



RESEARCH PAPER

Dissecting Neo-Classical Realism and Foreign Policy Behavior: An Analysis

Dr. Shahid Hameed

Director Research, Centre for International Strategic Studies (CISS) AJK, Pakistan

***Corresponding Author:** Shahid.hmm@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The current study explores and dissects the philosophical roots of neo-classical realism. The analysis aims to disclose the theoretical underpinnings of this framework that enable it to describe the state's behavior. The analysis is based upon a comparative approach that helps to understand the complex synthesis scheme of the neo-classical realist framework. The neo-classical realism is based upon an extensive array of internal and external sets of variables that help to explain foreign policy actions. The bedrock of foreign policy behavior of a state is intricately woven from these interplaying variables. As a matter of fact, the neo-classical realist perspective on security and the distribution of power lays the foundation for the analysis of foreign policy behavior of states. The discussion reveals that the major portions of its attributes are constructed through neo-realist routes synthesizing the domestic intervening variables. Though the framework has the capacity to incorporate complexities of foreign policy and decision-making, however, it cannot be considered an independent theory for foreign policy studies.

KEYWORDS Foreign Policy Behavior, Foreign Policy Theories, International Relations Theory, Neo-Classical Realism, Realism

Introduction

International relations theoretical literature has been connected with the mainstream foreign policy analysis (FPA) discourse (Hudson & Vor, 1995). FPA scholarship has a scientific challenge essentially linked with the variety of variables and subjective dimensions that ultimately build the notion of comparative foreign policy analysis (CFPA) (Hudson & Vor, 1995). This theoretical conception of the scientific and systematic study of foreign policy 'has different inquiry domain within international relations discipline' (Alden & Aran, 2017). The FPA discourse has been dominated by the neo-classical realist approach as it provides a loose framework to explain and understand state's behaviour. However, the usage of neo-classical realism as an independent theory of foreign policy is misleading. The foreign policy behaviour of a state has complex and distinct characteristics which reduce the capacity of mainstream theoretical frameworks to be used for explaining relationships between behavioural phenomena.

Foreign policy behaviour can be defined as 'responses, actions, and reactions of a state in a particular internal and external structure. These responses, actions, and reactions may be formal or informal in a manner that coincidence with its domestic and external environment. A particular foreign policy has plausible reasons, motivations, and objective foundations. Foreign policy has a combination of influences, the decision-making process, and the implementation. The permanent factors that influence decision-making choices include ideology, history, culture, and geography which assert an enduring influence in the formulation of foreign policy. Of course, each state's ideological grounds and historical branding bring the difference in foreign policy behaviour; otherwise, all states pursuing national interest may have theoretically similar fundamental foreign policy goals.

The neo-classical dominance as a formal theory to understand foreign policy behaviors is rooted in its ability to accommodate all intervening variables. As an illustration,

conventional determinants of foreign policy, such as geography, ideology, and national interest, have traditionally been regarded as enduring constants. However, it is imperative to recognize that foreign policy behavior can be influenced by evolving variables. The neo-classical theory, in its comprehensive approach, accommodates both subjective and tangible factors. By far in the case of considering any other foreign policy theory except neo-classical realism, these intervening variables have remained a neglected domain. The outcome or policy has thus generally been mostly analyzed on the basis of structural variables alone. This approach perhaps suffered the negligence of cognitive and normative forces that also assert an influence on the psyche of foreign policy choices of decision makers. Generally, the state's behaviour can be assessed through patterns of inputs; however, this traditional way lacks situational decisions and societal transitions. A typical pattern of behaviour has macro and micro-level influences. Of course, the macro-level influences have domestic and external characteristics but they do not give any explanation of gradual transitional changes, event-based or situational elements that shape the policies of a nation. Gradual transitional change means an evolution in the thinking of a state that includes foreign as well as domestic linkages of diplomacy that not only shape foreign relations but also furnish domestic affairs and the thinking of a nation (Bjola & Kornprobst, 2013).

The micro-level contents of social and political composition have also a significant portion to deal with foreign policy and state behaviour. However, neo-realism or the structuralism missed these valuable sections. Transitional changes can be traced within religious, cultural and psychological up-gradation. The second important element missing from the generalization scheme to understand state behaviour is the event or situational motivation of foreign policy. It also has outward and inward associations. Neo-classical realism enjoys significant prominence within the contemporary international relations discourse, particularly in the realm of foreign policy analysis. However, owing to the absence of a specific, comprehensive foreign policy theory, this framework has been adopted as an independent philosophical approach which is misleading.

Literature Review

(Waltz, 1979) theory of international relations has core position and became the foundation for Gideon Rose to extend the theoretical debate. (Ripsman, & Taleferro, 2016) and few others thus consider this theory as a 'logical extension' of structural portion of realist international theory.

At the same time, a foreign policy can be traced within the state's actions, purposes and choices essentially linked with its capacity to act, react, or not to act. (Rose, 1998) drew the primary lines of neo-classical realism in his extraordinary discussion of international relations theory to explain state behavior. (Firoozabadi & Ashkezari, 2016) discussed fundamental propositions of neo-classical theory and its dealing with agency-structure issues. (Lomia, 2020) has also drawn the neo-classical canvas on similar lines explaining the theoretical evolution of the realist paradigm.

Theoretically, states are equal—as their function is based on similar primary objectives. Choosing a particular foreign policy decision demonstrates state behaviour that is linked with advantages, preferences and choices. The means and sources of foreign policy were discussed by Rathbun in an extraordinary way (Rathbun, 2008). The commentators on state behaviour identified different variables that influence state behaviour and decision-making. (Rosenau, 1969) (Miller & Holl, 2005) (Walker, 1969) (Gray, 1973) (Dawson & Robinson, May 1963) (Rosenau, 2001). Similarly, different states have different capabilities that include negotiating, achieving goals, and conducting diplomacy shaped by a host of variables as foreign policy inputs. To study and analyse the foreign policy behaviour of the neo-classical realist framework, however, has no separate scale of analysis beyond the existing realist framework of international relations theory. (Fearon, 1998) for

example, considers neo-realism as a reductionist idea but do not consider this as an independent theory in foreign policy studies.

Hudson and Vor, (1995) defines FPA discourse as an inextricable part of mainstream international relations. (Kitchen, 2010) also confirms that neo-classical approach has widely used the basis of neo-realism. (Schweller, 2003) however gives a more indepth explanation of this framework and defines it as refined and scientific form of previous realist work.

Material and Method

The current study is based upon explanatory methodology to dissect and explore the neo-classical synthesis of classical and structural theories of international relations. The comparative analysis provided a way forward to understand the problem area. Within the limitations of comparative analysis, the dissection of traditional international relations theory has been explained in this paper. To support the arguments, results and to reach a logical conclusion, relevant international relations theory literature has been consulted. There were three major question which were addressed in this paper.

- 1- What is the relevance of foreign policy behavior with mainstream international relations theory?
- 2- How and why neo-classical realism provides extended realist framework for understanding the foreign policy behavior of states?
- 3- Why neo-classical realism is a synthesis within international relations theory literature and not an independent theory of foreign policy studies.

Neo-Classic Realism and Foreign Policy Behaviour

International relations are not all about waging wars or constructing peace but are more complex phenomenon (Kennedy, 1991). Neo-Classical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy (Rose, 1968) by Gideon Rose has a distinct way of understanding the complex nature of a state's behaviour in an international system employing the distinctive hybrid framework.

This theoretical framework explicitly integrates both extrinsic and intrinsic factors, offering a refined and structured reinterpretation of classical realist principles (Rose, 1968). Advocates of this perspective contend that a nation's foreign policy objectives are primarily determined by its position within the global order, notably influenced by its relative material power capabilities (Rose, 1968). The foundational alignment with realism underscores their perspective. Nevertheless, proponents of this framework go on to assert that the influence of these power capabilities on foreign policy decisions manifests indirectly and intricately, necessitating the mediation of intermediate variables at the individual unit level. This nuanced aspect of their theory aligns them with the neo-classical paradigm (Rose, 1968).

The distinction is based on three major characteristics of neo-classic realism. Firstly, this framework accepts the importance of domestic as well as systemic factors (Firoozabadi, 2016). It does not imply complete rejection or negation of neo-realist preference for structural and systemic pressure. Secondly, strategic, economic and political interests can be explained within the broader spectrum of the "relative power concept". States always opt for power maximization not only in military means but also at strategic and economic levels. In foreign policies, interests play a role in motivation (Hermann, 1980). Interestingly, it is hard to specify an absolute origin of interests in a holistic approach as the role of different actors in the formulation of state behaviour makes this complex and somehow unpredictable. For example, societal composition, leadership tendency, competency and many other variables perform their role as domestic agents.

On the other hand systemic organization and power structure also compels an actor to act accordingly. Much of the neo-realist debate therefore considers powerful structure as an unchallenging phenomenon. But their explanation of state behaviour is incorrect as the neo-classical theorists believe. Technically, there are four reasons for their falsification. The first argument is related to decision-making actors. If the structure is the only force that defines a state's behaviour in foreign policy then what will be the status of decision-making actors i.e., people, leadership, organizations institutions and so on? There was a theoretical loophole, exceptionally filled by the neo-classical theory of international politics.

The neo-realist approach has a 'reductionist dilemma' (Fearon, 1998) as compared to the neo-classical approach. Neo-realist philosophy undermines states' ability to perform independently as compared to structure. On the other hand, the neo-classic approach to states' actions is more inclusive as this framework allows a converging facility to domestic and systemic variables through strengthening statism and anarchic foundations of realist philosophy. Finally, in a neo-realist ground intervening variables are not considered as important actors. In this situation, policy implementation machinery loses its importance and effectiveness. Thus an absolute power gain and absolute interest gain becomes unjust.

The state's ambition to re-organize structures and orders gives space to interplay neo-realist theory. This characteristic is also embedded into the neo-classic school of thought that also absorbs offensive and defensive realism within its domain. Thus capabilities generate the intention and behaviour of an actor within and beyond a structure. More specifically neo-classic framework considers relative material power as an important driving force of foreign policy of states (Rose, 1968).

Similarly, the decision-making stage of foreign policy cannot be separated from leadership ambitions. Thus they are made by political leadership of a country based on their perception of capabilities (Rose, 1968). Thus apparently as a source of the state's behaviour, leadership's 'psychological makeup (Ripsman, & Taleferro , 2016)' is more important as compared to external sources.

A neo-classic framework is thus more flexible as compared to general analytical approaches to the foreign policy behaviour of states. For example, the most common approach in foreign policy analysis is 'innenpolitik' which has more emphasis on domestic politics (Ripsman, & Taleferro , 2016). However, they do not have the ability to disclose behavioural differences of the same type of states. While Rose's theoretical synthesis accepts the role of intervening variables extracted from traditional and neo-realist philosophies the foreign policy outcome and importance of strategic ideas reflect this synthesis of domestic and structural pressure (Kitchen, 2010). As a matter of fact, the "Strategy is not the art of winning the wars" (Kitchen, 2010). But it has more expended volume which includes subjective ideas and material choices. The failure of constructivism and neo-realism is therefore the primary reason to acknowledge the broad spectrum of neo-classic framework (Kitchen, 2010).

Despite a distinct position compared to the liberal approach to defining the international system, the realists also consider acts of state cooperation in a more appropriate way. In a pure 'loneliness status' the states have no choice but to survive through self-help formula. This primary realist assumption determines and draws lines for state-to-state relations, connections and cooperative mode. It denotes highly interest-based interaction between or among states. Thus under realist philosophy, friendship, cooperation, alliance or any other optimistic value must have roots in survival probabilities. Mearsheimer is of the view that the alliance is possible in the real world and it happens not on the basis of permanent agreements but actually such happenings are a consequence of the state's interest to ensure its security. The structural explanation of this behaviour according to him is simply a give-and-take act and alliances are in fact temporary marriages based on the conveniences and convergences of states (Mearsheimer, 1994).

Theoretically, the state is a primary actor and the anarchic world structure compels it to perform its actions on the basis of national interest primarily defined as 'survival'. At the same time, the conflict remains a permanent phenomenon and the rest of the actors cannot be neglected while dealing with the state's decision-making processes. State preferences always change with certain changes in their objectives. The broader outline of neo-classical realism in international relations covers fundamental issues of state affairs. However, a particular understanding of 'why states act in a particular way' has more complex issue areas. Within the realist philosophic domain, the neo-realist structural explanation lacks some important elements of state function. As Waltz says, it is not possible to declare what state 'X' is going to perform in the next few days (Waltz, 1979). However, the assessment of behaviour on the basis of a comprehensive examination of external and internal characteristics is more comfortable within neo-classical explanations. This implies that neo-classical realists do believe in the importance of structure (Eric , 1992). The acknowledgement of neo-realist foundation is a justification for scholars to critique neoclassical realism and they consider this framework as an extension and more scientific form of neo-realism (Schweller, 2003).

Neo-classical realism as the other option, considers innenpolitik and structural explanations as ambiguous frameworks. Innenpolitik theories fall short in providing a comprehensive understanding of foreign policy dynamics (Rose, 1968). According to this perspective, the preeminent factor shaping the overarching course of nations' foreign policies across temporal dimensions unequivocally lies in their relative material power in juxtaposition to the intricate tapestry of the international system (Rose, 1968). Hence, it is within this realm that a meticulous and foundational examination of foreign policy imperatives should be inaugurated" (Rose, 1968).

An interesting issue that has not been widely considered as an important part of foreign policy behaviour by international relations theorists is 'strategic vision'. As "strategic thinking" strategic vision provides a credible decision-making insight. As for issues are concerned, flaws in strategic vision lead to misperceptions and faulty decision-making. Other internal variables, including political culture, leadership history and capability, economic and military strength and ideological alignments also seem to be valuable inputs in defining choices of state. For example, a change or evolution in strategic vision can change the ultimate goal and way impact the guiding principle of national policy.

A comparative analysis shows that neo classical approach have similar basic lines as structural and classical theorists have. For example, states are rational actors and neo-classical realists do accept rationalist scientific epistemology (Folker, 2002). However, the evolution in strategic vision and strategic thinking of states also involves micro-level aspects of change in foreign policy behaviour. Fundamentally, the agreement of both neoclassical and neo-realists on security and survival prominently draw similar lines for foreign policy options. Neoclassical realists align with structural realist perspectives in positing that the core underpinning of states' foreign security policies centres on a meticulous evaluation of the evolving threats and opportunities within the international political chess board. This discernment fundamentally shapes the array of policy options available to individual states (Ripsman, & Taleferro , 2016). Given the existential stakes involved, wherein any failure to adequately secure their position in an anarchic international system may spell their downfall in a conflict-ridden environment, states are compelled by a potent set of incentives. Consequently, the core focus revolves around external variables, thereby prompting them to painstakingly engineer foreign policy paradigms that can astutely and adaptively respond to these external exigencies (Ripsman, & Taleferro , 2016). The fundamental assumption of survival and self-help objective of states in an anarchic system is an essential element of the realist perspective of state behaviour. The neo-classical realist framework is rooted in a similar assumption. It also takes into consideration some additional factors and gives new insights into the theoretical

conception of imaging and consolidates those variables which are neglected by structural realists.

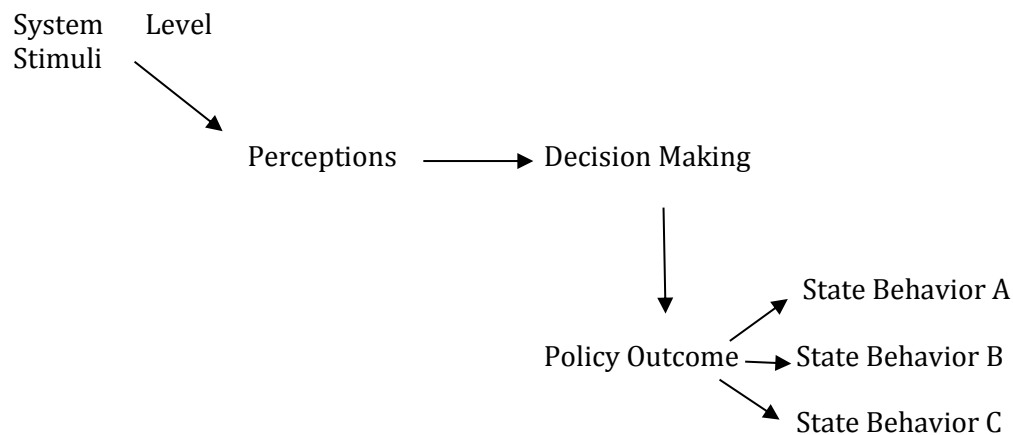


Fig. 1 Neo-Classical Model given by Norrin M, Ripsman

Comparing role theory with neo-classical intervening variable approach it reveals that it connects FPA with international relations theoretical literature. It establishes the link between agent and structure but does not cover relative and intervening variables. The issue of analysing comprehensively impact factors like role of sub actors and civilizational impact which define or shape the role of decision-makers remains negligible. As a reductionist version of foreign policy analysis, role theories have limited scope to explain complex foreign policy behaviours. For example, they do not consider and discuss public attitude in the same theoretical proposition (Cantir & Kaarbo, 2016). Societal issues, perceptions, strong beliefs, business and commercial interests, rituals and so many other forces transform a decision-maker’s choices.

Navigating the Credibility Problem and the State’s Decision Behavior:

The articulation of a foreign policy decision has quite different dimensions as compared to the formulation of foreign policy behaviour. It means that public response and acceptance of a foreign policy decision impacts the outcome of the decision and feedback process. As a result, a clear image of one’s foreign policy behaviour cannot be accurately measured through a situational decision. This issue acquires credibility through the support of the masses and the legitimacy of decision-makers.

Although the structural theory of international relations has a vast range of disseminating subjective and tangible attributes of state actions and reactions, however, the issue of foreign policy behaviour is more complex and dynamic in nature. The complexity of the issue is rooted in the ‘credibility problem’ and thus estimation of the success of a policy becomes difficult. Thus the means of foreign policy like an estimation of the success of a policy power and strength of the state which is not constant (Rathbun, 2008) is one of the several factors that make the decision successful.

Credibility means permanent criteria of a state’s actions and reactions. When, why and how a state will react or act in a particular fashion. For example, it is not possible in international relations that external or internal factors of a state’s foreign policy behaviour remain constant. This argument justifies the success or failure of policy in domestic social, economic or political environments

No state can permanently maintain an absolute constant state of domestic social, economic or political environment. Thus with the passage of time and changing domestic attributes foreign policy behaviour will also be affected. Structural evolution is also a reality and the evolutionary process also makes its own changes at the structural level. For example, unipolarity has its own characteristics of shaping a state's behaviour and other states' behaviour dealing with each other and the hegemonic power. Bi-polarity and multipolarity have different types of structural characteristics and impact on state's behaviour. Thus the unavailability of any single format of a state's foreign policy behaviour gives strength to using a neo-classical approach that supports a mixture of innenpolitik and structural explanations.

The credibility problem has two major dimensions to influence the foreign policy behaviour of a state. Firstly, the usual or expected foreign policy behaviour of a state can change with certain changes in domestic or structural changes. It means that variables can play a significant role in changing foreign policy behaviour. Secondly, an imbalance in domestic and structural pressures can reshape a state's negotiating behaviour with another state.

Generally, it is perceived that small states do not or cannot act independently as great powers do. In fact structural realists argue that small states achieve objectives in a structurally stratified world through bandwagon policy (Waltz, 1979) (Eric , 1992). The application of this theoretical approach, however, lacks some essential elements of realist philosophy. As G. Gvalia and D. Siroky et al., (2013) consider that it is an insufficient and overemphasized argument (Gvalia, 2013). It denotes that the foreign policy behaviour of small states cannot be always gauged or perceived via their perception of the external environment or on the basis of regional threat perception (Gvalia, 2013).

Within neo-classical realist parameters, extreme positioning in making sense of foreign policy behaviour can actually draw false understanding of one's action or reaction. Thus a traditional explanation of International relations theory requires the inclusion of self-perception of decision-making bodies (Sunny, 1999-2004). The strategic culture included a sense of insecurity, fear of war, economic challenges and a fragmented society. The self-perception of the elite was thus security-oriented and non-flexible at the ideological level. It is a fact that, in the WW-II period, the USSR has been a great power. The self-perception in the Russian elite was fuelled by an expansionist ideology and the establishment of its own socio-political system.

Foreign policy is used to achieve and strengthen the grand interests of states including security, economy, business and trade. These phenomena have also vast dimensions and expanded philosophical depth. For example, security includes the state's social, economic, political, ideological and human life propositions. It is not only the military but other dimensions of security as well which are linked with the survival and strength of a state.

Foreign policy, akin to the military's strategic doctrine, reflects the prevailing ethos of a state's common approach and the strategic culture of its domestic landscape. It operates as a dynamic framework, a myriad of emerging challenges, encompassing globalization, human rights, democracy promotion, counterterrorism efforts, and ecological concerns, have assumed pivotal roles in the international theatre. In tandem, economic diplomacy has risen as a critical facet in both the formulation and execution of foreign policy, akin to the logistical and tactical considerations of military planning. These transformations have prompted a recalibration of the international relations landscape, emphasizing the paramount importance of these issues, akin to the strategic realignment of forces. This transformative process has, in turn, facilitated the swift evolution of novel international norms, extending across these thematic domains and beyond, akin to the adaptation of military doctrine in response to evolving threats.

In contemporary international relations, foreign policy is thus a reflection of all these aspects of security. Moreover, internal and external security is inextricably linked with domestic and international structures. Similarly, economic interests are also becoming vast in nature as they are also becoming a permanent part of security discussions and national priorities. The same case is with trade and business areas which are now becoming backbone of a state and heavily dependent upon internal and global economic factors. This dual character of foreign policy ultimately shapes the dynamic and random behaviour of a state depending upon the same variables. This means that state behaviour has dual characteristics. Firstly somehow it is a controlled phenomenon for example the areas where states have a unilateral monopoly to control a factor or variable that influences the state's foreign policy. Secondly, the 'uncontrolled phenomenon' covers those areas of factors and variables that are not fully addressable for the state. For example, any international change that can harm or influence any state's dealing mode. In both cases, however, commitments are the outcomes that are perceived as the ultimate behaviour of the state.

Foreign policy analysis denotes investigations and procedures that give evidence to the behavioural characteristics of states (Sekhri, 2009). As the state has a unitary function in international relations, one cannot negate constraints and perception of a state while demonstrating any foreign policy option. How a state behaves in international system is not a mathematical framework with a definite answer. Similarly a state is not a moral entity (Jacobsen, , 2008). Assessment of a state behaviour in a realist framework requires a comprehensive investigation of the state's geographic existence to its linkages of the domestic and global political environment.

As an extended version of structural realism, neo-classical realist philosophy provides a new way to explain international politics as compared to traditional frameworks of neoliberalism or contemporary constructivist approaches (Ripsman, & Taleferro , 2016). A collective and comprehensive theory to understand state behaviour, the following are some prominent features of this theoretical approach.

Historically the systemic theory of international relations actually became famous due to the influence of great power politics. For example during WWI, WW-II, inter interwar period, or during the Cold War, the intensity of the power structure covered all those variables that were comparatively less potent due to the anarchic and stratified political environment of the world. This provided logic to structural realists to see power politics as the framework to understand the behaviour of states. They remained focused on acceptance of the notion of force as even permanent condition in the foreign policy behaviour of the state.

On the other hand, theorists focusing only on domestic sources of the country's foreign policy also ignored the importance of global factors. This is where neo-classical realists thought to build a bridge. This gap in the philosophy of international relations and particularly in the field of foreign policy was filled with a neo-classical scholarship. An interesting aspect of this bridge is to negate hard line philosophical foundation that falsifies liberal explanations of domestic factors. States always seek power to ensure their survival. As power is related to survival strategy, states desire to maximize power. Neo-classical realists take this realist characteristic from the individual perception of power and ultimately incorporate it into structural conception of power.

The evolutionary process of the international system also provides solid reasons to justify neo-classical realist's claims. Firstly, the change in the international system may cause domestic threats to states. It means that the state's stability or existence can be threatened due to any change at the structural level. Similarly, sometimes although not always, instability or disintegration of 'active systemic states' can harm the international system. For example, the bipolar world had the US and USSR as active systemic states.

Small, and inactive states logically followed the composition of the system through these active systemic states. After the disintegration of the former USSR, the bipolarity collapsed and this change ultimately hit the existence of an 'active systemic state' which ended that structure. USSR collapse was attributed to systemic change. Neo-classical approach however takes into consideration both domestic and systemic variables. The same is the case with the foreign policy of small states (Elman, 1995). The failure of neo-realist power focus on unit-level change related to behaviour of small states has been answered by neoclassical realist explanations.

The Agent Structure Linkage

There is no such international relations theory that can purely explain the qualitative and quantitative analysis of how and why states behave in a particular manner (Smith, 1998). The agent-structure debate is the second prominent feature of neo-classical theoretical framework. Theory is not hesitant to accommodate real agency-structure problem. From individual to an organized entity and from a state to an international system neo-classical realist framework can fix the actor's political role and issues of state ambitions.

One may determine the internal and external factors of an agency or structure with fault lines of the evolutionary process within the system. This dual understanding of the neo-classical approach allows state agents and system structures to perform the causal role (Wendt, 1987). Social structures consist of agents (Elman, 1995). These agents subsequently have relevant types of supporting characteristics.

Typically, the purpose of an agency is to perform a limited course of action that primarily ensures its own existence first and performs function at the structural level by the end. Thus, undoubtedly, an internal vulnerability of an agency does affect its own function and also deviates from the structural values. Any change in ideas or perceptions at an individual level may change with new imaginations or happenings (Morgenthau, 1972). This individual-level conception of fundamental realist philosophy is also part of the agent structure problem is analyzed by the framework of neo-classical realism.

Bandwagoning for instance is a unique tact of state to ensure their survival. There could be several reasons for so-called bandwagoning. However, accepting the reductionism critique of neo-classical realists on the neo-classical commentators, the internal realities and domestic situations also need to be analyzed carefully. Firstly the structural domain dictates foreign policy behaviour of states and secondly, the domestic domain that counters structural dictations and allows domestic factors and correction of actors to shape foreign policy behaviour based upon state interests as well as the self-interest of the ruling elite.

The new world order and resettlements in Europe and Asia in post-WW-II laid the foundation for the political future of the world with new dimensions. Also, the American serious entry into world affairs as a strong economic, political and military power gave a new direction to the international system. The emergence of bipolarity with the US and Russia as primary power centres of the world contributed to new debates in foreign policy thinking of states in that era and the bipolar systemic orientation ultimately shaped a hierarchical structure for foreign policy behaviour in the international system.

As classic realists believe, the subjective problem is a predominant character of the individual and structures are made up of human agency. For the same reason, the power-sharing or distribution of power is always triggered by subjective attitudes and desires. Weak states are theoretically similar to the powerful states as they also have the intention to gain power. However, due to lack of capabilities they choose to stay away from any conflict with major powers. This rational attitude gives them a space to achieve their desired status which is to improve power capability.

A simple ordering involve three sphere of power groups that may exist in any type of international structure (Fels, 2016). The first circle has strong states that always manage cooperation and conflict. The second sphere includes potential states. These states do not try to go for any direct or indirect conflict with powerful states but their subjective character to attain status of a strong state keep them focused on improving their capacities. Third sphere has weak states which have fewer choices in foreign policy decision-making. These states usually have to accommodate structural dictations. Even then, these states have domestic constraints and limitations to build their foreign policy. All circles continue to manage the lower circle of power share.

State behaviour is not simply a foreign policy of a state but also its intended positioning based on its rational choice of projection as well as the perception of other states about its prestige. As prestige is a personal characteristic that refers to the actual position of existence of a state this position ultimately affects one's behaviour. Role theories' are relevant to an understanding of foreign policy decision-making. Complications of linkages between internal and external variables do not allow these theories to assume shifts in foreign policy behaviour. Therefore role theory has its limitations in explaining patterns of foreign policy behaviour in different historical episodes. The neo-classical framework on the other hand give viable solution to these issues.

Conclusion

The neoclassical approach in analyzing ends and the means in foreign policy gives a clearer picture of what neo-realists missed in developing a relationship between the classical foundations of realism and the structural approach. This relationship is not so simple but needs attention and a logical argument and neo-classical theory explicitly provide a way forward to this linkage. Neo-classical realist framework points out deficiencies and shortcomings of structural and domestic theoretical explanations as independent sources for foreign policy behaviour. The grounds on which this theory works in foreign policy and international relations discipline are purely based on realist philosophic scholarship. Infact, the neo-classical framework is a pure synthesis of international relations theoretical discourse which provides a multifaceted foreign policy behavior explanation characterized by both subjective and material dimensions. The essence of this framework is the acceptance of internal variables and alignment of the structural underpinnings' significance while simultaneously challenging the notion of structural primacy as the sole determinant of foreign policy behaviour. This theoretical framework, by its very nature, transcends the limitations of conventional paradigms by embracing the intricate interplay of subjective and material factors that generate behavioural characteristics of actors in world affairs.

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