


Impact of American Foreign Policy on the International System

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1- Introduction

For the last seventy years, the Western liberal order has exerted significant influence on the world. Following World War II, the United States and its allies established a complex and extensive global framework characterized by economic openness, collaborative international organizations, security partnerships, and a commitment to democratic values. In the process, the United States assumed the role of the foremost global actor, taking on hegemonic leadership responsibilities. It took on a central role in preserving alliances, securing global economic stability, fostering international collaboration, and championing the principles of a free world. Most importantly to maintain a leadership position that has the upper hand on the world order. One of the most notable aspects firmly established in American politics at the start of the twenty-first century is the enduring fascination with power. This captivation with power has significantly shaped American politics throughout the previous century, especially during its final decade. Right from the start, the United States sought to move toward a more unilateral approach in international decision-making, striving to establish a unipolar system as the dominant global order, aligning with the features outlined by the new world system. The objective was to reshape the global political landscape in a way that safeguarded American national security and interests across various dimensions. This implied a condition of compliance and political subjugation to American dominance. Particularly with the downfall of the Soviet Union, which had served as a rival and deterrent to American hegemony, American leaders and political experts perceived a surge in arrogance and heightened self-assurance within the United States and the Western world. This was driven by the Soviet Union's collapse and its fragmentation into weak states. Over time, American foreign policies transitioned from diplomatic approaches to a greater reliance on the use of military force when addressing conflicts or disputes. and this approach created resentment among many states in the international system specially the developing world countries. It so that the paper seeks to examine the US foreign policy impact on the international system and its regions Similarly, the paper looks to answer and achieve the following questions and goals:

- To what extent has US foreign policy contributed to the stability of international system?
- To assess the US foreign policy outcome on the international system

2 Literature review

2.1 Foreign Policy Analysis

The examination of international relations and interactions between nation-states has a history dating back to the inception of nation-states. However, the formal discipline of foreign policy analysis, characterized by a distinct and deliberate theoretical approach, only emerged after World War II. Daniel Papp defines foreign policy as “a systematic sum of the activities that the state follows in formulating its foreign policy, and foreign policy is the systematically directed goals of the activities that the state undertakes in order to achieve the objectives of foreign policy.” (Papp, 2004). James Rosenau's approach before developing theories encouraged researchers to systematically and scientifically identify general patterns that could apply to the foreign policy actions of states across different nations.

According to Rosenau identifying factors doesn't equate to understanding their impact. Recognizing the processes affecting foreign policy doesn't explain when and why they work in specific situations. Acknowledging that both internal and external factors shape foreign policy doesn't provide insight into how they interact or the conditions favoring one over the other (Rosenau, 2005). Foreign policy is often seen as a collection of intentions that drive states to exhibit particular behaviors, essentially functioning as a blueprint or a series of strategies related to international affairs. Foreign policy primarily revolves around safeguarding a nation's autonomy and safety, while also aiming to promote and safeguard its economic interests as a secondary objective (Deutsch, 1988).

According to Walter Lippmann's equation for constructing foreign policy involves the delicate task of achieving equilibrium between a nation's international obligations and the resources and power necessary to fulfill those obligations (Goodwin, 1995). Some scholars believe that understanding changes in foreign policy necessitates an analysis of how shifts in international power dynamics are influencing these issues. Foreign policy involves navigating an environment filled with interactions stemming from these evolving events.

Therefore, the concept of foreign policy is linked to three basic dimensions: The first aspect relates to the external surroundings within which political entities operate. The second aspect involves external obligations that reflect a political entity's interests, shaped by its established goals, and

aims. and the third aspect encompasses a state's abilities and resources, including the necessary strength, to fulfill its obligations and attain its objectives (Bouamama, 2011). In a broader sense, foreign policy it should be determined by a clear understanding of the national interest. This perspective leads some to argue that the most effective way to shape foreign policy is by breaking it down into a series of decisions. Each decision can then be examined individually to identify the most critical and influential factors involved.

2.2 Instruments of foreign policy

One fundamental principle of foreign political actions aimed at pursuing national interests is the sense of responsibility that rests upon decision-makers, whether they are individuals or institutional groups engaged in foreign policy actions. As a result, this work involves employing a range of instruments to serve for the purpose of facilitating and bolstering foreign political actions for a state within its agenda aimed at promoting its principles that impact others. The lessons learned from the global system emphasize that a foreign policy equipped with effective tools for achieving its objectives is a key factor in a country's success.

Furthermore, the changes witnessed in this system are often a result of countries effectively aligning their tools with their national interests. There are several essential tools that a state utilizes to achieve its foreign policy objectives, such as diplomatic, economic, military tools. Diplomacy exhibits a wide range of applications and methods when dealing with various international actors. It encompasses various types, which are chosen based on the stage, direction, and specific issue that necessitates intervention. This diversity lends diplomacy a high degree of adaptability. These types include secretive, open, collective, and bilateral diplomacy, as well as official, popular, and summit diplomacy. Coupled with its legal and political tools, diplomacy has become a crucial instrument in foreign policy. In fact, it now holds a prominent position in achieving foreign policy objectives, surpassing military means which used to take precedence (Berridge, 2015).

The process demands creative communication among different representatives during negotiations. Diplomacy is the art and skill of managing negotiations between countries, often with the aim of establishing agreements. It encompasses the techniques and structures typically used in this process. At its core, diplomacy serves as the foundation for attempts to make peace, handle economic matters, engage in cultural exchanges, and navigate trade disputes between two nations that may have strained relations. Achieving success in these endeavors demands innovative

communication techniques by the various representatives involved in the negotiations. The second pillar of pursuing national interests involves striving for prosperity, economic becomes the next powerful tool in implementing foreign policy. Economics is a comprehensive concept that goes beyond business and trade in the context of foreign policy. It encompasses the broader notion of a nation's productivity and efficiency in building a sovereign state. economic instruments can be categorized into three groups: foreign aid, trade, fiscal policies, and sanctions.

Additionally, these tools serve as a bridge between political and military instruments (Deibel, 2007). Economic aid is seen as form of political leverage for a nation due to its dual political and economic aspects, serving to use economic resources to shape the behaviors of other countries both internally and externally in pursuit of specific objectives. Furthermore, economic sanctions can serve as a highly effective instrument in the practice of international relations. When a dominant global power holds sway over the market, economic sanctions can be wielded as a potent means to advance its foreign policy objectives. Some have gone as far as to label economic sanctions as a tool of coercion in an interconnected global economy, especially when allies resist adhering to the demands of the dominant power.

Furthermore, sanctions can range from retaliatory measures to actual warfare. These actions can be initiated not only by the state directly affected by a breach of the law but also by other states that step in to support the aggrieved state. Actions like reprisals or warfare conducted to uphold the law can be seen as actions taken on behalf of the community (Bull, 2012). Before resorting to reprisals and war, sanctions are utilized as a strategic means to achieve specific goals. In the context of the United States-Iran nuclear conflict, the United States employed global economic networks. As Hedley Bull points out, "International law, when implemented in practice, faces challenges when it comes to being a coercive system based on a network of sanctions." (Bull H. , 1977). Through sanctions, states are subjected to significant pressure to compel them to comply with the demands imposed by the sanctioning entity.

Likewise, the application of force or military action represents one of the tools employed by powerful states when it becomes essential or when alternative methods fail to achieve the intended objectives. Historically, military force was regarded as a significant instrument for advancing national interests and maintaining international unity when circumstances necessitated military intervention. This intervention could take the form of occupation or engagement, essentially

referring to the use of armed conflict to resolve disputes. Having specific military technologies and weaponry impacts a country's ability to advance its foreign policy, either by posing a threat or engaging in conflict with other nations. Military strategies aren't exclusively aimed at the most significant global threats; they can also be employed against states that pose an immediate risk to their foreign policy objectives or even their survival (Walt, 1987).

In similar way, the use of force is sometimes considered as part of coercion diplomacy. according to Lawrence Freedman the key aspect of coercion, is that it never removes the target's ability to choose. Instead, it compels the target to carefully consider the options, weighing the costs of compliance against those of non-compliance (Freedman, 1998). Crafting an effective strategy holds the promise of attaining foreign policy objectives without significant combat or excessive expenditure. However, strategies aimed at coercion are notably challenging to develop and put into action, and the historical track record doesn't offer much encouragement. Without a doubt, military force, in all its facets, embodies forms of brutality and animosity. The choice to employ force in foreign policy isn't solely based on levels of influence and sway but is often seen as a blunt and brutal approach by most standards. Military force, while effective in dealing decisively with military threats and attacks, has a dual nature. On one hand, it can yield positive outcomes in favor of one party over another. However, it also carries significant drawbacks due to the substantial human and financial costs involved.

2.3 The American foreign policy

Throughout the 20th century, the United States foreign policy was heavily influenced by geopolitics. head of states during this period aimed to prevent any single nation from gaining control over key strategic regions in Europe and Asia. In pursuit of this goal, the United States became involved in two major global conflicts, followed by a prolonged Cold War lasting four decades with the Soviet Union. So, the United States discovered itself as the sole superpower in the global arena, transitioning from a state of power equilibrium and rivalry to disseminating its own system and principles worldwide. Numerous analysts have expressed concern about the shift from multilateral collaborative international efforts to a more independent unilateral approach in U.S. foreign policy (Krauthammer, 2001).

Additionally, The United States has reduced its global diplomatic involvement, distanced itself from the United Nations (which it played a key role in establishing), and, turned down several

significant international treaties and agreements. This list encompasses agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol for addressing Climate Change, the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Treaty to Ban Landmines globally, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the supplementary protocol to the Convention Against Torture, and the Paris Climate Agreement (Sachs, 2018). In addition to the new policy approach that the United States embraced in the 1990s known as the Bush Doctrine, in the national security strategy it was stated by the former United States secretary of state Colin Powell that the U.S. has the inherent right to use military force for self-defense against countries possessing weapons of mass destruction and collaborating with terrorists, which were the stated reasons for the invasion of Iraq (DUNMIRE, 2009).

Additionally, the United States' choice to initiate a war against Iraq, even without a clear authorization from the U.N. Security Council and lacking the backing of several crucial allies, represents a striking example of American unilateralism. The U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 was in violation of international law as it occurred without the approval of a Security Council resolution. This invasion was marked by a destructive bombing campaign and the contentious use of extraordinary rendition that led to the death of hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians (Williams, 2011). A United Nations study found that at least 40 percent of civilians killed by air strikes were children (Release, 2021). These wars of choice from Iraq to Afghanistan to bombing Libya were strategic moves by the United States to demonstrate its power and compel other nations to comply with the American based order.

Furthermore, following the Cold War, the United States sought to promote the liberal American order, which involved the spreading of democracy and western values worldwide. This was often pursued through actions like regime changes, either through direct military intervention or by meddling in the internal affairs of other nations. Initiated "color revolutions" in Eurasia and carefully planned the "Arab Spring" in West Asia and North Africa, which led to turmoil and catastrophe in numerous countries. The U.S. Department of State openly acknowledged its significant involvement in these "regime changes." In his recent book "Never Give an Inch: Fighting for the America I Love" former secretary of state Mike Pompeo revealed it came to light that the United States had devised a strategy to interfere in Venezuela. The strategy aimed to compel the Maduro government to negotiate with the opposition, disrupt Venezuela's capacity to

export oil and gold for foreign currency, create significant economic pressure, and impact the outcome of the 2018 presidential election (Pompeo, 2023). The strategies employed by the US, characterized by dominance, coercion, and aggressive tactics to exploit and overpower others, often resorting to force and deceit, as well as pursuing a win-lose approach, are causing significant damage and worldwide discontent specially in the global south and weaker states.

3. METHODOLOGY

The paper employed a qualitative research approach, specifically utilizing document analysis. This involved gathering secondary data from important academic sources, including books, journal articles, and online materials, which were highly relevant to the paper's subject matter. Document analysis is a structured process used to assess various types of documents, whether they're in print or digital form (like those found on computers or the internet). Similar to other techniques in qualitative research, document analysis involves thoroughly examining and interpreting data to uncover significance, enhance comprehension, and establish factual insights (Corbin, 2008). The study employed thematic analysis to examine the data, focusing on well-defined and consistent themes. This choice was made due to its adaptability and appropriateness for the qualitative nature of the research. Thematic analysis is a qualitative method used for analyzing data, which includes reviewing a dataset like focus group records, interview transcripts. The goal is to extract meaningful themes and identify data recurring patterns. This process requires active reflection, with the researcher's personal perspective playing a crucial role in interpreting the data (Guest, 2012).

4. Findings

4.1 The Impact of the US foreign policy on the globe

Following World War II, the United States and its Western allies established a fresh international order centered on principles like open free markets, democracy, and mutual prosperity. This framework was further reinforced through international organizations like the United Nations. However, over time, US policy underwent a noticeable transformation, shifting from a rule maker to a rule breaker (Goodman, 2018). Over time, the international system increasingly became centered around the United States interests. The US employed various strategies to achieve its objectives, often without regard for international institutions, violating the international laws, without taking in consideration the national interests of other countries and nations. this ranged

from orchestrating coupe to regime change to direct military intervention and imposing unilateral sanctions. precisely after the cold war ended the United States foreign policy became more hawkish, relied more on military and hard power.

The primary aim of American foreign policy shifted towards involving other nations in agreements that would uphold a global order aligned with the interests and principles of the United States. Hence, the United States supported and even defended states that welcomed its primacy, while isolating, containing, and resisting all who opposed it. These policies had a detrimental impact on the world, causing instability and economic disruption in multiple regions. From the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq to the airstrikes in former Yugoslavia and Libya, they led to chaos and insecurity that reflected on the international level as well, Triggered fear and revived terrorism on a global scale. Even the partners of the United States were severely affected, as an example the European Union enjoyed relative security for much of the latter half of the previous century, but the situation changed when the United States indirectly contributed to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

4.2 The Impact of US foreign policy on EU

Furthermore, this exposed the EU's vulnerabilities in terms of security and military capabilities, prompting it to seek shelter under the NATO alliance led by the United States. This shift aligns with certain American objectives related to the war. as to revive the NATO through creating the new threat of Russia and at the same time to weaken the Russian economy and army, considering Russia potential rival. Western nations were compelled to align with the United States and adopt a hostile stance towards Russia. This entailed cutting significant economic ties, forfeiting the advantages of affordable energy that had contributed to substantial economic progress, and subsidizing it with American energy which is provided at a price three times higher than the Russian one, which led to descending the challenges of inflation, soaring energy costs, and citizen unrest. These events underscored Europe's vulnerability in adhering to American policies. Hence, the European stance towards China was not accidental. The United States persists in its conflict because it serves its interests for both Russia and Europe to remain in a weakened state and maintain strained relations between them. Therefore, the heads of European Union countries, such as the French President and the German Chancellor, visited Beijing in an effort to strengthen Chinese economic and trade relations in a clear recognition of the significance of China, and its role on the international arena and for Europe in particular. and confirming China's status in the

new international order. additionally, president Macron also stated, "The significant risk confronting Europe is being entangled in crises that don't concern us or originate from us, hindering our ability to establish our strategic autonomy." He underlined the importance of Europeans not blindly following the United States into crises unrelated to Europe (ANDERLINI, 2023). These policies generated dissent and resentment, not just among their adversaries but also among their closest allies.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

To sum up, the research paper focused and analyzed the role of the United States in the international system and the strategies of its foreign policy, to expand its sphere of influence and maintain global dominance. The United States recent attempts to influence and control global politics have not resulted in greater safety. Instead, its foreign policy has disrupted various regions globally, damaged civil liberties, and infringed upon human rights. These shortcomings are attributed to both Democrats and Republicans following a "liberal hegemony" strategy, which, despite its inability to achieve its desired outcomes, continues to be upheld by foreign policy-making bodies. The historical patterns of peace, collaboration, progress, and mutual gain are inevitable.

The United States aimed to promote liberal values, influence regional politics, and bolster global institutions with ambitious efforts. However, these endeavors, despite being expensive and repeated, were ultimately driven by Washington's dedication to a larger strategy known as liberal hegemony, this strategy employed American power to transform the world in alignment with American political preferences and values. Nevertheless, this approach proved unsuccessful due to flawed perspectives on international politics. The United States overestimated its capacity to reshape societies and underestimated the ability of less powerful actors to thwart its objectives. The United States has been using its power to manipulate the truth and disregarding fairness in pursuit of its self-interest. self-centered, these one-sided, and backward dominant actions have faced increasing and strong disapproval and resistance from the global community. American military bases are present globally, with over 750 military bases in more than 130 countries. Their roles range from direct military operations to support functions and logistical.

5.2 Recommendation

However, it's important to recognize that even with such widespread presence, no single power can fully control all the challenges, variables, and global developments. Attempting to engage in multiple conflicts worldwide and impose the American model through various pressure tactics, including those related to freedoms, democracy, and human rights while also maintaining certain stances toward international institutions, comes with its limitations and choices to be made. The United States should embrace a fresh foreign policy approach focused on cooperation through multilateral means, and advantages. This shift should prioritize diplomatic efforts over weaponry and military strategies. states should uphold mutual respect and equality in their interactions. Larger states should act in a manner that aligns with their status, leading the way in establishing a fresh approach to state-to-state relations characterized by dialogue and cooperation, rather than conflict or alliances.

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