

Study Unit 4: Power, Security and Balance of Power

Unit Objectives

1. To define power.
2. To identify the characteristics of power.
3. To identify the balance of power theory.
4. To explain major methods of balance of power
5. To explain state centric power.

Power is the capacity of an individual to influence the conduct (behaviour) of others. The term “authority” is often used for power that is perceived as legitimate by the social structure. Power can be seen as evil or unjust. This sort of primitive exercise of power is historically endemic to humans; however, as social beings, the same concept can be seen as good and as something inherited or given for exercising humanistic objectives that will help, move, and empower others as well. In general, it is derived by the factors of interdependence between two entities and the environment.

The use of power need not involve force or the threat of force (coercion). An example of using power without oppression is the concept “soft power,” as compared to hard power.

The following are the characteristics of power

Power is a perception in a sense that some people can have objective power. but still have trouble influencing others. People who use power cues and act powerfully and proactively tend to be perceived as powerful by others. Some people become influential even though they don't overtly use powerful behavior.

Power exists in relationships. The issue here is often how much relative power a person has in comparison to one's partner. Partners in close and satisfying relationships often influence each other at different times in various arenas.

Power usually represents a struggle over resources. The more scarce and valued resources are, the more intense and protracted are power struggles. The scarcity hypothesis indicates that people have the most power when the resources they possess are hard to come by or are in high demand. However, scarce resource leads to power if it is valued within a relationship.

Balance of power is important because it is a system in which peace can be kept among a large number of states when there is no hegemon among them. The sides can constantly work to keep any one of them from getting too strong and coming to be able to threaten the others.

Balance of power theory in international relations suggests that states may secure their survival by preventing any one state from gaining enough military power to dominate all others. If one state becomes much stronger, the theory predicts it will take advantage of its weaker neighbors, thereby driving them to unite in a defensive coalition. Some realists maintain that a balance-of-power system is more stable than one with a dominant state, as aggression is unprofitable when there is equilibrium of power between rival coalitions.

Underlying Principal Assumptions and Postulates of Balance of Power:

The Balance of Power rests upon several fundamental postulates and assumptions.

Principal Assumptions of balance of power includes the following;

Balance of Power assumes that states are determined to protect their vital rights and interests by all means, including war.

Vital interests of the states are threatened.

The relative power position of states can be measured with a degree of accuracy.

Balance of Power assumes that "balance" will either deter the threatening state from launching an attack or permit the victim to avoid defeat if an attack should occur.

The statesmen can, and they do make foreign policy decisions intelligently on basis of power considerations.

Major Methods of Balance of Power:

Compensation: It is also known as territorial compensation. It usually entails the annexation or division of the territory of the state whose power is considered dangerous for the balance.

Intervention and Non-intervention: "Intervention is a dictatorial interference in the internal affairs of another state/states with a view to change or maintain a particular desired situation which is considered to be harmful or useful to the competing opponents.

Divide and Rule: The policy of divide and rule has also been a method of balance of power. It has been a time honored policy of weakening the opponents. It is resorted to by all such nations who try to make or keep their competitors weak by keeping them divided or by dividing them.

Armaments and Disarmaments: All nations, particularly very powerful nations, place great emphasis on armaments as the means for maintaining or securing a favourable position in power relations in the world. It is also used as a means to keep away a possible aggressor or enemy.

Arguments in favour of Balance of Power

A Source of Stability in International Relations: Balance of Power provides stability to international relations, it is a device of effective power management and peace. During the past 400 years it was successful, at most of the times, in preserving peace.

It suits the real nature of International Relations: Balance of power tune with the dynamic nature of international relations. It helps continuous adjustments and readjustments in relations without any grave risk of war among states.

Ensures Multiplicity of States: Since Balance of Power postulates the presence of a number of major international actors (7 or 8 even more), it ensures multiplicity of nations and their active participation in preserving balance in international relations.

Guarantees the Freedom of Small States: Balance of Power ensures the preservation of small and weak states. Its rule that no nation is to be completely eliminated, favours the continued existence of all states. Each state feels secure about its security in the balance of power system.

Politics and business

In the whole African nation, Uganda's economy is the fastest rising due to its political stability and economic policies. Political stability is the main success of business in Uganda. The country's political and Business & Politics is particularly interested in manuscripts that use the tools of social science to illuminate contemporary policy issues, such as financializing and economic policymaking in a post-crisis era, and important scholarly foci, such as business strategy in weakly institutionalized environments, private regulation and privatization of services, and the relationship between business organizations, nongovernmental organizations, courts, and political parties.

Economic environment has been consistently improving and stable since 1986. Under the leadership of H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, Uganda has been able to be a political stabilizing force in the region, which has provided a secure environment for business to thrive. Security of investment is also guaranteed under the Constitution of Uganda and the Investment Code 1991, as well as the major international investment related agreements / treaties to which Uganda is signatory.

Violence is of course never a good option. whether through warfare or terrorism, but political balance of power always normally results in a standoff of non-violence.

It is only when one side of a conflict is so powerful, so wealthy, and so militarily superior, that violence and injustice becomes an inevitability.

According to Kegley and Wittkopf in World Politics-Trends and Transformation. 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 their rival coalitions.

The role of power in business negotiation

Power in negotiations process has been regarded as one of the elements that contributes to. and influence the outcome of the negotiation. It is through this factor that multinational corporations and large organizations use power to get what they want in a negotiation process.

French (2008) defines negotiation as a process of making joint decisions when the parties involved have different preferences. On daily activities people are involved in negotiation process, it is worth noting that, because of the different preferences people have; they engaged in a negotiation process in every communication that takes place. In that, negotiation can be considered as a way of finding the best solution with others or coming to agreement in the process of decision making.

Having discussed on the concepts of negotiation and power, I will not show power can disadvantage "the underdog" in a negotiation process. As it is already mentioned in the discussion regarding power factor in the negotiation process, it is imperative to argue that power influence in decision making between parties involved in the negotiation process. (Bacharach & Lawler 1981) contend that, Power is the central determining factor in negotiation.

Power Negotiators realize that you're usually better off if you can get the other side to commit to a position first. There are several obvious reasons to adopt this approach:

1. Their first offer might be much better than you hoped.

2. It gives you information about your counterpart before you have to disclose anything.
3. It enables you to bracket their proposal. If they present a price first, you can bracket them, so if you end up splitting the difference, you will get what you want. If they can get you to commit first, they might bracket your proposal. Then if you end up splitting the difference, they get what they wanted.

The less you know about the other side or the proposition that you are negotiating, the principle of not going first becomes even more important.

Power Negotiators realize that you're usually better off if you can get the other side to commit to a position first.

Power exists only to the point at which it is accepted. At the airport on a return trip from Europe, I noted that all the ticketing agents for economy class had at least a twenty-minute line to check baggage.

Power Negotiators always want the other parties to believe that they won in the negotiations. Start the negotiation by asking for more than you expect to get. It continues through all of the other Gambits that are designed to service the perception that they are winning. It ends with congratulating the other side.

When you're finished negotiating, you should always congratulate the other side. However poorly you think the other person may have done in the negotiations, compliment them. Say. "Wow-did you do a fantastic job negotiating that. I realise that I didn't get as good a deal as I could have done, but frankly, it was worth it because I learned so much about negotiating. You were brilliant." You want the other person to think that he or she won in the negotiations.

State centric international relations

International relations theory is the study of international relations (IR) from a theoretical perspective. It attempts to provide a conceptual framework upon which international relations can be analyzed.

State-centric theories of international relations assume that states are the primary actors in world politics. Theorists working in this tradition do not deny the existence of other political actors. As Kenneth Waltz (1979, 93-94) writes, "states are not and never have been the only international actors....The importance of nonstate actors and the extent of transnational activities are obvious." Rather, the claim is that states, and especially great powers, are sufficiently important actors that any positive theory of international relation must place them at its core.

States have been and are likely to remain central actors in world politics. As such, they are necessary to any explanation of international relations. Yet, given the evident importance of domestic politics in many issues and the continuing growth of transnational actors, the role and, therefore, likely explanatory importance of states are increasingly qualified. State-centric theories can be quite powerful, but they can also be misleading when domestic interests are highly divided and their internal sovereignty is highly constrained.

Global governance or world governance is a movement towards political cooperation among trans-national actors aimed at negotiations responses to problems that affect more than one state or region.

It is also understood as the way in which global affairs are managed. As there is global government, global governance typically involves a range of actors including states as well as regional and international organization.

However, a single organization may nominally be given the lead role on an issue the world trade organization in world trade affairs.

Thus global governance is thought to be an international process of consensus, which generates guidelines and agreements e.g. WHO global governance is one of the main in ways individuals and institutions, public and private manage their common affairs.

Global governance is the sum of all the diverse efforts of communities at every level to move towards goals while preserving their coherence from one moment in time to the next

Global governance was able to draw on the themes inherited from geo-politics and theories of international relations such as peace, defense, geo-strategy, diplomatic relations and trade relations.

It is a system of roles of all levels of the of human activities from the family to international organization in which the pursuit of goals through the exercise of control has trans-national precautions.

Tutor Marked Assignment (TMA) study unit 4

Explain how East African community has promoted peace and security in the region.

Explain how the above has created a conducive environment for business.

Study review question four-study unit 4

- a) Identify and explain the types of balance of power.
- b) Discuss the importance of balance of power to a developing country.
- c) State and describe the dimensions of power.

Study review answer question four-study unit 4

- a) Balance of power is a state of stability between computing forces in international relations. It refers to equilibrium among countries or alliances to prevent one entity from being strong.

Types of balance of power.

- Rigid balance of power
 - Flexible balance of power
 - Simple balance of power
 - Complex balance of power
 - Local balance of power
 - Worldwide balance of power
- b)
- It encourages favourable terms of trade
 - It helps to maintain peace
 - It increases bargaining power
 - It influences decision making in developing countries
 - It encourages innovation
 - It encourages cooperation between states
- c) Dimensions of power
- Power as an attribute
 - Power is a relationship
 - Power is a structure