



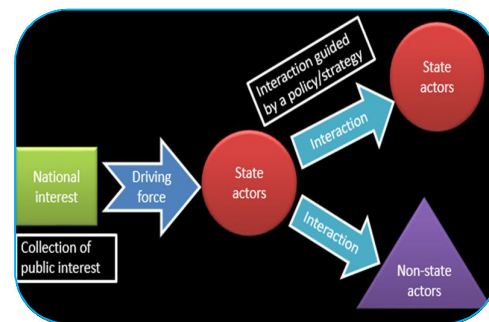
## IDEATIONAL LIBERALISM AND CONCEPTUALIZATION OF FOREIGN POLICY

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### ABSTRACT :

*In the Penguin Dictionary of International Relations foreign policy is described as an action which involves actions, reactions, and interactions of state actors. The foreign policy of any country is based on self-interest to defend its determined goals which are based on the pre-defined goals of the country. The interest of the particular country is considered supreme and for this purpose foreign policy is formulated by higher authority of decision making process of any country. Realist describes foreign policy as balancing behaviour of a unitary actor, whereas liberalism emphasises on preferences or priorities of individuals or groups within the state and their impact on external action. Constructivism defines foreign policy as a characteristics of national identity, it investigates role of norms and the constitution of identities (e.g. socialization of actors), and their impact on interests. Ideational liberalism which is one of the most important variant of liberalism talks about the role of domestic social identities (national, political and socio-economical) as determinants of state foreign policy. These preferences often shared by social identities are national identity and geographical borders, political decision making process and socio-economic regulation. This paper analyses the conceptual framework of foreign policy based on ideational liberalism.*



**KEYWORDS :** Liberalism, Ideational Liberalism, Foreign Policy, Identity, International Politics.

### INTRODUCTION

Liberalism cannot be said in any greater sense that it is related with only second image idea of international relation theory. The second image idea is more related to the role of state in international system. Main variance lies in the perception, how liberal theories and other theories perceive the systemic and domestic structure. Generally liberal perceive the distribution of preferences. They do not focus on the capabilities. For that reason liberal theory predicts that where conceptions of legitimate borders exist, coherence and harmony is possible between neighbours. Where societal identities are unharmonious and generate significant externalities, tension and zero-sum conflict is more possible (Moravscik 1997:525). The idea of capabilities lies with realism and information with institutionalism as the systemic characteristics. For instance, if we talk about trade protection, liberals are inclined to go for the description of societal domestic conflictual issues. Mismanagement of information is the key to institutionalists. And realists go for such consideration which has been generated by the necessity of security. In realist term state inclinations has been taken as given that they are really conflictual.

Institutionalists think and suppose that interests should be taken as they are based on the convergent (Moravcsik 1997:527).

The liberal schools ideas of international relation makes state- society relationships the focal point in international politics. Primarily liberal ideas and its proponents have opined that the natural order of international system has been spoiled by undemocratic state leaders. They underline that the balance of power as an outdated strategies which has lost its influence after the cold war because of the emerging multi-polar system. Liberals suppose that morality is achieved through the exercise of reason and formation of constitutional states. Liberalism can be traced back to Kant's *'Perpetual Peace'* and major proponents of the liberal traditions are Immanuel Kant, Jeremy Bentham, J.S Mill, Richard Cobden and Woodrow Wilson. In International relations, current scholarship can be traced back to three different tradition of liberalism. John Locke, one of the prominent modern liberal explained that individual rights and liberty reflected political independence and the rights of property expresses territorial integrity. Proponents of commercial liberalism emphasised on liberal pacifism. In this ideas of thought, Adam Smith and Schumpeter talks about the commercial liberalism based on the freedom of trade. And liberal republicans such as Giuseppe Mazzini, and Immanuel Kant who conceived internationalism that is based on peace among fellow liberal republics (Badie, Morlino, Schlosser 2011:1434). For Kant perpetual peace is must among nation state to eliminate the propensity of war. Bentham emphasises the importance of personal decision and ethical judgment by state leaders thus depicting closely on the effects of human nature (Franceschet 1999: 469). Generally a trust in the authority of law to resolve the problem of war is supported by Jermeý Bentham at the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Kant's prominent work *'Perpetual Peace'* has been perceived as backing federalism and world government (Hurrell 1990:183). Immanuel Kant's idea of perpetual peace predicts the pacification of liberal states (Doyle 1983:225). Locke derives his perception about international relations from this understanding of domestic politics. International society is not necessarily in state of war, if only the institutions can be established to remove misunderstanding and poor judgment on the part of states. J.S Mill was also very close to the philosophy of self- determination of nation. Mill found a vital difference between interventions for self- government (which he disallowed) and interventions for self-determination (which he recognised) (Hoffmann 1995:162).The belief of Cobden was based on **free trade. It was expected by him that it** would form a more nonviolent world order. This was a main notion of nineteenth-century liberalism. But possibly one of the strongest supporter of international authority was Woodrow Wilson. According to him peace could only be protected with the formation of international organisations. Liberals origin can be traced in normative theory and political ideology. It has been perceived as a critique of present social order. Its proponents pointed that progress is possible on the condition of reducing restrictions in terms of economic and political aspects (Brian 2010: 6).

There can be three basic assumptions which distinguish liberal international relation theory from realist and constructivist ideas. Among these, the first supposition is based on the idea that individuals and groups endorse their interest as a major actor in international relations. It can be said that it puts the bottom up ideas of international relations. The second supposition is that state signifies some natural characteristics of domestic society whose biased preferences create the inherent goals that states officials follow. The third supposition is based on interdependent state preferences according to which state determines its behaviour. Liberals take configuration in a way that they are either fixed constraints or endogenic to state preferences (Moravcsik 1997:520). The external policy of any country is strongly swayed by the domestic connection of social forces and their material goals.

## UNDERSTANDING FOREIGN POLICY

Literature related to foreign policy is more influenced by the realist approach. The foreign policy of one country has been analysed largely on the premises of dominant paradigm and the societal aspect of the state has been ignored. It shows one of the biggest inconsistencies in the literature of the analysis of foreign policy. It cannot be denied that states act as per their perceived interest. What really

matters is how interests are understood to be instituted or constructed (Wendt1999: 113-114). For instance, Risse -Kappen, Berger, Barnett, and Herman all advance the argument that states holding a specific identity have deep effects on the structure of the international. Liberalism considers a group of positive theories and ideas to explain how states act rather than how they ought to behave (Slaughter 1995:10). Liberalism emphasises on ideas, social forces and political institutions in the direction of foreign policy making. Primarily, liberal theory regards the domestic conditions as an imperative variables in clarifying their international behaviour (Doyle 1997: 50). Liberalism perceives economic interdependence as the main features of global environment that states must reflect when they form foreign policy. The response to current liberalisation has been seen in the form of economic integration. Both wealthy and poor states are engaging in arrangements and dialogue to institute greater interdependence at the global and regional level (Kaarbo 2013:11, 12). Liberalism adds to the understanding of foreign policy. It analyses the role of concepts such as human rights, liberty and democracy, capitalism and markets and political institutions (democracy representation) on foreign relationships (Doyle 2008:50).

What goes inside the state has fundamental impact on the action of state. Liberalism tells us that different types of political system effect foreign policy in a different way. For example democracies are always different from dictatorships. Former being peaceful and the latter are war prone. It states that there is not only the importance of policy makers but at the same time other actors are also important. This is much important in democracies. Liberalism identifies that there is a need of popular consent and cooperation which is required in foreign policy making. This means that other state level features and national self cannot be overlooked. The importance of pluralism also works inside the state action. Liberals understand that rationality prevails in international relations. They recognize that states understand the need to work together. International institutions and regimes are seen essential for international society as cooperative mechanism. Many current international organisations can be seen as the manifestations of the need of international cooperation.

There are three variants in liberal school which are espoused by Liberals in the present time. These variants are known as ideational, commercial and republican liberalism. Ideational liberalism emphasises on the existing social preferences through essential shared goods in the form of unity of nation, legitimacy of political institutions, and socio-economic domestic compulsion (Moravcsik 1997:25-28). Commercial liberalism is more inclined to chances of transborder economic inter-linkages and dealings. The attention of the republican liberalism is based on the characteristics of domestic representation and subsequent potentials for state centered behaviour. Of these three variants of liberalism, ideational liberalism is the most useful because of its focus on different aspects in the study of foreign policy preferences. It enriches the enquiry of the analysis of foreign policy and justifies the preferences taken in the foreign policy of the country. For example, Moravcsik and Vachudova(2003) in his study argues that EU enlargement is mainly the result of national interest and power of EU member states. They promoted accession because they considered it their long term economic and geo-political interests.

### **Identity in International Politics**

Ideational liberalism explains the requirement of foreign policy analysis based on three factors which are national identity, political ideology and socio-economic regulation. The first important kind of shared identity explaining the internal choice of foreign policy includes the set of societal preferences relating to the nation which in turn purposes the valid site of national borders and the distribution of rights of citizens (Moravcsik 1997:526). The idea of "identity" in this way functions as a key link between environmental structures and interests. This word comes from social psychology, where it relates to the picture of individuality and distinctiveness believed and planned by an actor and shaped in relations with others. Thus the terminology refers to mutually created and evolving imageries of self and the other (Katzenstein 1996:21). Interests are shaped and generated by identities. Some interests

in the form of survival and minimal physical well-being, occur outside of definite social identities; they are comparatively broad. But many national security interests hang on a specific construction of self-identity in relation to the identity of others. This was surely factual in time of Cold War. State actors frequently cannot choose what their interests are until they distinguish what they are symbolizing--"who they are" which in turn rests on their societal relationship (Katzenstein 1996: 21-22). Collective identity has been perceived in the relation of self and other to its identification. In the process of identification identity of the self and other transcend altogether. Identification has been perceived in term of issue specific theme and rarely total. The mechanism of identity construction is incorporated in the form of social constituted "Me". Role identities do that so that the difference between self and other can be maintained but collective identities merge them into a single identity. Collective identity includes shared characteristics and all type of identities cannot be called shared identities because they do not involve identification. Collective identities have been seen as the distinct combination of role and type identities. Identification is rarely total. At the level of individual, individual has both egoistic and collective motivations (Wendt 1999: 229,306). The majority of states in international system consider themselves as part of the society of states. They adhere with norms not because of self-interested manufactured calculation but internalizing factor of identity to identify with them. The question of coexistence has gained a level of collective interest in international politics (Wendt 1999:242-243). National security interest depends on a particular construction of a state identity in relation to the identity of others. It is must to know that what the actors are representing and "who they are" which broadly depends on their social relationship (Jepperson, Katzenstein &Wendt 1996:14). The construction of collective identity formation is not a"Tabula Rasa" but is formed on cultural background (Wendt 1999:340). Ruggie (1998) explains that neo-liberal institutionism treats the identity and interest of actors as exogenous and given. Constructivist project has sought to widen the narrow theoretical framework of the field. It is problematizing the interests and identities of actors. This theory provides the intersubjective bases of social actions and social order (Ruggie 1998: 862). Ruggie (1998) says that Kehone and Goldstein explained three types of ideas. One they call "world views" which is concerned with the conception of people's identities evoking deep emotions and loyalties. The second is principled beliefs which is related to standards and measures for differentiating right from wrong and just from unjust. The third one is causal views. These are views about cause effect relations resulting from the common consent.

Ideational liberalism emphasises on societal preferences through fundamental shared goods like national unity, legitimate political institutions and socio-economic regulation. Primarily liberals do not take the distinct point on the question of social identity. They do not emphasise whether they ultimately reflect material or ideational forces. But with the help of different variants, they have tried to narrow down the concept of social identity to understand the preferences in foreign policy. These three essential elements are essentially shaped by geographical borders, political decision making process and socio-economic regulation. National integrity, political autonomy and national security is considered not an end in itself but a way of realising preferences described by the demands of social groups. Ideational liberalism stresses that borders coincide with the national identities of powerful social groups. Under such circumstances, government tries to unite nation in appropriate jurisdiction. On the other hand, other governments may hinder the process of making national identity or uniting nationals. It shows if there is any disjuncture between borders and identity conflict is more likely or possible. In other words, identities become the essential element to analyse the international conflict and cooperation in international politics. Slaughter has also argued that state choices are not static or autonomous but are the combination of individual and group choices (Slaughter 2001: 184).

The role of particular ideology cannot be overlooked in particular time of the history. Every state frames its foreign policy based on the national interest of that specific country. So, the question of aligning the economic instruments of state power with particular dominant ideology to pursue national interest becomes essential. Schimmelfenning (2001) in his study on ideational liberalism and European

Union makes the point that European Union is the prominent organisation of the European community. It is grounded on a European and liberal shared self. At the local level, the liberal values of shared political and social order- the rule of law, social pluralism, autonomous and democratic political involvement, private possessions and a market centered economy are resulted from and defended by those liberal civil rights.

In the global domain the liberal imperative is described by the democratic peace and multilateralism. In the rationalist viewpoint, basic values and norms is at best an essential consideration of enlargement. In absence of economic assistances, having shared values and norms is not a constructive incentives for expanding the organisation. State players can purposefully use shared self, values and norms to defend and advance their self-interest. However, this strategic action is controlled by the constituent ideas of the community. Once fixed in this community setup, they can be enforced to honor identity and shared value based assurances in order to defend their reliability and status as community members (Schimmelfenning 2001:78). It is judicious to assume that in the case of two level bargaining, the main negotiator will stretch preeminence of his national calculus. Two level game has integrated domestic factors into systemic theory. It has emphasized on the role of statesmen as a strategic actor. The statesman's choice has been considered as an important element in international negotiations. Moravcsik argues that the framework of two level game simply invites us to explore principle-agent relations between the polity and the statesmen. This approach has recognized to use domestic factors to explain the outcome of international bargaining. International bargaining may be solely aimed at achieving domestic goals. In the two level game, the most constraint on the statesman is the size of win-set which rests on domestic factors including the distribution of domestic coalitions, the nature of representative institutions and domestic strategies employed by the statesmen (Moravcsik 1993: 24). In liberal world order, superiority is accorded to market rationality. Definite regimes that aid such rules in the ranges of money and trade constrain the will of states to interfere in the running of currency and goods market. These are generally called strong regimes, because they confine self-centered states from interfering straight in international economic matters. The power of this regime is supported by, certainly the competences of the great power. The rules recognised by British economic power in the 19th century and that marking the authority of the United States after World War II exemplify liberal orders with powerful regimes (Ruggie 1982).

The third component of ideational liberalism is socio-economic compulsions on foreign policy of any country. Globalisation has been perceived as a worldwide condition of world politics. But at the same time, individual and groups are an essential players in politics. Individual and groups are entrenched in national and transnational society which generates varied incentives for them to act together across borders-economically, socially and culturally. It generates the private demands from significant subset of the people. It is diffused through representative institutions. The consequence is generally the varied distribution of preferences. It captures essential social embeddedness of world politics (Moravcsik 2010: 113). The substantial concept of modern liberal ideas has accepted that social preferences regarding the nature of domestic compulsion imposes legitimate constrains on the state and markets. For instance, governments are required to uphold steadiness in food production that protect farmers from the compressions of changing harvests and instable prices. The state has the role of taking control over the markets by making the rules which are generated within the domestic society (Polanyi 1944, 2001: 26). Within the framework of embedded liberalism, multilateralism and domestic solidity are interconnected to and conditioned by one another. The international openness is expected to support the domestic economy from external disturbances. Such domestic efforts should be consistent with the degree of external disturbance (Ruggie 1998:78). Ruggie has argued that the post war regime for trade and money has established the normative agenda of embedded liberalism. The essence of embedded liberalism is to develop a form of multilateralism that is well-matched with the necessities of domestic stability. If government is seeking to encourage international division of labour and replicating some idea of comparative advantage, it is expected to minimise the disruptive domestic

modification and vulnerability at home that might expand from global functional differentiation (Ruggie 1982:399-400). In the book *'Market and Society: The Great Transformation today'* Hart and Hann argues that Polanyi never rejected the importance of markets for the allocation of some public goods and services. But he has condemned the very high elevation of self-regulating market which acquired a position of dominance. The victims of liberalism therefore sought to protect themselves from such kind of mechanism. Thus there are two constraints behind the market: first, its dependence on the state and second is associated with the range of domestic and social institutions formed to counter impersonal and natural market forces (Hart & Hann 2009:9).

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