



Introduction to International Relations

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What is International Relations?

- **International relations (IR)** is the 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.



What is International Relations?

- International Relations is not just a field of academic study, we all participate in and contribute to International Relations on a daily basis.
- Every time we watch the news, vote in an election, buy or boycott goods from the supermarket, recycle our wine bottles, we are participating in International Relations.
- The decisions we make in our daily lives have an effect, however small, on the world in which we live.



What is International Relations?

- At the same time, IR has a significant impact on our lives. Our daily lives are increasingly international in their focus, improvements in communications and transport technology mean we are constantly coming into contact with people, places, products, opportunities and ideas from other countries.
- The study of International Relations enables us to explain why international events occur in the manner in which they do and gives us a greater understanding of world in which we live and work.



What is International Relations?

- 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.
- These relationships are influenced by many variables. They are shaped by the primary participants in international relations, including national leaders, other politicians, and nongovernmental participants, such as private citizens, corporations, and nongovernmental organizations.
- They are also affected by domestic political events and nonpolitical influences, including economics, geography, and culture. Despite all of these other influences, the primary focus of international relations is on the interactions between nations.



What is International Relations?

- The term 'International Relations' incorporate the vast and multicolored phenomena composed of international conference, the comings and goings of diplomats, the signing of treaties, the deployment of military forces, and flow of international trade as well as burning issues of migrant worker, asylum seekers etc.
- The term international relations have been used by scholars in two different senses, narrow and broad.
- In the narrow sense it is taken as the study of 'official relations conducted by authorized leaders of the state'. These scholars have tried to exclude relations between businessmen, scientists, etc. of various states from the purview of international relations.
- In the wider or broader sense the term international relations includes 'all intercourse among states and movements of people, goods and ideas across national boundary.'



History of Study of IR

- Historical starting point of modern IR—Treaty of Westphalia, 1648. 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



History of Study of IR

- Two important historical processes 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.



International Politics and International Relations:

- International Politics and International Relation are very often used in the same way both by layman and scholars.
- International politics is much narrower in its scope than international relations.
- International Politics deals mainly with the "official" actions of the government, being much narrower in scope.
- International politics describe the official political relation between government acting on behalf of their states but no doubt that it is the core of International Relations.



International Politics and International Relations:

- International Relation deals with not only the political relation of state but also deals with non-political relation of 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 include interactions among the states, non-state associations and international organizations and the details of these relations may be political, even non-political like; social, economic, humanitarian etc.



International Politics and International Relations:

- 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.
- Because of that 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 the first sense- only the study of official relations conducted by authorized leaders of the state, which is mostly influenced by International Politics and in the second 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.



Importance of International Relation

- **To avoid world wars-** The 20th century witnessed two world war 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 IRS helps us to analyze and aims of the states in the world affairs, the methods adopted for that attainment of these objects and the factors which ultimately lead to their success or failure. The international understanding helps us to analyze helps the all states to live boldly and confidently in the world of diversity with peacefully.



Importance of International Relation

- **To understand defects of nationalism-** Intense of nationalism was one of the major causes of 1st world war.
- Because each state thinks of the entire problem in its own national interest and forgot the wider international interest.
- Bit IR teaches that the nations must learn the basic factors of mutual trust and good will in order to stop any possible conflicts.



Importance of International Relation

- **Nation sovereignty Out Of Date-** The 21st century IR 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 we can not think of any states having an isolated life.
- The concept of national sovereignty has now outdated in the context of international co-existence.
- Therefore each nation state has to surrender at least some of its nation sovereignty. If it is not done international co-operation is impossible.



Importance of International Relation

- **Educative values-** Today the modern weapons of warfare have become very sophisticated and too much danger 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 need to have precautionary measure. To educate the people in the interest of the very survival of human race.
- **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.



Importance of International Relation

- **It avoids international conflicts and ensures international peace** – It helps to understand the true importance of collective security and disagreement.
- These all are making way 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.



Actor of International Relations

- Types of actors
 - States
 - Non-state actors



The central actor: the state

- **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).**



Non-state Actors

- **Actors that**
 - (a) share some but not all of the characteristics of states (sub-state actors), or**
 - (b) incorporate two or more states in a new entity (e.g. international organizations)**
- **Non state Actors can be categorized on:**
 - International Organizations
 - Multinational Corporations
 - Non-governmental Organizations



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

- Limited Membership, Narrow Purpose: **Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries**
- Limited Membership, Broad Purpose: **African Union**
- Universal Membership, Narrow Purpose: **Universal Postal Union**
- Universal Membership, Broad Purpose: **United Nations**





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





Non-Governmental Organizations

- Broad category - Not states and non-profit
- Includes religions, charities, political activists, academic research communities, and even terrorist groups.



Examples of NGOs

- Roman Catholic Church
- International Red Cross
- Greenpeace
- Doctors Without Borders





Some other example of non state actors

- **Transnational Interest Groups**

Red Cross, Amnesty International, WWF

- **Religious Movements**

Catholic Church, Hindu and Muslim Movement,

- **Ethnic Groups**

Kurds, Chechens, Kosovars, Tamils

- **Terrorist Organizations**

al-Qaeda, Hamas, IRA, ETA, Shining Path etc.



Types of Interaction among Actors

All types of actors interact.

- Harmony
- Coordination
- Cooperation
- Conflict



Types of Interaction: 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.



Types of Interaction.

Coordination

- Actors more interested in choosing the same strategy than in choosing any given strategy.
- Example – Human Right Protection
- Two possibilities
 - Pure coordination – easier
 - Coordination after investment - harder



Types of Interaction: Cooperation

- Cooperation is mutual adjustment of policy.
- Benefits both actors, but not always equally.
- Example – WHO eradication of smallpox



Factors Determining International Relations

Main Factors:

- (i) Geographic;
- (ii) Economic;
- (iii) Demographic;
- (iv) Strategic

Additional Factors:

- (i) The historical-psychological, Sociological factor;
- (ii) The organizational-adminis-trative factor;
- (iii) The military factor



(i) Geographic;

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 must 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 lock 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. It cannot follow an independent foreign policy, of its own.

Thus it is clear that a country which has unfavorable geographical positions cannot be able to keep itself isolated from the events happening in its neighboring 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 centers 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 and one of the opponent of USA as a big economic power too.



iv) Strategic factors:

- The military strategy of a country is another important factor to determine the foreign policy because it is closely connected with the national security of the country.
- If a country has effective protective natural barriers, 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 a 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 by the U.S.A. on the globe serves an example in this respect which remained unaffected by the disturbances taking at some distant places.
- Thus the distance of a country from the centers of trouble spots is an important factor governing the strategic problems of that country.



Additional Factors.

- i) The historical-psychological, sociological factors:**
- If a country has its bold history, and its people are ready to sacrifice their blood for their motherland, its moral shall always be high.
 - The future of a country cannot be assessed well if we do not study its to day'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.
 - Such elements are necessary for adopting an independent policy by any country or nation.



ii) The organizational and administrative factor:

- 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 organization, efficient public ad-ministration 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.



iii) 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 which determine the foreign relations also.