**Foreign Policy in International Relations**

1. Introduction
2. Determinants of Foreign policy Variable
3. Domestic and international Determinants
4. Domestic Determinants
5. Military capabilities
6. Economic capabilities
7. Type of Government
8. External Determinant
9. Geopolitics
10. Constraints
11. Domestics
12. International
13. Conclusion

**Models of Foreign Policy Decision-Making**

1. The Rational Model
2. The Bureaucratic Model
3. The Pluralist Model

**Introduction**

* A policy pursued by a nation in its dealings with other nations, designed to achieve national objectives.
* The development of foreign policy is influenced by domestic considerations, the policies or behaviour of other states, or plans to advance specific geopolitical designs
* Diplomacy is the tool of foreign policy, and war, alliances, and international trade may all be manifestations of it.

**Determinants of States’ Foreign Policies**

**Domestic and International Determinants**

Determinants of state’s foreign policy can also be categorized into Domestic and international determinants.

**Domestic Determinants**

Internal or Domestic Determinants on States' Foreign Policies focus attention "on variations in states' attributes, such as i) military capabilities, ii) level of economic development, and iii) types of government

**Domestic Stimuli**

* Domestic stimulus is more important source of foreign policy than simply international events.
* Thucydides: He observed about Greek city-states that external behaviour of these city-states was shaped more by domestic conditions.

**Military Capabilities**

* This includes the size of military, Equipment, Training, Leadership and nuclear or non-nuclear capabilities.
* All states may seek similar goals, their ability to realize them vary according to their military capabilities.
* State’s preparations for war strongly influence their use of force.
* Very often, military capabilities limit a state’s range of appropriate policy choices.

**Examples:**

* North Korea repeatedly provokes the United States through anti-American rhetoric.
* Superior military capabilities of USA enable it to practice ‘unrestrained globalism’.

**Economic Capabilities**

**Stages of Industrialization:** Wood, Coal, Oil, Nuclear, Renewable Resources. Gross national product, Per Capita GNP;

**Type of Economy:** Free Market Economics, Centrally Planned Economies, Socially Steered Market Economies.

* The level of economic and industrial development affects the foreign policy of a state.
* Generally the more economically developed a state is, the more likely it is to play an activist role in the global political economy.
* Very often, states that enjoy industrial capabilities and extensive trade also tend to be militarily powerful- in part because military might is a function of economic capabilities.
* The United States: US today stands out as a superpower precisely because it benefits from a combination of vast economic and military capabilities.
* Its ‘imperial reach’ and interventionist behaviour are seemingly unconstrained by limited wealth or resources.
* Rich States are often ‘satisfied’ ones. Global instability or revolutionary changes affect them most.
* Levels of ‘productivity and prosperity’ affect the foreign policies of the poor states.
* Some poor states are forced to comply subserviently with the withes of the rich on whom they depend.
* Leader’s Perceptions: The factor that may more powerfully influence the foreign policy choices are the leader’s perceptions of the opportunities and constraints.

**Type of Government**

* Constitutional democracies (presidential systems and parliamentary systems); Autocratic Systems (authoritarian and totalitarian); Military Dictatorships; Political Party Systems; Traditional monarchies (Saudi Arabia); and Modern theocracies (Iran)
* The important distinction is between **constitutional democracy** (representative government) on one end of the spectrum and **autocratic rule** (authoritarian or totalitarian) on the other
* Who is allowed to participate and how much they exercise their right to participate are critical determinants of foreign policy choices
* Public opinion, interest groups, and the mass media are a more visible part of the policy-making process in democratic systems
* In authoritarian regimes the real choices are made by a few elites behind closed doors
* Therefore, democratic system, sometimes, is called ‘open’ and autocratic as ‘closed’.

**International or External Determinants**

**Geopolitics**

* The geopolitical location of a state is one of the external determinants on its foreign policy.
* It matters where on the globe a country is located.
* The presence of natural frontiers, that is whether it is protected by oceans, high mountains, or deserts, may profoundly guide policymakers’ choices.
* It matters who one's neighbors are and whether a given country is territorially large, populous, affluent, and well-governed.

**Geopolitical Theories;**

* The underlying principle behind the geopolitical perspective is, ‘Leaders’ perceptions of available foreign policy options are influenced by the geopolitical circumstances that define their states’ place on the world stage’.
* The **geopolitics** school of realist thought and political geography generally stresses the influence of geographic factors on state power and international conduct.
* Alfred Thayer Mahan: In his The Influence of Sea Power in History maintained that control of the seas shaped national power.
* Thus states with extensive coastlines and ports enjoyed a competitive advantage.
* Most countries have many states on their borders. It denies them the option of non-involvement in world affairs.
* Sir Halford Mackinder and Nicholas Spykman: They stressed that not only location but also topography, size (territory and population), climate, and distance between states are powerful determinants of the foreign policies of individual countries.

**Examples:**

* The United States: U.S has the advantage of having oceans as barriers to foreign intervention, combined with the absence of militarily powerful neighbours.
* It permitted the US to develop into and industrial giant and to practice safely and ‘isolationist foreign policy for over 150 years.
* Switzerland: Its topography has made neutrality an attractive foreign policy option.
* Great Britain: Maintaining autonomy from continental politics has been an enduring theme in the foreign policy of Great Britain.
* Its physical separation from Europe served historically as a ‘buffer’ separating it from entanglement in major-power disputes on the Continent.
* Germany sits in the geographic center of Europe. Historically, therefore, its domestic political system and foreign policy preferences have profoundly been affected by its geostrategic position.
* Saudi Arabia: The foreign policy of Saudi Arabia is controlled by a King and royal family.
* Switzerland: It is governed by a multiparty democratic process.
* Other **external determines** may include power structure of international system, international organizations, reaction of other states, world public opinion, alliances etc.

**Constraints Facing State’s Foreign Policies**

Domestic and international constraints

**Domestic Issues**

* The domestic environment refers essentially to features, factors and forces peculiar to the state on which foreign policy is being made.
* It includes geographical location of the state, its peculiarity, natural and human resources, the nature of the political system, quality of leadership, the nature of the interaction among groups in the society.

**International Foreign Policy Issues**

* International foreign policy issues have their roots from outside, that is external. For instance, some of the major international foreign policy issues facing Pakistan today include but may not be limited to the following;

1. India’s hostile posture
2. War on Terrorism and Al-Qaeda
3. Yemen Crisis
4. Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan
5. Middle East Peace Process between the Israelis and Palestinians

**Conclusion**

* To attain its set goals and interests in foreign policy, any state continues to seek effective strategies in its approach to foreign policy depending on its power, objectives and leadership.
* The objective to promote economic development mainly influences any state’s approach to foreign policy while maintaining its traditional core principles and norms of non-alignment, non-interference in internal affairs of other states, good neighbourliness and peaceful settlement of disputes.

**Models of Foreign Policy Decision-Making**

**Introduction:**

Realists, liberals, and radicals view the decision-making process very differently.

**Three Models;**

1. The Rational Model
2. The Bureaucratic Model
3. The Pluralist Model

**The Rational Model:**

* It says that the foreign policy is the set of actions chosen by the national government (state) to maximize its strategic goals and objectives
* In this model, state is assumed to be a unitary actor (hence it’s about state centrism).
* According to it, a state have established goals, a set of options, and an algorithm with which it decides to choose the best option that meets its goals.

**Rational Decision Making requires;**

* **Problem Recognition and Definition**:  "Policy-makers perceive an external problem and attempt to define objectively its distinguishing characteristics."  Full information is assumed to be available.
* **Goal Selection:**  Policy makers "must determine what they want to accomplish."  It requires that they rank "all values . . . in a hierarchy from most to least preferred."
* **Identification of Alternatives:**  "Rationality also requires the compilation of an exhaustive list of all available policy options and an estimate of the costs association with each alternative.
* **Choice:**  Selection of "the single alternative with the best chance of achieving the desired goal(s).
* For this purpose, the policymakers must conduct rigorous means-ends, cost-benefit analysis guided by an accurate prediction of the probable success of each option.

**Examples of Rational Decision Making**

* President John F. Kennedy's 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis decisions
* President Bill Clinton's 1999 Kosovo intervention

**Criticism:**

* Many foreign policy analysts have critiqued and criticized the rational-actor model, calling it far too inclusive.
* The model is more focused on the details and processes of foreign policy making and does not review the broader analytical and theoretical associations with historical events.
* Graham Allison in his work, ‘The Essence of Decision’ says the rational-actor model is incompatible with accurate foreign policy analysis as ‘a state itself has limitations of resource and time’.
* According to Allison view the model is western-centric. He says the model is sufficient for developing and analysing the pluralistic nature of foreign policy in western democratic governments, but it is an inaccurate mould for more hierarchic foreign policy of non-western and non-democratic states.
* Herbert Simon, foreign policy analyst and psychologist, declares that the rational-actor model does have beneficial aspects, but proposes his own theory of bounded rationality (human rationality is bounded by limited knowledge and humans are prone to errors)
* With the presence of the human conditions (error, limited knowledge, emotionalism etc.), are political decisions ever rational?
* Cognitive dissonance:  Generally, humans tend to block out information that does not agree with what we already believe to be accurate.
* Overloaded policy agendas:  Decision-makers handle many issues at the same time and cannot spend enough time on any one of these issues.  The pressures of circumstance limit the ability to choose.

**The Bureaucratic/ Organizational Model:**

* In this model, decisions are seen as products of either sub-national governmental organizations (e.g. in Pakistan, Chief Ministers, Governors, Trade organizations etc.) or bureaucracies.
* Policy outcomes result from a game of bargaining among a small, highly placed group of governmental actors.
* These actors come to the game with varying preferences, abilities, and positions of power.
* The decisions arrived at are not always the most rational ones; rather they are the decisions that ‘satisfice’- satisfy the most different constituents without excluding any.
* The actors are the competing interests in bureaucracies and organizations.
* The model is most relevant in large, democratic countries, which usually have highly differentiated institutional structures for foreign policy decision-making and where responsibility and jurisdiction are divided among a number of different units.

**Organizational Politics:** The pursuit of individual agendas and self-interest in an organization without regard to their effect on the organization's efforts to achieve its goals.  
It emphasizes the standard operating procedures and processes of an organization.

* Major changes in policy are unlikely. Because what an organization did yesterday is very likely to be done tomorrow.

**Bureaucratic politics:** It occurs among the members of the bureaucracy representing different interests.

* Decisions determined by bureaucratic politics flow from the tug-of-war among these departments, groups or individuals.

**Example:**

* This model is most commonly applied to national policy making in the United States foreign policy. In the United States, the U.S. President shares decision-making with the National Security Council, Defense Department, State Department, Central Intelligence Agency, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and many other bureaucracies.

**The Pluralist Model:**

* It attributes decisions to ‘bargaining’ conducted among domestic sources- the public, interest groups, mass movements, and multinational corporations.
* Power is dispersed throughout the society in an attempt to eliminate domination from a particular section of the society.
* On particular issues, especially economic ones, societal groups may play very important roles.
* Societal groups have a variety of ways of forcing decisions in their favour or constraining decisions.
* They can mobilize the media and public opinion etc to influence the representative bodies.
* Radicals do not believe that state decision-makers have real choices.
* In the radical view, capitalist states’ interests are determined by the structure of the international system and their decisions are dictated by the economic necessities of the ‘dominant class’.
* Pluralists maintain that media and publics are independent of political interference and, as such, can (and should) act as powerful constraints upon governments.
* According to pluralists, State is not necessarily a rational actor

**Examples**:

* Power of farmers, manufacturers lobbies in Pakistan in preventing the government from awarding the MFN status.
* Power of rice farmer lobbies in both Japan and South Korea in preventing the importation of cheap, U.S grown rice.
* The 1971 Washington D.C protest forcing the Johnson’s government to end the Vietnam War.