



The Concept of Power in International Relations

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Abstract:

The terms of Power, influence and authority could be heard in political world vastly, but using these terms is not leaving only to this realm. Despite its visual simplicity, generally there is not similar and equal perception about term of Power among people. Understanding about by politicians differs from lawyer perception about this term. What people takes about Power, totally differ from what a strategist interpret from. Role and influence of Power also among society is differs from its application in international relations. Power, undoubtedly is the most basic concept of registered knowhow over international relations. In fact, Power reflects relations between activists in international relations, means that, international relations and perhaps more precisely, relations between states warrants Power relations between activists in this area. According to this fact, variety in interpretation about Power in international relations have not been emerged but in variety of international relations theories. However, in ordinary understanding about International relations course, it has supposed that concept of Power closely has been made linkage with realism theory in its all forms, but it should be admitted that, today it could be possible to reach novel recognition about Power concept and its requirements by arising thoughtfulness approaches. Old politic scholars defined Power, in its general and ordinary concept, both as destiny and cause. In this interpretation, Power merely depends on level of ability and sovereignty of one party against other party(s), to oblige him to obey. In this view, whole life of people could be summarized as result of Power interactions in different domains and degrees. Practical results achieved from present theory, which in some cases meets visions of behavior – orientation is that, in international relations, there is no governing Power, or at least governing states do not recognize any Powers over their Power and sovereignty. In this ambiguous realm, some believes that lack of international governing Power, requires establishing a global state in form of an international contract. In contrast, there are many other groups that follow Power balance theory in relations of governing and dependent states. There is also a compromising theory.

Keywords: Power, International Power, International policy, International relations.

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Introduction

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which in some cases meets visions of behavior – orientation is that, in international relations, there is no governing Power, or at least governing states do not recognize any Powers over their Power and sovereignty. In this ambiguous realm, some believes that lack of international governing Power, requires establishing a global state in form of an international contract. In contrast, there are many other groups that follow Power balance theory in relations of governing and dependent states. There is also a compromising theory.

Present research has been implemented through analytical – descriptive method and attempted to recognize concept of Power in international relations science and raised this main question that considering existing perspective in international relations course, how can we find fundamental concept for Power? Therefore, the main aim in this research is to investigate on concept of Power and its application in international relations. In this article it has tried to point out to concepts of Power and analyze these meanings. Meanwhile, collection of required data in current study implemented through relevant articles, textbooks and internet resources.

Power and influence

What obviously clear is that role of Power in national policy is differed from its influence over international policy and relations. In national political system, the Power merely possessed by governing states and according to current rules, right to punishment of delinquents and culprits, is legitimacy and exclusively under authorization of governmental system. Whereas, within international society, limitations of this Power and legitimacy in execution of punishment over delinquents is under shade of ambiguity and despite presence of various international institutions and

written (or unwritten) rules in this respect, there is not any governing Power similar to national society. Some of lawyers, relying on this approach, even believe that what we called as international law, in fact is not law in its real meaning, since there is not any Transnational Power over the world that possess necessary legal guarantee.

If we pay attention to traditional theory about lack of governing Power in international relations, it will be facilitate understanding of many common issues in human society. Of course, such this approach differs fundamentally from Neo-Marxism theories about imperialistic Power sources. Idealists care about issue and title of Power so as to realists, but considering traditional approach of both groups to matter of Power, their interpretation over this field is different. Idealists that know group and collective security as a guarantee for legal necessity, in same time, believe that this structure relies on some considerations that are effect of Power and deterrence. Realist theorists is opposing collective security but admit the logic of this proposal (Hassanbeigi, 2011).

All discussions and theories in field of international relations raise around matter of Power. The national dimension of Power in addition to various component such as army force, resources and facilities, human resources, economic Power, is required to people support. International aspect of Power also, relies on ability to apply maximum existing facilities in order to effect on other states and people over the world. In both aspects of power, advertisement or in more accurate word, communication and informations plays critical role, i.e. one of axial components of Power within our time, is the ability to produce and distribution of message in line with predetermine objectives in national and international domain (Marvi,

2004). As a general view, present research could be considered as an introduction to cognition of Power concept, in International relations sciences. Therefore, the main question raised is that considering present perspectives within international relations course, how can we reach to a fundamental concept about Power?

This is deemed to mention that recognition of Power concept in international relations is not so far without history. In this way, Barnet and Dwal in their common work and in frame work of Power typology and mention four dimensions of Compulsory, inherent, structural and generative, show that in social relations those are based on formation, Power, structure and social trend that reinforce activists like social existence, social identity and their capacities to define and adhere to its interest and ideals. Barnet and Dwal in their interpretation know only two structural and generative Power related with contextual factors, since in these types, Power is as a result of contextual procedures, discussion procedure and systems of implications and concept that make subjects. Therefore, viewpoints of Barnet and Dwal, in sense of ontology about role of social factors in formation of activists (Epistemological – cognition of relations between activists) is based on semantic approach. In similar study that conducted by Ebrahimi Far and Monavari (2011) they dealt with recognition concept of Power in international relations science and attempted to evaluate evolution of Power concept in international policy invoking to different theoretical schools; categorizing, measuring and manner of its application to establish peace and security over international level. Eyvazi and Parsa (2012), in their work tried to determine influential elements of Power in international policy, considering concept of Power, and pointing out to novel

Power in area of international policy; that is soft Power and sought to answer this question that which elements of soft Power influence on international policy? And while answering to these questions they pointing out to influential elements of soft Power in international policy, knows culture as a main factor and called cultural diplomacy as a strategic policy in this area. Considering that international credit achievement and influence on vox pop are among important and implicit goals of states' diplomacy in international policy domain, that follows in different manner and mechanism and according to situation, conditions, opportunities and cultural capacities of every state; this theory has been expressed that if there is satisfaction and consent about importance of values and beliefs in states, that national culture will be considered as strong and otherwise defined as weak culture. This important task would be implemented by states through cultural diplomacy. Therefore, cultural diplomacy and general diplomacy are two instruments to apply soft Power in international policy.

Definition of Power in political science

There are different definition about political Power such as: "the Power could be known as a dominant intention that others' intention are in line with" (Bakhshayeshi, 1997) or "The Power is set of material and immaterial factors that cause an individual or group of people obeys other person or group" (Amid Zanjani, 1421), or the Power is ability of its owner to oblige others being surrounded against his / her wish in any kind. (Ashouri, 1987). We can understand from these definitions that, political Power can be emerged and demonstrated in form of commandship and obedience, impose, surrounding and obey and etc. and since sociologist instead deal

with Power in its most spread social concept, rather mostly involve with investigation political Power that is among most important displays of social Power.

Power concept

Political researchers, depending on their ideology raised different definition about Power. Some of these definitions are listed as follows:

Max Weber: The Power is a particular ability in a factor (individual or group) due to possessing situation in social relations that can apply its wishes, despite existing of resistance and regardless of relying basics for this particular ability.

Dal: The Power is relation between actors, in which, some actors compel the others to implement something that otherwise they do not do so.

Lasswell: The Power is to participation in decision making process and individual inter-relations.

Morgenthau: the meaning of political Power points out to existing of control over mutual relations of general Power and between general Power and public (other definition from this author: ability of human over other's mind and act is Power)

Political Power

There is a psychological relation between those who applies this to whom that this Power being applied. Political Power enables the early groups to control behavior of later people through making stress on their mind.

What is in fact considered in discussion about Power in international relations, is ability of governments to reach to their objectives of foreign policies of states. It is obvious that decision and policy makers usually are intended to follow such objectives which they

have ability to reach them. Ability to achieve objective of foreign policy compounds in fact the concept of Power in international relations that is the main core of policy issues, whether national or internationally, in so far it has expressed that the policy is a whole effort to achieve Power (Seif zadeh, 2002).

Soft Power

Among fundamental issues in political science and political thinking is concept of Power. Since time of Plato afterward, the Power has been focal point of political scholars, particularly in current era, it has been transformed to one of the basic concept and found axial role. The Power in view of Neo Liberalisms, who in fact established this concept, plays an important and influential role in international policy. Joseph Nay believed that, what he called as soft Power, in fact is an indirect path to reach wishes, the way, in which there is no threat and policy of force and stupidity. In soft Power, others rather to enforce to do something; invite others to collaborate and for this purpose, the others encourage wishing what we wish... Therefore, soft Power is in fact ability to formation of others' interests. (Nay, 2008). Soft Power in international equations is on high importance, so far it could be suggested that, at present time, the most dominant symbol of national Power is cultural Power in general meaning and psychological Power of advertisement in particular word, in which actors in international relations scene attempt to increase and extend this dimensions and through its application and creation particular influences on other actors to exhaust them from competition field. The characteristic of this aspect of Power attributes with concept of satisfaction. Today, international policy domain is being intensively influenced by cultural and identity factors. Hence, transaction and cultural

relations and also efforts to protect identity, allocates a particular place in level of theoretic issues and theorizing and as well in practice, so far protection of identity is not only in foreign policy and strategic studies, but rather results a wave that its field extended internationally and globally. In this point of view, it could be suggested that: belief in role of ideas and identities and generally, culture in international relations domain could be observed in work of constructivism schools (Hinnebusch, 2005).

National power

National Power is the ability or capability of a nation to secure the goals and objectives of its national interests in relation with other nations. It involves the capacity to use force or threat of use of force or influence over others for securing the goals of national interest.

Regional Power

Regional Power is the concept that raised after termination of two polar system. Within worldwide hierarchical system, regional Powers are actors that their stand and performance are on high importance.

Matter of regional Power hierarchy has been used to initiate a valuable research work by Buzan and Vior. They distinguished, within mentioned discussion that rose in form of regional – security complex theory, between great Powers and super Power that act over worldwide level and influence in this area on one hand and regional Powers that their influence may be extended over the region on the other hand, but have not been paid attention over worldwide level. To reach proper situation by great Powers, it is required to possess financial resources, identifying such these situations from great Powers side and that performance of this states in internation-

al level and over behavior of other great Powers shall yield to observable consequences. In contrast, regional Powers, define structure of every regional – security complex. However, it may probable that their abilities would be considerable, but their Powers over the region has been limited and great Powers beyond the mentioned region do not account them in worldwide Power balance. In their point of view, the regional Powers, however may not possess proper financial resources and hardware, but in sense of historical authenticity, deep traditions and geographical situation, they located in desired conditions.

While analysis of regional Power, they raise two terms as: regional clusters and intermediate regions. Regional clusters are included of all countries that have similar security concerns and in view of history, geographical and culture in so far have same destiny. European Union could be a good instance as a security cluster, since threats and opportunities that they face are so far similar.

Buzan and Vior divided the world in their theory to six security regions (Asia, Middle East, Europa, Africa, North America and South America). In their point of view, some of countries located at the middle of different security regions and could not be assigned to a particular region. For instance, Turkey, that placed between security regions of Middle East, Europe and Asia and could be considered as intermediate state. The most important feature of such these regions, is enjoyment of security attributions of two neighbor countries.

Power and International policy study

International policy defined as main groups over the world to progress in objectives of

someone against others opposition. (Wright, 1955). However, term of political Power has undesired meaning for someone; such these definitions imply that this term is waste and redundant. Traditionally, international policy study, assuming that national states are full of political conflicts, hold high value for preserve independency and relying on first priority army forces. The states that have highest army forces designated as great Powers and international politic games is being played with them. (Spykman, 1942). Only some states efficiently had military abilities to protect foreign policy. An efficient express in 1930 suggested surely that these groups comprise great Powers. In 18th century, Power of great and individual states assumed to be accurate measurement of such factors as population, territory, wealth, army forces, and sea Power (Sprout and Sprout, 1945) and states are seeking to maximizing their Powers against others or seeking for Power balancing.

Power in Realism Approach

Realism is often associated with Realpolitik as both are based on the management of the pursuit, possession, and application of power. Realpolitik, however, is an older prescriptive guideline limited to policy-making (like foreign policy), while Realism is a particular paradigm, or wider theoretical and methodological framework, aimed at describing, explaining and, eventually, predicting events in the international relations domain. The theories of Realism are contrasted by the cooperative ideals of Liberalism. One of the main concept in this area is balance of power.

The Balance of Power Theory in international relations suggests that national security

is enhanced when military capability is distributed so that no one state is strong enough to dominate all others. If one state becomes much stronger than others, the theory predicts that it will take advantage of its strength and attack weaker neighbors, thereby providing an incentive for those threatened to unite in a defensive coalition. Some realists maintain that this would be more stable as aggression would appear unattractive and would be averted if there was equilibrium of power between the rival coalitions.

When confronted by a significant external threat, states that look to form alliances may "balance" or "bandwagon". Balancing is defined as allying with others against the prevailing threat, while states that have bandwagon have aligned with the threat. States may also employ other alliance tactics, such as buck-passing and chain ganging. There is a longstanding debate among realists with regard to how the polarity of a system impacts on which tactic states use,[3] however, it is generally agreed that bipolar systems as each great power has no choice but to directly confront the other. Along with debates between realists about the prevalence of balancing in alliance patterns, other schools of international relations, such as constructivists, are also critical of the balance of power theory, disputing core realist assumptions regarding the international system and the behavior of states.

Power and Geopolitics

a study of the influence of such factors as geography, economics, and demography on the politics and especially the foreign policy of a state (Merriam Webster) some scholars believe that real power is recognized in frame of Geopolitics. Geopolitics focuses on political power in relation to geographic space. In particular, territorial waters and

land territory in correlation with diplomatic history. Academically, geopolitics analyses history and social science with reference to geography in relation to politics.

Conclusion

The results of research show that various definition for Power have been provided, among which the most proper definition is: The Power is psychological relation, based on which the wishes and intention of one party realizes from other party and to continue this relation, potential facilities and abilities will be applied. The Power emerges in different forms so called Power modification and it has also descriptive and explanatory attributions such as degree, level, resource, scope, domain and distribution of Power. Among issues that follow discussion about quality and quantity of Power, is the matter of Power measurement, for which different methods such as Algebra loss and statistical methods have been raised. It could be suggested that Power in international policy means ability of people to use tangible and intangible resources, so that influence on behavior of other people. With respect to national Power, it could be divided to 3 components as: Power application analysis (influence actions), Power sources (influence tools), and answers. Power sources categorize in two groups of material (tangible) or immaterial (intangible). At the end, states in view of level of Power could be categorized into 6 groups as: 1. First level Powers, 2. Second level Powers, 3. Middle Powers, 4. Low level Powers, 5. Regional Powers and 6. Very low level states.

Since Thucydides time; a Greek historian, Power has played important role in international relations issues. Despite long term history of Power, there is no scientific consensus over Power and its role in international relations. Two main approaches about analysis of

Power in international affair in Power view considered as sources and approach of relation based Power. The second approaches about Power developed in second half of 20th century by Philosophy researchers and different courses of political science. Both approaches are apparent in current international relations. However, the Power is a historical focal point in research about international relations, though there are many opportunities for further research, which is included of: 1. considering the Power about independent variables, 2. Types of Power, 3. Institutions and Power, 4. National policy and Power, 5. Strategic interaction, 6. Power distribution in different regions. However, it will be improbable making scientific conditions about role of Power in international affairs in near future, though study about aforesaid proposed opportunities may results to perceive important aspects in international behavior.

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