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**Research Paper**

**Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations and Ways for Attracting New Members  
(A study of Tehran's Non-Governmental Organizations Using the Fundamental Theory Approach)**

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**Introduction:**

Today, environmental issues have affected human life in the world, including Iran. Environmental problems are mainly the result of human use of natural resources and improper treatment of the environment, including the inappropriate use of fossil fuels. To achieve sustainable development, specifically in the field of energy, the knowledge of the correct ways of using natural resources and non-profit behaviors towards the environment, as well as proper ways to protect it must be considered. Given that new development approaches emphasize the need for the participation of all individuals and different groups in society, the role of environmental non-governmental organizations in achieving these goals, protecting the environment, and reducing vulnerability is very important. The purpose of the present study was to analyze the strategies of environmental non-governmental organizations in climate change and energy adaptation programs with a focus on an urban area.

**Materials and Methods:**

The approach of this research was interpretive. This study was conducted using contextual theory. Participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling in the form of snowball sampling, based on which 16 members of environmental non-governmental organizations in Tehran in 2019 were selected. Sampling in this study continued until it reached theoretical saturation. Accordingly, at the end of 16 interviews, data saturation was obtained. The data were collected using semi-structured interviews and analyzed using open, axial, and selective coding steps. In open coding, the data were first grouped into separate lines and categories, and a code or concept was attached to them. In the axial coding stage, the related raw codes were subdivided in terms

of features and concepts. At this stage, the categories were connected as a network, and finally, the main categories and the core category emerged in addition to a paradigm model were extracted. The extracted paradigm model was divided into four parts: causal conditions, intervening conditions, strategies, and consequences. The four parts were formed around the central phenomenon.

**Discussion of Results and Conclusions:**

Data analysis showed that the causal conditions affecting the ways of attracting the participation of non-governmental organizations and the causes of the phenomenon of persuasion and related strategies were a sense of responsibility for the environment, scientific and executive

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ability of members, self-efficacy, and belief in the effect of individual action (effectiveness). Also, the intervening conditions affecting the phenomenon of persuasion were the weakness of society in the field of awareness (about individual duties, environmental knowledge, and status quo), lack of appropriate contexts in the society, weakness in group interactions, lack of proper infrastructure in buildings, and restrictions on laws. Besides, the results showed that the strategies adopted by non-governmental organizations were training and promotion of environmental knowledge at both intra-organizational and extra-organizational levels, improving local knowledge, fear and hope (the promise of a better future and fear of potential risks), sustainable local change (empowerment, alternative jobs, the formation of a local organization), profit and creating consensus between policymakers and active energy actors for legitimacy, division at the government, industry and university levels. The consequences of adopting these strategies were raising the level of awareness, responsibility, empowerment and independence of local communities, earning money, and prosperity of ecotourism. In general, the results of the present study showed that the main method of members of environmental groups to attract the participation of target groups was persuasion. To achieve this, the members of the non-governmental organizations have focused their efforts on educating and benefiting various groups. The results of this study can help other environmental agencies and government organizations to use the various capacities of environmental agencies.

**Keywords:** Climate Change, Energy, Non-Governmental Organizations, Environment, Social Participation, Background Theory, Tehran.

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