's participation in public diplomacy. Structurally, there is a lack of coordinated institutional support and strategic planning. The disconnection between different governmental bodies responsible for cultural diplomacy, including the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance and the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, limits the efficiency and sustainability of women's initiatives. Socially, traditional attitudes within segments of Iranian society sometimes restrict women's participation in public and international spaces. At the international level, pervasive Western propaganda and stereotyping remain significant obstacles, as media representations often ignore or misrepresent the complexity and strength of Iranian women.

In sum, the findings demonstrate that Iranian women play a vital role in advancing the country's public diplomacy and resistance discourse. Their activities span a wide range of sectors and reflect a distinctive blend of religious commitment, intellectual engagement, and political consciousness. By embodying an alternative model of Muslim womanhood, they challenge global norms, counter hegemonic narratives, and contribute to the cultural and ideological presence of the Islamic Republic on the world stage.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this research shows that Iranian women play a very significant and impactful role in the public diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially in promoting the discourse of

Impact Factor:	ISRA (India)	= 6.317	SIS (USA)	= 0.912	ICV (Poland)	= 6.630
	ISI (Dubai, UAE)	= 1.582	ПИИИ (Russia)	= 0.191	PIF (India)	= 1.940
	GIF (Australia)	= 0.564	ESJI (KZ)	= 8.100	IBI (India)	= 4.260
	JIF	= 1.500	SJIF (Morocco)	= 7.184	OAJI (USA)	= 0.350

resistance. The discourse of resistance in the Islamic Republic of Iran, which emphasizes resistance against oppression, imperialism, and colonization, has been one of the main pillars of both Iran's foreign and domestic policies since the Islamic Revolution. In this context, Iranian women have emerged as active representatives of this discourse, not only within the country but also on the international stage. The discourse of resistance, in essence, is an effort to oppose Western domination and defend the independence and dignity of Muslims, with Iranian women playing a central role in effectively promoting and presenting this discourse globally.

The redefinition of women's roles in the Islamic Republic of Iran, particularly in public diplomacy, has led to the presentation of a new and different image of Muslim women. Contrary to the common Western perception that portrays Muslim women as passive and confined to the private sphere, in the Islamic Republic of Iran, women are seen as resilient, knowledgeable, independent, and active in various social, cultural, artistic, academic, and diplomatic fields. Within this discourse, women are not only viewed as mothers who nurture future generations but also as active social and political agents, standing firm against oppression and imperialism, while maintaining their religious and cultural identity. Especially within the discourse of resistance, Iranian women, through their significant contributions in the fields of media, academia, art, social diplomacy, and humanitarian activities, have been central to promoting and advancing this discourse to the world.

In the media diplomacy arena, Iranian women have played a key role in international media outlets such as Press TV, Al-Alam, and Al-Kawthar. These women, as spokespersons for the Muslim Iranian community, have been instrumental in showcasing the discourse of resistance. Through their storytelling of the resistance movements in Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen, they have successfully conveyed the message of resistance in opposition to Western imperialism and Israel. These women, by presenting the narratives and struggles of oppressed nations, have introduced the discourse of resistance as an alternative to Western policies of domination. This has had a significant impact on promoting the image of the resilient and active Muslim woman on the global stage.

In the field of academic and scientific diplomacy, Iranian women have also had a prominent presence at international conferences, seminars, and academic projects, where they not only introduce the scientific achievements of the Islamic Republic of Iran but also offer a different portrayal of Muslim women as intellectuals and researchers with a resilient and independent spirit. These women, particularly in academic circles, have played a crucial role in strengthening the discourse of resistance and presenting it to the world. The participation of women

such as Dr. Zahra Mostafavi and Dr. Fatemeh Tabatabai at international conferences is a prime example of this, as they have not only presented scientific achievements but also showcased the resilient and independent image of Muslim women in the face of global challenges.

In the realm of cultural and artistic diplomacy, Iranian women have made notable contributions by producing works inspired by the discourse of resistance in cinema, documentaries, poetry, calligraphy, handicrafts, and theater. The films made by Iranian female directors, which have been showcased at international festivals, have been successful in conveying messages of justice-seeking, resistance, and self-sacrifice. These works of art, particularly in global cinema and the visual arts festivals, have acted as cultural ambassadors for the discourse of resistance, communicating its principles to the world.

In the area of social and humanitarian diplomacy, Iranian women have been actively involved in NGOs and voluntary organizations, supporting women and children in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen. These activities, while humanitarian, also have a cultural-political dimension, and have been crucial in reinforcing the public image of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its people. Their efforts in organizations and charities have significantly contributed to promoting the discourse of resistance from a humanitarian and social perspective.

However, despite these impressive achievements, there are also challenges faced by women in this field. One of the major challenges identified in the research is structural and organizational barriers, which hinder the process of supporting and facilitating the activities of women in public diplomacy. In this regard, there is a need to create more effective mechanisms for supporting active women in public diplomacy and increasing coordination between various governmental and non-governmental institutions. Additionally, traditional and conservative views in some sections of society sometimes prevent further participation of women in international arenas. Some active cultural women face limitations in accepting their transnational roles due to these societal barriers.

From the findings of this research, it can be concluded that Iranian women play a crucial and influential role in the public diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Their presence in media, academic institutions, the arts, social activities, and humanitarian efforts has effectively contributed to introducing a new image of the Muslim woman to the world. These women have played a significant role in countering the negative propaganda from the West about the Islamic Republic of Iran and Muslim women, and have been influential in promoting the discourse of resistance. Therefore, Iranian women, through their active participation in various fields of

Impact Factor:	ISRA (India)	= 6.317	SIS (USA)	= 0.912	ICV (Poland)	= 6.630
	ISI (Dubai, UAE)	= 1.582	ПИИИ (Russia)	= 0.191	PIF (India)	= 1.940
	GIF (Australia)	= 0.564	ESJI (KZ)	= 8.100	IBI (India)	= 4.260
	JIF	= 1.500	SJIF (Morocco)	= 7.184	OAJI (USA)	= 0.350

public diplomacy, have been able to introduce the discourse of resistance as one of the key pillars of Iran's foreign policy and have been influential in strengthening this discourse globally.

References:

- Adler-Nissen, R. (2015). *Opting Out of the European Union: Diplomacy, Sovereignty and European Integration*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ahmadi, S. (2018). "The Role of Women in the International Media of the Islamic Republic of Iran." *Media Quarterly*.
- Bagheri, F. (2023). "Cultural Diplomacy of Women in the Art of Resistance." *Journal of Revolutionary Art*.
- Delphi, S. (2019). "Resistance in the Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran," *International Studies Quarterly*, Issue 72.
- Hosseini, M. (2021). "Muslim Women and the Discourse of Resistance," *Monthly Women Today*, Issue 55.
- Khamenei, S. A. (2015). *Statements during a meeting with elite academic and cultural women*.
- Khamenei, S. A. (2018). *Statements of the Supreme Leader in a meeting with elite women*.
- Kazemi, M. (2017). "Iranian Muslim Women in the Western View." *Cultural Communications Research Journal*.
- Leader of the Revolution (2018). *Second Step of the Islamic Revolution Statement*.
- Melissen, J. (Ed.). (2005). *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*. Palgrave.
- Miskimmon, A., O'Loughlin, B., & Roselle, L. (2014). *Strategic Narratives: Communication Power and the New World Order*. Routledge.
- Mirzadeh, H. (2019). "Institutional Analysis of Public Diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran with Emphasis on the Role of Women." *Foreign Policy Research Journal*.
- Nasr, F. (2019). "Muslim Women and the Narrative of the Islamic Revolution." *Women Studies Quarterly*.
- Nye, J. (2004). *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. *PublicAffairs*.
- Parsaei, A. (2018). "Challenges of Women's Cultural Participation in the International Arena." *Cultural Sociology Quarterly*.
- Rahmani, F. (2021). "The Lived Experiences of Iranian Cultural Women in Informal Public Diplomacy." *Women and Politics Journal*.
- Rehnavard, Z. (2014). *Muslim Women in Iran: Role and Image*. Tehran: Office of Islamic Culture Publication.
- Sadeghi, N. (2022). "Muslim Women and the Representation of the Discourse of Resistance in Virtual Space." *Media and Culture Quarterly*.
- Snow, N. (2009). *Public Diplomacy and Propaganda: Rethinking Diplomacy in the 21st Century*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Talebzadeh, N. (2021). "Scientific Diplomacy of Iranian Women: Opportunities and Challenges." International Conference on Women and Science.
- Wendt, A. (1999). *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Yazdani, M. (2020). "Iranian Women in International Humanitarian Activities." *World of Islam Journal*.