Title: Outside Lobbying

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Definition

Interest groups can choose from a wide variety of activities to influence public policy. The two main strategies are "outside lobbying" and "inside lobbying." While inside lobbying refers to activities aimed at influencing policymakers through direct interaction (e.g., by means of advisory boards, consultation procedures, or personal contacts), outside lobbying seeks to influence them *indirectly* through the mobilization of public opinion (e.g., Kollman, 1998). Some scholars make use of different labels, such as "access and voice" (Beyers, 2004), "direct and indirect strategies" (Binderkrantz, 2005, 2008), or "quiet and noisy politics" (Culpepper, 2011), to express a similar distinction. The crucial roles of outside lobbying are to involve the general public in the policy process and to influence public opinion by changing how voters consider and respond to policy issues (Kollman, 1998, p. 8). This expansion of conflict to a wider audience has always been a key strategy in democratic politics (Schattschneider, 1960/1988). Through outside lobbying, interest groups can shift attention to their issue and demonstrate to policymakers that citizens care about the issue and are likely to weigh this information in their voting decision. However, scholars have also stressed the risks of outside lobbying and argued that groups may damage their inside lobbying efforts if they simultaneously pursue outside strategies (e.g., Beyers, 2004). Therefore, interest groups selectively apply outside lobbying.

This chapter first identifies different outside lobbying strategies then discusses how reliance on outside lobbying varies according to group type and institutional context, the two most widely discussed factors in the literature.

Different Outside Lobbying Strategies

Both inside and outside lobbying strategies are composed of a range of different tactics. While some empirical studies combine these activities into single measures of inside and outside lobbying use (e.g., Dür & Mateo, 2013; Kriesi et al., 2007; Weiler & Brändle, 2015), others differentiate between different types of inside and outside lobbying strategies, often according to their target. With regard to inside lobbying, an administrative strategy is generally distinguished from a parliamentary strategy (e.g., Binderkrantz, 2005, 2008; Binderkrantz et al., 2015). The former includes tactics such as contacting public servants, serving on governmental advisory boards, and presenting research to the government, while the latter consists of personal contacts with members of parliament and participation in parliamentary hearings. With respect to outside lobbying, researchers generally identify a media strategy, as well as one or several strategies targeting the citizen public. The media strategy is relatively straightforward and comprises activities such as holding press conferences, issuing press releases, or writing letters to the editor (see the entry Interest Groups and the News Media). Depending on their degree of citizen involvement, outside lobbying strategies targeting the public can be further divided into information, mobilization, and protest strategies (Tresch & Fischer, 2015). The informing strategy includes activities involving information about the public and of the public (e.g., polling the public, presenting oneself on the Internet) but rarely leads to direct contact with citizens. The mobilization and protest strategies, in contrast, aim for citizen participation but demand varying degrees of citizen time and effort. While mobilization refers to conventional activities that do not require much commitment from the individual citizen (e.g., signing petitions, attending public meetings), protesting includes costly and confrontational activities (such as demonstrating, striking, or boycotting). The ultimate goal of all outside lobbying strategies is to win media attention in order to influence public opinion in one's favor and, in this way, put pressure on policymakers.

Who Uses Outside Lobbying Strategies, and When?

Outside lobbying has long been considered a fallback option for groups excluded from privileged access to policymaking arenas (e.g., Kollman, 1998, p. 12). However, the empirical

literature demonstrates that inside and outside lobbying are not mutually exclusive, but complementary, and that most groups have added selected outside lobbying tactics to their standard inside lobbying repertoire (e.g., Beyers 2004; Binderkrantz, 2005; Kriesi et al., 2007; Kollman, 1998). Yet, the relative use and specific combination of different inside and outside lobbying strategies vary depending on several factors. In the following, the two most often discussed factors are briefly reviewed: group type and institutional context.

Group Type

Many studies have argued, and have empirically shown, that group type matters in the choice and combination of different outside and inside lobbying strategies (e.g., Binderkrantz, 2008; Dür & Mateo, 2013; Gais & Walker, 1991; Tresch & Fischer, 2015; Weiler & Brändli, 2015). However, the literature still lacks a shared interest group concept or a common interest group classification scheme (see the entry Interest Groups). Some studies distinguish specific from diffuse interest groups (e.g., Gais & Walker, 1991; Beyers, 2004), while others distinguish groups with corporatist resources from public interest groups (Binderkrantz, 2005, 2008), interest groups from social movement organizations (Kriesi et al., 2007; Tresch & Fischer, 2015), cause groups from specific interest groups (Weiler & Brändli, 2015), or business associations from citizen groups and professional associations (Dür & Mateo, 2013). As argued by Weiler and Brändli (2015, p. 748), these different classifications are, however, largely congruent with each other. Public interest groups, social movement organizations, cause groups, or citizen groups are all organizations that defend public interests that are linked to broad and fragmented segments of society, such as consumers or migrants, whereas specific interests and groups with corporatist resources defend well-circumscribed subsections of society and champion the professional, social, or commercial interests of their members.

A widely shared expectation in the literature is that these specific interest groups generally focus on inside lobbying strategies and that public interest groups more often engage in outside lobbying strategies (e.g., Gais & Walker, 1991, p. 104–108; Kollman, 1998, p. 50). This assumption is based on various considerations. First and foremost, it is argued that public interest groups suffer from structural weakness and are almost forced into an outside lobbying strategy to compensate for their lack of systematic access to policymaking arenas (e.g., Gais & Walker, 1991, p. 105; Kollman, 1998, p. 107). This assumption is already present in Schattschneider's (1960/1988) classic theorizing of democratic politics and the interest of the relatively disadvantaged in expanding the "scope of conflict" to involve the public for their

cause. Second, authors stress that the reliance on outside lobbying strategies is not just a matter of a weak structural position in the policymaking process but also motivated by the necessity of public interest groups to constantly make their values and concerns publicly visible. Because their diffuse members are united only by their dedication to a common cause, their loyalties must be continually reinforced. Hence, to achieve publicity for their cause and create a perception that they are a worthwhile group defending a valuable public benefit, public interest groups are drawn toward outside lobbying strategies (Gais & Walker, 1991, p. 105–106). Third, while specific interest groups have resources that facilitate access to administrative and parliamentary arenas, such as expert knowledge and information, public interest groups are better endowed with resources (such as volunteers) that are important for gaining access to public fora (Binderkrantz et al., 2015, p. 100). These differences in the types of resources groups possess make an inside strategy relatively cheaper for specific interests and an outside strategy relatively more attractive for public interest groups (see the entry Interest Group Access).

There is consistent empirical support for the assumption that specific interest groups make more use of inside lobbying than do public interest groups (e.g., Beyers, 2004, p. 224; Dür & Mateo, 2013, p. 674; Kriesi et al. 2007; Weiler & Brändli 2015, p. 760). However, this does not necessarily imply that specific interest groups resort less to outside lobbying overall. For instance, the analysis by Kriesi et al. (2007) suggests that actors who use more inside lobbying at the national level also have more elaborate outside-oriented strategies. Yet, with regard to the choice of *specific* outside lobbying strategies, a common assumption is that specific interests favor moderate strategies (such as talking to the press) and refrain from confrontational, disruptive behavior, such as mobilizing and protesting. Empirically, it has been shown that media-oriented activities are frequently used by all types of actors, whereas mobilization and especially protesting are less common (Beyers, 2004; Binderkrantz, 2005; Kollman, 1998; Tresch & Fischer, 2015). In Denmark, cause groups are much more likely to pursue both media-oriented strategies and mobilization strategies, while groups in control of specific resources are less likely to do so (Binderkrantz, 2005). In contrast, on the level of the European Union (EU), specific interests are more inclined to combine their efforts in seeking direct access to policymakers through information politics, including media activities, than diffuse interests. Protest, on the other hand, is more likely to become part of the overall lobbying strategy of diffuse interests, despite not being important in terms of frequency of use (Beyers, 2004, p. 227).

In a comparative study, Tresch and Fischer (2015, p. 364) find that social movement organizations rely significantly more on the mobilization strategy than (specific) interest groups. Among the latter, unions and farmers resort more often to protests than other types of (specific) interest groups. Overall, however, various studies suggest that group type alone cannot fully account for the choice of lobbying strategies. While there is variation across group types, groups still have considerable leeway in their choice of lobbying strategy, as supported by the fact that there are also substantial differences within group types. Some of these differences can be related to a group's endowment with (material) resources. While Dür and Mateo show that business groups increasingly turn to inside lobbying as their staff size grows (2013, p. 675), Kriesi et al. (2007, p. 67–68) suggest that resourceful actors have the luxury of diversifying their strategies and fully exploiting outside lobbying strategies, although they believe them to be less important than inside lobbying.

Institutional Context

Next to group type, the institutional framework of a country is often expected to affect interest groups' lobbying strategies, and several more recent studies adopt a comparative design to study its influence (or to at least control for it, e.g., Dür & Mateo, 2013). The general argument is that the choice of outside lobbying strategies depends on the degree of openness of the political system: while open institutional settings with multiple points of access and intervention in policymaking arenas invite interest groups to make use of inside lobbying, closed political systems tend to force more groups into outside lobbying strategies (e.g., Kriesi et al. 2007, p. 55). Based on Lijphart (1991), scholars typically consider consensus democracies with a corporatist interest group system and policy concertation as open and qualify majoritarian countries with a pluralist interest group system as closed. Empirically, the comparative study by Kriesi et al. (2007), which included seven European countries, shows that in Switzerland, a paradigmatic case of consensus democracy, groups behave differently than in other countries. Weiler and Brändli (2015) dig deeper into this result by comparing Switzerland and Germany, two corporatist countries, in order to assess the influence of direct democracy on reliance on inside versus outside lobbying (see the entry Interest Groups and Direct Democracy). They argue that direct democracy facilitates the access of public interest groups to policymakers and thus increases their use of inside lobbying. At the same time, they expect direct democracy to lead specific interest groups to pay more attention to public opinion and to invest more in outside lobbying. Their analysis confirms that public interest

groups use a more balanced mix of inside and outside lobbying tactics in Switzerland than in Germany, while no moderating effect was found for specific interest groups.

With regard to the choice of *specific* outside lobbying strategies, it is assumed that interest groups largely refrain from disruptive protest activities in the more open political systems, where confrontational activities are particularly at odds with the tradition of negotiation and compromise-seeking (Binderkrantz, 2005, p. 771; Tresch & Fischer, 2015, p. 358). In addition, Tresch and Fischer (2015) argue that the openness of national media systems also shapes the choice of particular outside lobbying strategies. They suggest that strongly commercialized media systems (such as in the Anglo-Saxon countries) and strongly politicized media systems (as in Italy, for instance) are less accessible to interest groups—the former because of their strong focus on non-political news, and the latter because of their strong reliance on elites. To reach public opinion via the media, interest groups operating in these media systems are more likely to turn to mobilization and protest strategies. Their results show that protesting is indeed used less often in open than in closed systems, while media and information strategies are slightly more widespread in open institutional contexts.

Overall, however, the role of institutional accessibility appears to be rather limited with regard to actual lobbying *behavior* on the national level but more important with respect to the *subjective evaluation* of outside lobbying: in closed systems, (specific) interest groups and social movement organizations value outside lobbying to a significantly greater extent than in open systems (Kriesi et al. 2007, p. 67–68). On the EU level, institutional factors seem to have a stronger impact, and interest groups do adapt their lobbying strategies to the specific functioning of the different legislative bodies (Beyers, 2004; Kriesi et al., 2007).

Other Factors
Group types and institutional context are the most often examined factors in the study of interest groups' lobbying behavior, but scholars have speculated about, and sometimes demonstrated, the importance of additional factors, such as issue characteristics (e.g., Kollman, 1998; Dür & Mateo, 2013), the nature of the pursued policy goals (Binderkrantz and Krøyer, 2012), the phase of the policymaking process (e.g., Binderkrantz, 2005; Kriesi et al., 2007), and the state of public opinion (Kollman, 1998).

Conclusion

In the 1990s, Kollman (1998, p. 5) stated that "precisely when, why, or how outside lobbying operates to enhance group influence […] is not well understood." Since then, various studies have shed light on the factors that incentivize the use of outside lobbying strategies, including group type and institutional factors. This literature has consistently shown that most groups widely use outside lobbying strategies, especially media-oriented activities, and combine them with tactics of conventional inside lobbying within their overall influence strategy. However, existing works can still only provide snapshots of interest groups' influence strategies. They cannot currently address questions regarding time trends in the use of inside and outside lobbying strategies, although ongoing processes of mediatization and Europeanization might affect the balance of groups' mix of inside and outside lobbying strategies. Moreover, more attention still needs to be paid to the outcomes of outside lobbying in terms of other groups' strategic reactions, public opinion shifts, and public policy responses.

Cross-references to other entries in the book
- Interest Groups
- Interest Group Access
- Interest Groups and The News Media
- Interest Groups and Direct Democracy

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