**Introduction to International Relations**

1. Introduction
2. History of Study of International Relations
3. International Politics and International Relations
4. Nature of International Relations
5. Scope of International Relations
6. Importance of International Relations
7. Significance of International Relations
8. Actors in International Relations

a) States

b) Non-State Actors

1. Types of Interactions Among Actors
2. Factors Determining International Relations
3. International Relations in Transition

**Introduction to International Relations**

**Definition**

* International relations (IR) is the scholarly study of relationships between countries, including the roles of States, Inter- governmental Organization (IGOs), International Non- governmental Organization (INGOs), Non-governmental Organization (NGOs) and Multinational Corporations (MNCs)
* A strict definition of International Relations would confine itself to the relationships between the world’s national governments, conducted by politicians at the highest level.
* However, this is a far too simplistic and narrow perspective of international relations.

**Introduction:**

* The study of International Relations enables to explain why international events occur in the manner in which they do and gives a greater understanding of the world
* International relations is a broad and complex topic both for countries engaged in relationships with other nations, and for observers trying to understand those interactions.
* As an academic discipline, international relations encompasses a wide range of academic fields, ranging from history to environmental studies, and there are a number of areas of specific specialty for academics who are interested in them
* International Relations as a field of study covers the factors and processes that affect the interactions among states and non-state actors across national boundaries
* The concept of international relations on some level is probably quite old, given that humans have been establishing governments and communicating with each other for thousands of years.

**History of Study of IR**

* The history of international relations can be traced back to thousands of years ago; Barry Buzan and Richard Little, for example, consider the interaction of ancient Sumerian city-states, starting in 3,500 BC, as the first fully-fledged international system

**Treaty of Westphalia-1648**

* Historical starting point of modern IR
* Established the principle of sovereignty as the foundation for relations among states

**Up to the late 19th century**

* Limited focus on the study of IR in academic institutions and scholarly literature
* Most political theorists dealt with IR as a side-kick of domestic politics, or as an appendix of other disciplines
* Practice of principal aspects of IR (war, diplomacy,, international trade) was widespread, but the scientific study of these matters was disconnected and relied on different disciplinary aspects and methodologies

**Imperialism and World War I**

* Two important historical processes-imperialism and World War I- provided a strong impetus to the study of IR as an academic discipline separate from other disciplines

**Imperialism-** in the late 19th century and early 20th century helped globalize the international economy and solidified the connection between economics and politics

**World War I-** brought home an awareness of the destructiveness of war, and its social, economic, and political implications. It also highlighted the potential globalization of militarized conflict among states.

In the 19th and 20th centuries the state system was expanded to encompass the entire territory of the earth.

**International Politics and International Relations**

* International Politics and International Relations are very often used in the same way both by layman and scholars
* However, International politics is much narrower in its scope than international relations
* International politics describe the official political relation between government acting on behalf of their states.
* International Relations, on the other hand, deals with not only the political relations of a state but also deals with non-political relations of a state as well as various international organizations
* It is a study of changing relationship between world communities in terms of state, international organization, tribes, religious groups and other kind of groups
* International Relations is a creation of the International Politics, which includes all type of relations with one another, whether harmonious or conflicting, peaceful or war-like, civilian or military, economic and others
* Therefore, international Relations becomes "inter-state relations" along with relations of state with other international independent entity (like UN, NATO, EU, Red Cross etc) which has the semi-or partially sovereignty
* International relation studied under two different ways, one in a narrow and another in a broad sense.
* **In a narrow sense**- only the study of official relations conducted by authorized leaders of the state, which is mostly influenced by International Politics and
* **In the broad sense**- it is supposed to all relations among states and all movements of the people, goods and ideas all over the world, which is vast and different than the International Politics.

**Scholars’ Views:**

* **Hans Morgenthau** believes that "the core of international relations is international politics", but a clear distinction between the two is to be made.
* International Relations, according to Hans Morgenthau, is much wider in scope than International Politics.
* Whereas politics among nations is, as Morgenthau says, struggle for power, international relations includes political, economic and cultural relations.
* **Harold** and **Margaret** **Sprout** opine that international relations include all human behaviour; on one hand a national boundary affecting the human behaviour on the other side of the boundary, deals with conflicts and cooperation among nation-states essentially at political level.
* As **Padelford** and **Lincoln** define it, international politics is the interaction of state policies within the changing pattern of power relationship.
* **Palmer** and **Perkins** express similar views when they say that international politics is essentially concerned with the state system.
* Therefore, since international relations include all types of relationships between sovereign states, it is wider, and international politics is narrower in scope

**Nature of International Relations**

* In a rapidly changing and increasingly complex world, IR encompasses much more than relations among nation-states and international organizations and groups.
* It includes a variety of transitional relationships at various levels, above and below the level of the nation states.
* International relations are a multidisciplinary field gathering together the international aspects of politics, economics, geography, history, law, sociology, psychology, philosophy and cultural studies.
* The context and nature of IR have undergone major changes after the Second World War.
* Traditionally, world politics was centred around Europe and relations among nations were largely conducted by officials of foreign offices in secrecy. The common man was hardly ever involved, and treaties were often kept secret
* Today public opinion has begun to play an important role in the decision-making process in foreign offices, thus, changing completely the nature of international relations.
* Today, not only have nuclear weapons changed the nature of war and replaced erstwhile the balance of power by the balance of terror, but also the nature of diplomacy changed as well

**Scope of International Relations**

* Beginning with the study of law and diplomatic history, the scope of international relations has steadily expanded.
* With growing complexity of contacts between nations, the study of international organizations and institutions attracted the attention of scholars.
* The outbreak of the Second World War gave a strong stimulus to area studies and strategic aspect of foreign policy.
* This led to efforts to understand better the dynamics of national liberation struggles and anti-colonial movements.
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* The foundation of the United Nations during the war encouraged thinking about post-war restructuring of the relations among nations.
* The study of cooperation became important even as the study of conflict remained central.
* There is also a "revolution of rising expectations”
* The United Nations and its various agencies are engaged in numerous socio-economic and political activities.
* Currently, international terrorism is a cause of serious concern for the human existence.
* Thus, the scope of international relations has become vast, and, besides international politics, it embraces various other inter - State activities as well.
* It is known by now that international relations encompass a myriad of discipline. Attempts to structure and intellectualize it have often been thematically and analytically confined to boundaries determined by data.
* The core concepts of international relations are International Organization, International Law, Foreign Policy, International Conflict, International Economic Relations and Military Thought and Strategy. International and Regional Security, Strategic Studies, International Political Economy, Conflict or War and Peace Studies, Globalization, International Regimes
* Moreover it covers , state sovereignty, ecological sustainability, nuclear proliferation, nationalism, economic development, terrorism ,organized crime, human security, foreign interventionism and human rights.
* These have been grounded in various schools of thought (or traditions) notably Realism and Idealism.

**Significance of International Relation**

**To avoid world wars**

* The 20 century witnessed two world wars which was very danger in their destruction of man and material.
* It is feared that a third world war would wipe out the human race on earth if it comes.
* The study of IR helps us to analyze the aims of the states in the world affairs, the methods adopted for the attainment of these objects and the factors which ultimately lead to their success or failure.
* The international understanding helps all the states to live boldly and confidently in the diverse world with peacefully.

**To understand defects of nationalism**

* Intense nationalism remained one of the major causes of general and limited wars
* Because each state thinks of the entire problem in the limited domain of its national interests only and neglects the wider international interests
* But IR teaches that the nations must learn the basic factors of mutual trust and good will in order to stop any possible future conflicts.

**Limiting Nation-sovereignty**

* The 21st century IR is becoming more and more complex
* Today each country has become dependent upon the other states for one or the other things
* In this interdependent world it is hard to think of any states having an isolated life
* The concept of national sovereignty has now outdated in the context of international co-existence.
* Therefore in the emerging scenario, each nation state has to surrender at least some of its nation sovereignty. Without it, international co-operation deems impossible.

**Educative values**

* To educate the people in the interest of the very survival of human race
* Today the modern weapons of warfare have become very sophisticated and too much danger as in a matter of few hours they can wipe out millions of population by their atom bombs, germ warfare etc
* It warns about the threat to the world peace and needs to have precautionary measures.

**Better World Order**

* Study of the IR aims at better understanding of problems of the world
* Any states which violate international peace should be silenced by collective actions of all the states.

**Peace not Conflicts**

* It avoids international conflicts and ensures international peace
* It helps to understand the true importance of collective security and mutual agreements
* World Community
* International Relations is paving the way towards for the new concept of World village or World Community‖•
* By the above all reasons the importance of study of IR is becoming very popular in the present age, because of interdependence of all the nation- states.

**Actors in International Relations•**

**Types of actors**

1. State
2. Non-state actors
3. **The state:**

* A state is the central actor in the study of IR.
* A state is composed of

**(a)** A defined territory demarcated by specific boundaries,

**(b)** A defined population residing in that territory,

**(c)** An integrated set of institutions that is capable of making and enforcing laws over this population (internal sovereignty), and

**(d)** The recognition by other states of the sovereignty of that state (external sovereignty).

**2) Non-state Actors**

* Actors that

**(i)** Share some but not all of the characteristics of states (sub-state actors), or

**(ii)** Incorporate two or more states in a new entity (e.g. international organizations)

**Categorising Non state Actors:**

1. International Organizations-IOs
2. Multinational Corporations-MNCs
3. Non-governmental Organizations-NGOs
4. Political Groups that Advocate Violence (Terrorists)
5. International Criminal Groups
6. **International Organizations:**

* Institutions with formal membership and procedures
* Only states are members
* Membership can be limited or universal
* Purpose may be broad or narrow

**Examples of IOs**

1. Limited Membership, Narrow Purpose: Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
2. Limited Membership, Broad Purpose: African Union
3. Universal Membership, Narrow Purpose: Universal Postal Union•
4. Universal Membership, Broad Purpose: United Nations
5. **Multinational Corporations:**

MNCs are organizations that seek to make a profit by engaging in foreign production, marketing, finance, and staffing through directly controlled affiliates located in several states.

**Examples of MNCs**: Coca-Cola, Sony, Nike

1. **Non-Governmental Organizations**

* Broad category
* Not states and non- profit
* Include religious organisations, charities, political activists, academic research communities, and even terrorist groups.
* Examples of NGOs: Roman Catholic Church, International Red Cross, Greenpeace, Doctors Without Borders

1. **Terrorist Organizations**

* Political groups that advocate violence
* They operate in the same manners which are by interacting both with states and with relevant populations and institutions through violence and planning attacks.
* These groups held great power and are able to influence the international relations between states
* **Examples:** Al-Qaeda, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, ETA (in Spain and France), Shining Path (in Peru) etc.

**Other Types:**

* **Transnational Interest Groups-**Red Cross, Amnesty International, WWF•
* **Religious Movements-**Catholic Church, Hindu and Muslim Movement,
* **Ethnic Groups-**Kurds, Chechens, Kosovars, Tamils

**Types of Interactions among Actors**

* All types of actors interact generally in four ways- a) Harmony, b) Coordination, c) Cooperation,

e) Conflict

1. **Harmony**

* Harmony is when actors’ interests coincide
* Independent pursuit of own interests returns maximum output
* More common than often considered
* **Example** – India become strict for the production of Small arms, availability of small arms decreases in Nepal.

1. **Coordination**

* Actors more interested in choosing the same strategy than in choosing any given strategy
* **Example** – Human Rights Protection

1. **Cooperation**

* Cooperation is mutual adjustment of policy
* Benefits both actors, but not always equally
* **Example** – Eradication of polio

1. **Conflict**

* Results from mutually incompatible preferences
* Not always violent
* **Example** – 2004 US steel tariffs, EU retaliates on Florida oranges, conflicts between India and Pakistan

**Factors Determining International Relations**

* Major factors are as follows

(i) Geographic; (ii) Economic; (iii) Demographic; (iv) Strategic Additional Factors: (i) The historical-psychological, Sociological factor; (ii) The organizational-administrative factor; (iii) The military factor

**(i) Geography**

* The location of a State, its climate and size are such factors which influence its foreign policy in relation to other States
* The geographical position of a nation is the principal factor conditioning its foreign policy - the principal reason why it must have a foreign policy at all
* If the geographical position of a country is sound, and its climate is healthy, if it is rich in food-stuffs and raw materials, it will easily follow an independent foreign policy
* As for instance, if a state is strategically situated having natural barriers like seas, mountains, terrains, deserts etc., it is not ordinarily vulnerable to foreign invasions. Land-locked and sea-locked countries have their own policy and limitation too
* If a country lacks in these geographical factors, it has to look to the other States and has to follow course of neighboring States in her relation with them.
* Therefore, it cannot follow an independent foreign policy, of its own
* Thus a country which has unfavourable geographical positions cannot be able to keep itself isolated from the events happening in its neighbouring countries.

**ii) Economic Factors**

* The economic factors hold a key-role in affecting the relation of a State with the rest of the world
* The chief elements of economic factors which determine the position of a country in relation to other states are (i) its self-sufficiency and (ii) its capacity to provide food, clothing and shelters to its population
* A State may be purely agrarian or agricultural being rich in its raw materials and food-stuffs only but lack in mineral resources as coal, iron etc. and hence such States cannot be industrially advanced
* Again a State may be rich in mineral resources which can establish huge centres of production and hence they may be industrially advanced states
* But they also cannot pretend to be self-sufficient because they have to depend upon other States for import of raw-materials without which their industries cannot run successfully
* The great development in China is an illustration on this point which has become one of the Five Big Powers of the world.

**iii) Demographic factors**

* The demographic factor - (a) the size of the population and (b) ethnic circumstances, also affect the international affairs to a great deal
* A nation becomes great and powerful if it has both a growing large population and efficient industrial production.
* The population of China, India, USA, and Brazil have a prominent role in their power potential and industrial development
* Thus the size of the population and equally the huge and efficient industrial production determine the existence to which a nation can claim an independent foreign policy of its own
* The size of population also contributes to the weakness of a country.
* Greater the size of population, more weak is expected to be the economic position is of a country
* Another demographic factor is the ethnic circumstances of a nation.
* Those countries having a single race or nationality have no internal problems to solve.
* Such countries are quite free to pursue an independent foreign policy
* On the other hand, the countries which have various races or nationalities are bound to face numerous internal problems.

**iv) Strategic factors:**

* The military strategy of a country is another important factor to determine the foreign policy and its role in international relations because it is closely connected with the national security of the country
* If a country has effective protective natural barriers (or protective shields), it seldom worries about its security, as for instance British and Japan, surrounded by oceans on all sides and they enjoy the position of islands
* Since they are surrounded by oceans on all sides, they have become able to have strong navy to safeguard their frontiers from foreign attacks
* Besides seas and ocean, mountains, rivers, snow, deserts, swamps and forests play significant roles in safeguarding the territories of countries
* The Russia and Switzerland are among the few countries which have the most secured frontiers.
* Both of these countries play important roles in their international affairs as they are strengthened by the most effective protective natural barriers
* Countries which are isolated from the disturbed areas of the world due to distance, remain actually unaffected
* The U.S.A. on the globe serves an example in this respect
* Thus the distance of a country from the centers of troubled spots is an important factor governing the strategic problems of that country.

**v) Additional Factors:**

**a) The historical-psychological and sociological factors**

* If a country has its bold history, and its people are ready to sacrifice their blood for their motherland, its morale shall always be high
* The future of a country cannot be assessed well if we do not study its today’s affairs in light of the yesterday’s history
* No country can pursue an independent foreign policy if the morale of its people is not high and their national character is not strong enough

**b) The organizational and administrative factors**

* This factor constitutes the form of the government within a political society and the attitude of the people towards it
* Many of majority of foreign issues can be decided by the sound governmental organizations, efficient public administration of a country
* A government which has strong support from its people lasts long and becomes efficient with lapse of time and becomes also able to deal with the foreign affairs peacefully
* Thus, general support of the government and the efficient administration are very important factors for the formulation of sound foreign policy.

**c) The Military factor**

* Last but not the least significant factors is the military factor which determines the foreign relations of a country
* This factor is considered from various aspects, e.g., size of the armed forces, quality and morale of army men, quantity and variety of weapons and equipments

**IR in Transition**

* The immediate aftermath of World War II was marked by a constructive outlook. New topics like ideology and disarmament assumed unprecedented importance in the era of cold war.
* Writing about the contents of international relations, a few decades back, Palmer Perkins had said that the then international relations were a study of "the world community in transition."
* This conclusion is largely true even today. The transition has not reached a terminal point.
* While the underlying factors of international relations have not changed, the international environment has changed and is still changing.
* The state system is undergoing modifications; a technological revolution has taken place in a very big way; new states of Asia and Africa are playing increasingly important roles.