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A CONCEPTUAL STUDY ON MEANING, NATURE, SCOPE, AND SIGNIFICANCE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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In the terribly starting of the civilized world, the states were reciprocally interlinked. In nowadays the globe has greatly shrunken as a result of scientific and technological development. As a result, events in one part of the globe have an immediate impact on the rest of the world. Thus the states maintain regular relations with alternative states of the globe. As an alone individual is nothing equally, a state while not alternative state is nothing and within the present complicated life, a state while not relations with alternative cannot survive. Materialistic desires, religious beliefs, economic needs, industrial enterprise, security concerns, and trade and commerce etc. brought the states along. Interstates wars brought in post-war treaties, economic and friendly arrangements and international organizations. To better understanding of those advanced interactions of the nations, it's essential to have a clear idea concern meaning, nature, scope, and significance of international relations for better and higher solutions of this complex and advanced world's issues. The present study is descriptive in nature and based on secondary data. This paper tried to explain meaning and definitions of International Relations and analyzed the distinction between International Politics and international relations, and studied the nature, scope, and significance of International Relations from all dimensions, with that we can get crystal-clear conceptual clarity on nation-states interactions.

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INTRODUCTION

In the terribly starting of the civilized world, the states were reciprocally interlinked. In nowadays the globe has greatly shrunken as a result of scientific and technological development. As a result, events in one part of the globe have an immediate impact on the rest of the world. Thus the states maintain regular relations with alternative states of the globe. As an alone individual is nothing equally, a state while not alternative state is nothing and within the present complicated life, a state while not relations with alternative cannot survive. Materialistic desires, religious beliefs, economic needs, industrial enterprise, security concerns, and trade and commerce etc. brought the states along. Inter-states wars brought in post-war treaties, economic and friendly arrangements and international organizations. All these issues are studied as a discipline of International Relations. International relations as a practice-activity are as old as human civilization. Greeks and Romans treated International Relations as a special field in their interactions with other states.

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Department of Political Science and Public administration, Sri Krishna Devaraya University, Anantapuram, Andhrapradesh From the beginning of World War-I period, international relations started its journey as a regular subject, and after that Second World War, Cold war, emergence of new world order, emergence of international organizations, trade wars, terrorism, global problems, human rights, and dynamic diplomatic activities of the nations etc. took the significance of the subject to the zenith.

The study and practice of international relations are the political relations amongst the nation-states particularly their governments' interactions, and it means synergy and intercommunications of NGOs. MNCs. or international organizations such as United Nations (UN) etc. From the point of viewers, understanding the nation's interactions which are engrossed in relationships' with other states is difficult; because of the nature of international relations are extensive latitudinal complex and intensive longitudinal dynamics. These interactions are affected by many fluctuating variables. The variables are participants of NGOs, political leaders, national dignitaries, leaders of the nation, private citizens etc. The interactions are also influenced by events of domicile politics and non-politics, geography, history, culture, economy, science, and technology etc. Although these factors are influencing, the main focal point of international relations is the synergy and intercommunication betwixt sovereignnations.

Objectives of the Study

- 1. To explain the meaning and definitions of International relations.
- 2. To analyze the distinction between International Politics and International Relations.
- 3. To study the complex nature of International Relations from the point of traditional and modern views.
- 4. To study the scope of International Relations from the view of levels of state and behavior of actors, and,
- 5. Last but not least, to evaluate the significance of International Relations in a globalized society for a better understanding of complex interactions of nation-states.

Methodology of the Study

The present study is descriptive in nature and the paper is primarily based on secondary sources of data. The information and data for the research have been collected from published articles, journals, newspapers, reports, books, and websites of different fields.

Meaning and Definitions

The term "International Relations" (IR) was used for the first time by Jermy Bentham in the later part of the 18th century, although its Latin equivalent,' Intergenetes', was used a century earlier by Rijehare Zouche. Both scholars used the term with regard to the laws of nations. Consequently, the term "IR" was used to define the official relations between sovereign states. According to the Quincy Wright^[1], the term IR may be used both for a 'condition' and a 'discipline'. The official relation between sovereign countries is described as international relations...the word "interstate" would have been more accurate because, in Political Science, the state came to be the term applied to such societies. He further viewed international relations, as a condition, refers to the facts of international life, that is to say, the actual conduct of relations among nations through diplomacy based on foreign policy. It also includes actual areas of co-operation, conflict, and war.

IR must speak of the subject about how these interactions are conducted, and, as a discipline, IR ought to treat them in an exceedingly systematic and scientific manner. It's currently accepted proven fact that IR has it specializes in the study of all relations political and non-political, economical and noneconomical, war-peace, civil-military, diplomatic-academic interactions among sovereign nation-states, which considers the discipline of the subject.

The scope of IR should cover different sort of groups those are involved in interactions of states, nations, coalitions, confederations, alliances, MNCs, international organizations, peoples etc. Therefore there are two broad views concerns the meaning of international relations.

From the narrow standpoint of view, IR covers only "the formal interactions dealt by the legitimate leaders of the state." This view considers in-formal or non-formal interactions do not consider the domain of IR. However, some scholars have seen the IR from the broad point of view. They consider IR includes, apart from the formal interactions of the nationstates, all types of intercourse among nation-states, all motility among the people, things and concepts, across the frontiers of the nations covers as the domain of IR. So far lamentably, no common universally accepted definitions of IR have been created by the scholars due to its dynamic nature.

For a better understanding of IR let us have a brief look at some definitions by eminent scholars. 'The word "international relations" for the first time used in 1880. In UNESCO Nomenclature (1998) (It is a system developed by UNESCO for classification of research papers and doctoral dissertations), No. 5901 represents international relations within political science. In practice, IR can be studied as an independent discipline or as a branch of political science. As a subject of study IR deals with war-peace, cooperation-conflict, tradecommerce, civil-military, alliance-deterrence, diplomacy etc [2].

Goldstein and Joshua^[3] in his book "International Relations" write, "The field of international relations concerns the relationships among the world's government. But these relationships cannot be understood in isolation. They are closely connected with other actors (such as intergovernmental org., multinational corporations, and individuals); with other social structures (including economics, culture, and domestic politics); and with geographical and historical influences. These elements together power the central trends in IR today-globalization."

Frankel^[4] "IR includes the study of international society as a whole and of its institutions and processes. IR also covers interactions of nation-states and also the web of trans-national politics".

Palmer and Perkins^[5] "IR envelopes more than interactions of nation-states, international organizations and international groups. It covers different trans-national interactions in and around of nation-states which is consider the main actor in the community of international.

Lawson ^[6] defined IR from the point of narrow and broader views. According to her narrower view, IR is taken as to 'denote the study of relations between states', and her broader sense, IR 'denote interactions between state-based actors across state boundaries' which means, besides the intimate concern with the state system as a whole, there is an equal concern with the activities of a variety of non-state actors.

Thus it may be observed that there has been a tremendous effort on the part of the IR scholars to come out of a statecentric thinking and embark on a perspective, recognizing the presence of the other actors as well. Therefore, summing up the above definitions, it may be ascertained that IR is a vast field encompassing the relationships among states in all their dimensions, including interactions with various other political and non-political groups along with the study of international history, international polity, international economy, international law, and many more.

Nature of International Relations

To explain the nature of IR is a precarious assignment. It has been a complex work owing to many reasons. According to Vinay Malhotra ^[7], four following reasons made it complex. They are,

Interchangeably using the terms-International Politics (IP) and International Relations (IR). He explained it as Political Science scholars are confused and were not cleared about the contents of these terms. Most of the scholars are titled their work as IR but inside they discussed IP, and if they titled IP but inside they discussed IR.

- 1. *No common and acceptable definitions:* There is none common and acceptable definitions of IR scholars have given. No one could give with precision and authority the definition discipline whose scope is ever changing.
- 2. **Dynamic International environment:** World community is dynamic and international environment is changing so rapidly. Fast changing new developments at a global level bring new actors to the international stage, which bring continuous change in the nature of IR study.
- 3. *The newness of the subject:* Newness of the subject creates confusion about any definition of this young discipline as the last word.

For a better understanding of the nature of IR, we seek to analyze the significant scholar's opinions on IP and IR under the heads of traditional view and modern view, as follows,

Traditional view

In this view, it is called as International Politics. Politics in relation to the nations is called IP. It's a process of adjustment of the relationship among nations in favor of a nation or a group of nations by means of power. 'IP involves a conflict as well as cooperation. It is a phenomenon of a recurring pattern of conflict and harmony. But cooperation is feasible only through control of the conflict. Conflict can be regulated towards the desired direction ^[8]. So with that, we can understand that IP deals with control of conflict and attainment of cooperation. By and large nature of IP is conflictual.

For a better understanding of IP let us have a look at some significant definitions of IP...

Mahindra Kumar^[9] - "IP is a process in which nations try to serve their national interest, which may be in conflict with those of other nations, by means of their policies and actions."

R.T. Jangam^[10] - "The existence of nations: friendly or unfriendly relations: the struggle for acquisition, retention, and extensions on the use of power- are broadly characterized IP throughout the ages".

Padelford & Lincoln ^[11]-"Define IP as the interaction of state policies within the changing patterns of power relationship." In their later work, they again defined IP as "The interaction of individual nation states in the pursuit of their perceived national interests and goals" ^[12].

Quincy Wright^[13] -"The art of influencing, manipulating or controlling major groups, so as to advance the purpose of some against the opposition of others."

Joseph Frankel^[14] -"Embraces the foreign policies of all the states in their mutual interaction as well as in their interaction with the international system as a whole, with the international organizations, and with the social groups other than states, the operation of the international system: and also the domestic politics of all the states". He was considered as a most comprehensive definition given scholar of IP.

From the above definitions, we can get a conclusion that from the point of view of traditionalists International relations are nothing but International politics.

Modern View

This modern trend made extensive use of term IR from 1960's onwards became popular and IR in preference to IP as it

encompassed all the relevant actors, contents and relationships. The study of IR is more comprehensive than IP. According to Vinay Kumar Malhotra^[15], IR includes "the state, international system, international organizations, other trans-national and supra-national agencies, non-state entities, groups and relevant individuals as actors and the basic unit of analysis. At the same time they also cover larger areas of relationship- conflictual and cooperative, friendly and unfriendly, power relationship etc., the contents and forms of relations among the different actors are varied such as political, economic, cultural, educational, scientific and technological etc., all these are part of IR..." Due to increasing human-activities, the relations among various states have been changing and due to these continuous changes in international relations, the meaning, nature, and scope of international relations have been changing. There are many factors which affect nature of international relations such as the evolution of new nations, technological development, nuclear research, the rise of a multipolar world, emergence of new order, non-state organizations, global problems, so and so forth.

The terms IP & IR are used interchangeably and loosely by scholars. But a careful study will make a distinction between the two: the distinction among them can be explained in a table form that as follows;

Currently, the study of Global world politics or Global Relations may also consider as the study of IR. The unavoidable dynamics in the contemporary world has been making the study of IR more inter-disciplinary in its nature. However, IR has a close relationship with other subjects like geography, law, history, economy, psychology, defense studies, etc..., due to this; a doubt is raised about on continuity, independent identity, an amalgamation of its major contents. Scholars like Walker, Lawson, Smith, Rosenau etc., have preferred to use 'World politics' rather than International studies, because of their interest is not only politics between nation-states but also in political patterns in the world, so these scholars preferred world politics instead of IR.

In this era of Liberalization, Privatization, Globalization (LPG) the process of 'globalizing' the international or 'de-globalizing the international' where present scholars are talking of 'post-International Relations' it may be re-named as Global politics or Global relations. Whatever the terms those may be called for IR, the term IR continues to be widely used and accepted by the academicians.

Scope of International Relations

According to Pue Ghosh^[19], the scope of IR as "it is a dynamic discipline because of the factors like globalization, ethnicity, and terrorism, the crisis in sovereignty of states, human rights etc... made the subject forcibly moved beyond its traditional themes and incorporate a new agenda in its study". The scope of IR is not yet well settles and it is a most debatable issue in the world of scholars because it is continuously expanding nature and ever changing its subject areas made most debatable since the age of colonization in the 18th Century to till date.

Some scholars analyzed IR from the point of traditional view, according to them IR deals with international peace with prosperity, and it includes areas such as diplomacy, deterrence, arms control, and alliance politics, and is concerned solely with the development and change of sovereign statehood, it

| Sl. no. | Issues | International Politics | International Relations |
|---------|-----------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Period | Up to 1950's studied as IP. | From 1960 onwards studying as IR. |
| 2 | View | Narrow-sense. | Broad-sense. |
| 3 | Emphasis | State dominated the view. Studied politics and relations among the nation-states. | Studied all the relevant actors and factors, called @360 degree study. |
| 4 | Methodology | Mainly studied with the using of historical, descriptive and analytical methods. | Using enriched wider and more versatile and scientific approached methods. |
| 5 | Actors | Non-states | State, the international system, international organizations, trans-national, and supra-national agencies, non-state entities, groups and relevant individuals. Larger areas of relationships: |
| 6 | Focuses | Nation- states and their official relations. | both conflictual & cooperative; friendly & unfriendly: power & peace: governmental & non-governmental: People to people, Etc. |
| 7 | Important Contents | National interest is the objective.Conflict is the condition.Power is the means of IP. | Varied such as political, cultural, economic, social, educational, science & technology, etc., |
| 8 | Deals with | Political relations & the problems of power and peace ^[16] . | It deals with Political & non-political and all the Problems of human behavior also. |
| 9 | Label | Those interested in oppositional relations label their study as IP ^[17] . | Those who also include cooperative relations name their study as IR $^{\left[18\right] }.$ |

Table 1 The Distinction between IP & IR.

Source: authors own.

might help in explaining the questions of war and peace. This view supported by Padelford & Lincoln, Quincy Wright, Joseph Frankel, R.T. Jangam etc...And some other viewed IR from the point of contemporary or modern perspective. According to them, the study of IR includes international political economics, environmental politics, refugee, migration issues and human rights etc... along with political relations between the states. This view supported by Lawson, Kegley, wittkopf, Vinay Malhotra etc...

However, for the purpose of the study the scope of IR can be analyzed under two heads, they are...

Study the IR from the view of Levels of the State

In international system, many actors involved at once. This makes competing for explanation and theories very complex to understand. So in order to understand it, scholars of IR have put forward many levels of analysis. A level of analysis in IR is based on a set of similar actors or processes that suggests possible explanations to 'why' questions. Level of analysis provides different types of interpretations of international events.

In consonance with Goldstein^[20], there are four main levels -

The Individual level of analysis entangles the awareness, alternatives, and actions of the individual personalities. Great leaders impact the course of the history, as do individual persons such as taxpayers, villagers, voters, citizens, etc. For example Mao, Mahatma Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln and many more. It is said, without Mao, there might well have been no the Peoples Republic of China. Similarly, the role of Mahatma Gandhi, in India's freedom struggle before independence and his influence to till date is most makeable.

The Domestic (or State or Societal) level of analysis entangles the gatherings of individuals within states that impact nation's activities in the international realms. Such gatherings having pressure groups, political and non-political organizations, and government and non-government agencies. These groups function differently under the influence of international influence in various societies and states. For instance, Indo-Pak relations due to issue in Jammu & Kashmir. The politics of majority and minority and neo-nationalism, etc. are now playing the significant influence on interactions among nation-states.

The Interstate (or International or Systemic) level of analysis entangles the results or outcome impacted by the international system. This level focal point is nation-states relations among themselves, without influenced by their leaders or internal conditions. This level focused on an analysis of relative power and interactions among the nation-states. For instance trade.

The Global level of analysis seeks to explain international outcomes in term of global trends (such as the evolution of human technology, an era of globalization and many) and forces that transcend the interactions of states themselves.

Study the IR from the view of Behaviour of Actors

In international relations, we study & analyze the behavior of actors as Goldstein & Pavehouse in his book, 'International Relations' write, "International relationships among the world's governments are closely connected with other actors." Actors include any institution as well as individual influencing policies & decision of the government in the international perspective. Actors consist of individual leaders and citizens, bureaucratic agencies in foreign ministries, MNCs and terrorist groups. Actors can be classified into state actors & non-state actors.

State Actors

The most important actors in IR are states. According to Goldstein and Pavehouse; "A state is a territorial entity controlled by a government and inhibited by a population. A state government answers to no higher authority; it exercises sovereignty over its territory to make and enforce laws, to collect taxes, and so forth. This sovereignty is recognized (acknowledged) by other states through diplomatic relations and usually by membership in the United Nations (UN). The population inhabiting a state forms a civil society to the extent that it has developed institutions to participate in political or social life", For the sake of understanding the state actors can be put into the following table;

Table 2 State Actors and their Examples

| Туре | Who are they | Examples |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| State Leaders | Head of Government and Head of State, | Prime Minister of India, President of India, President of USA, PM of UK etc |
| Individual Leaders | Diplomats, Reputed Scholars, and Subject Experts. | Henry Kissinger, Madeleine Albright, Sashi Tharoor, etc |
| Bureaucratic Organizations | Those acts in the name of the state | Foreign Ministries. |

Source: Author's own.

Under the 'international system' the state actors intercourse among themselves. The international system structure depending upon defined rules and regulations, methods of interactions and the set of relationships. Those rules are may be in the form of explicit or implicit in nature. These rules can illustrate: to be or not to be a member of the system, what type of activities and interactions generally happening among the nations, rights, and responsibilities of the nations.

Non-State Actors

Excluding state actors, all other comes from non-state actors. Non-state actors influence decisions of state actors (state government). These actors are also called transnational actors when they operate across international borders. According to Goldstein & Pavehouse, Non-state actors are categorized as follows:-

Table 3 Non-State Actors and their examples.

| Туре | Who are they | Examples |
|--------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| IGOs (intergovernmental | Members are | United Nations, NATO, |
| Org.) | national | G20, SAARC, BRICS, |
| Olg.) | governments | WTO, etc. |
| NGOs (nongovernmental | Members are | Amnesty International, |
| Org.) | individuals & | Lions clubs, Red Cross, |
| Olg.) | Groups | Green Peace, etc. |
| MNCs (Multinational | Companies that | TATA, Amazon, Toyota, |
| Corporations) | span borders | Wal-Mart, etc. |
| Others including illegal | Individual, cities, constituencies, etc. | Bono, Iraqi Kurdistan, al |
| 0 0 | | Qaeda, Daesh (earlier |
| actors | | ISIS) etc. |

Source: Adapted from Goldstein, in his book, 'International Relations' P.31

According to the VN Khanna [21] "over one-third of all international activity takes place exclusively among non-state actors, further well over 50% of all international activity involves interactions among non-state actors and nation-states. Thus in contemporary world politics, nation states continue to be central units of international relations, yet several bodies like multinational corporations (MNCs) terrorist organizations, and religious groups, are increasingly interacting with the nation-states. They have become such important units that they just cannot be ignored. The non-state actors are now influencing foreign policies of various countries".

Today, the international stage is crowded with state and nonstate actors, large and small, that are intimately interwoven with the decisions of the governments and they are playing a crucial role in designing the destiny of the world politics.

Significance of IR

Our pertinent complex world badly needed a global-oriented view for dynamic problems of the world, and it requisitioned professionally skilled people as a rip-roaring field of study. The IR theory and practice are in interdisciplinary nature, due to the overlapping of the fields like philosophy, economics, history, law, political science, political environment, liberalization, privatization, globalization, ethics, global education on environment and security, etc, The 21st Century global problems like threats from terrorists, cyber attacks, nuclear threats, issues of human rights, environment protection, de-globalization, un-precedence economic trade wars etc... all of these problems made the study of IR from complex to more complicated. Which means the study of IR should focus its research nature from one dimension to multidimensional and unitary research to interdisciplinary research is the need of the hour to give a proper reply to the world's leading problems. International relations often referred as international interactions or international affairs having extensive prospects in the current complex world, as it investigates to explain:

- The roots of war and management of peace,
- The nature of power, the execution of power under the world order,
- The dynamic nature of the state and non-state actors in the international decision-making process.

For instance, some organizations may study the activities of the leaders, diplomats, bureaucrats, and policy-makers who involved in their countries foreign policy-making process from the point of psychological and social-psychological reasoning, while some-other concentrate on their IR studies from the structural-functional point of view to detect the objectives as behavior of state and non-state actors. At eventually, the field of IR study depends on the organization's objectives and goals, and also the study of IR vary from organization to organization depends on the whims and fancies of the management of the organization.

The Significance of IR in a Globalized Society

IR is absolutely not a new concept, even though; now a day's the study of IR given high priority due to the dynamic nature of the nation-states and their interactions. Historically, the study of IR focused on the interactions of the nation-states and their treaties, termed as the earliest form of IR.

The reasons for giving high priority to the study and practice of IR in the present world as follows...

- IR encourages trade treatises among nation-states to promote successful economic relations among the nations.
- IR promotes travel business like tourism, immigration, to improve the standards of living and opportunities for a common man.
- IR provides an opportunity for the states to cooperate rather than conflict, peace rather than war and pooling, sharing, the data regarding the issues like terrorism, cyber threats, nuclear threats, human rights, global environment etc.
- IR enhances cultural tie-ups, state-craft, and developmental policies among the nations.

IR may be a branch of political science, but those areas of study and practices are very deep-rooted on its own downright. As a continuous expansion of our modern world with radical advancement in science and technology, information technology, trade, wars, and unexpected threats from anti-state actors, IR emerged as an ultimate study of an independent subject to deal these complex problems of the 21st century. For instance, the study of IR from the traditional point of view deals with issues like international peace, international diplomacy, deterrence, alliance politics, arms control, the trade war. Whereas in modern point of view, deals with issues like human rights, environmental politics, de-globalization politics (for ex. BREXIT), refugee issues, migration issues, nuclear war, and supply etc.

CONCLUSION

International relations as a subject are concerned with the relationships among the governments of various sovereign states. Many people might think that relations among nations are regulated and conducted by the presidents, prime ministers, foreign ministries, and diplomats. This is partially true. The scope of international relations is not merely political. Today, economic activities such as international trade, the role of multinational corporations, terrorist activities, and impact of environment all are embraced in the fold of relations among nations. As rightly observed by Robert O Keohane and Krasner, "as a field of study, IR has uncertain boundaries, as a part of political science, international relations is about Politics', which implies 'International decisions of governments concerning their actions towards other governments". However, IR today, is inter-disciplinary, relating international politics to economics, history, sociology, and other disciplines.

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