

## **Foreign Policy and Domestic Constraints: A Conceptual Account**

**Mubeen Adnan**

*University of the Punjab, Lahore.*

### **Abstract**

Foreign policy is an endless dialogue between the powers of continuity and the powers of change. It begins at frontiers. One cannot ignore the domestic inputs/actors role towards making foreign policy of any country. It is shaped by the internal needs of the country and projection of internal policies. Differences in states capabilities to act are constrained by the characteristics of states, or national attributes. The domestic constraints and challenges add much more complexity and unpredictability to the foreign policy process. Problems or constraints and challenges come out when a single individual or agency bypass the domestic interests of a state. The task of formulating foreign policy for developing states is more filled with constraints as compared to a developed and sovereign state. A Great number of social, economic, technological and political factors constrain the rate and kind of interaction of one state with another state. As these factors affecting the mobilization and the use of state capabilities. State is constrained not only by its own capabilities, interests, policies and actions but also by those of the state with which it interacts. One country's constraint may be the source of power for an-other country.

**Key Words:** Foreign Policy, Concept, Objectives, Domestic, Environment, Implementation, Constraint.

### **Foreign Policy: Conceptual Concerns**

To understand the words foreign policy, one needs to break them down into foreign and policy. Policy is a decision or a guide of choosing actions to achieve one's goals. Foreign means anything beyond the state, to areas where state has no authority over territory and people. When combined these words, mean a guide of choosing actions outside the state boundary for achieving goals. Foreign policy means, goals, values and different instruments which the government uses in making relations with different countries. Some things are important to take into account like, environment (international and domestic), available choices and resources before making foreign policy. Foreign policy comes out from the interaction of domestic and international systems. Roscoe Pound explains that "domestic policy is social through law and foreign policy is the use of political influence in order to induce other states to exercise their law-making power in a manner desired by the state concerned"(Northedge, (Ed.),1974: 11) States use

political power for converting law making power in favour of them. Foreign policy can never be more than an undertaking to negotiate with other states. Force of unpredictability is there and does not always achieve or moves on direct lines. Effectiveness of policy depends upon changes which occur internally and externally in international relations. Foreign policy debate is generally about the interests whom are to be defended and which are sacrificed if needed in dealing with other states. Foreign policy is independent, meaning that “the relative freedom of a country from interference in what it regards as its internal affairs and some degree of power to express and implement an independent viewpoint on external affairs.”(Northedge, (Ed.), 1974 : 19). It is not dependent on other states view point regarding foreign policy but it is possible to change or regulate the behaviour of other states with the view of serving their national interests.

Hugh Gibson has defined foreign policy as “a well rounded, comprehensive plan, based on knowledge and experience, for conducting the business of government with the rest of the world. It is aimed at promoting and protecting the interests of the nation.”(Khana,2005: 1)Basically foreign policy is framed for the protection and promotion of the national interest of a state which is based on information, knowledge, experience and planning for making relations with other states of the world.

According to Mahendra Kumar, “foreign policy is a thought out course of action for achieving objectives in foreign relations as dictated by the ideology of national interest.”(Chandra and Arora, 2008: 68).The National interest of a state guide its goals and through making relations with other countries, the state achieves those planned goals some times in short time or some times in long time. Every state decides its own course of action in foreign policy in the light of its own means. “The formulation of foreign policy is essentially an exercise in the choice of ends and means on the part of a nation- state in an international setting”(Shahid, 2006: 66). The choice of means and ends varies on issues of the particular state at particular time periods. It is also important to note where the state stands in the hierarchy of world politics. Cecil V Crab, Jr. defined foreign policy as “reduced to its most fundamental ingredients, foreign policy consists of two elements: national objectives to be achieved and means for achieving them. The interaction between national goals and the resources for attaining them is the perennial subject of the state craft. In its ingredients the foreign policy of all nations, great or small, is the same.”(Khana, 2005:2)National objectives can be achieved through using the successful means. Large and small states all work on foreign policy. Foreign policy is a continuous changing process where states co-operated with other states on its own grounds or some times modified policies regarding the international environment or pressures.

Hartman has described the foreign policy as “a systematic statement of deliberately selected national interests.”(Khana, 2005:2).Foreign policy may be defined as an integrated plan to secure and enhance national interest of a state. Scholars like Rosenau (1969), Frankel (1970) and Sondermann (1977) emphasized

the concept of national interest, as it is playing its role in making policy choices and decisions. It is necessary for each and every state to judge the success in foreign policy in the form of the achievements, prestige abroad and the protection of its interests. Failures in foreign policy must also be defined. Foreign policy can achieve its aims if it is based on accurate assessment of the facts, secondly if it is timely, thirdly if it is self-consistent, fourthly if understood and backed by relevant domestic social forces and lastly supported by appropriate resources. (Northedge,(Ed.), 1974:40).“Foreign Policy is the output of the state into the global system, the outcome of whatever foreign policy process exists within that state. Foreign policy is to affect the behavior of another actor from how it trades, to how it votes, to how it uses its weapons.”(Russet and Starr, 1981:88). It is a link between what goes on inside a state and the world outside of that state.

A state may interact with other states for so many reasons: for economic resources, natural resources, military armaments, political, trade, cooperation or alliance and so forth. Foreign policy finds the ways beneficial to each state. It is also a continuous process; it did not end with any government, its never ending. K.J. Holsti explains foreign policy objectives, as “an image of a future state of affairs and future conditions that governments through individual policy makers aspire to bring by wielding influence abroad and by changing or sustaining the behavior to other states.”(Holsti, 1997:139). It’s a direct link between domestic and international situations. He comes up with 3 categories of objectives,

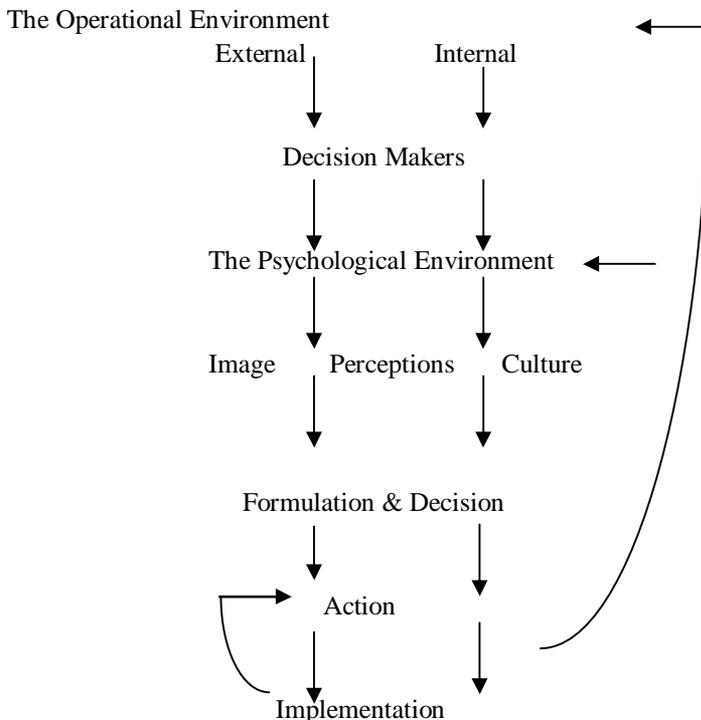
1. Core objectives
  2. Middle range objectives
  3. Long range objectives
1. Core objectives: - These must be achieved all times. Sovereignty, autonomy, national interest, territorial integrity, well being of people. Every state wants full autonomy and sovereignty of its own territory in order to plan out domestic and foreign policies. These objectives keep a state away from influence, coercion and the rule by other states. Acquisition of power provides influence on other states. Protection and promotion of national interest is important. These are more permanent in character. Compromise on any one of them will lead towards weakening of foreign policy.
  2. Middle range objectives: - These are less immediate and they require cooperation from other states like economic and social development. Economic conditions determine the status of a state in the international arena. Economically developed states play more effective roles. Economic prosperity can be achieved through an effective foreign policy. Social development is also important. Through a successful foreign policy, states acquire economic prosperity and economic development leads towards the development of society. Not permanent, at one time co-operation with different states may not be co-operation for ever.
  3. Long range objectives: - These are least immediate; plans, dreams, political vision and ideology. Decision makers have enough time to think and

develop and achieve these objectives. Time is no constraint, there is enough time to think, plan and implement the policy.

### Domestic Factor (Environment)

The foreign policy implementation phase is one in which actors confront their environment and in return the environment confronts actors. Social and political actors pushed a course of action and through these actions states succeed in acquiring their foreign policy objectives. Clashes between actors and their environment also erupted. For having every state's own way in the world system is not always possible.(Smith,(Ed.), 2008: 118)

**Fig. 1.1 The Operational Environment**



Source: Source: Smith, S. (2008).(Ed.), *Foreign Policy Theories . Actors. Cases*, New York, Oxford University Press,121.

To formulate a dialogue with neighbours, the state is restricted by pressures originating within the country. The political condition of a country, will determine how forcibly a government can play its role, what it cannot do for losing support at home. What it must do for the people of its country. Organized pressure groups acting as lobbies in parliament or congress or as opinion forming agencies and press, radio and television will all have their roles to play. It is necessary to handle all these domestic actors.

Norman Kogan an eminent scholar of foreign policy believes that “the influence of the domestic system on the process of foreign policy is so dominant that it becomes difficult to make a distinction between the domestic and foreign policies. All policies are essentially domestic in the sense that they seek to attain domestic goal”(Kogan, 1963:vii).F.S Northedge emphasized that, country’s political or diplomatic style the projection, the processes, the consensus building on political issues and the sources of internal conflict on foreign policy are highlighted in the domestic background of foreign policy.

“Political style is the established manner of conducting public affairs in a given country, the political mental habits and inarticulate major premises of a nation coloured by tradition and reflected in government policies, its method of attending to the arrangements of society. Style helps to make certain policies sensible in terms of the political setting in which they are framed, style too provides the observer with clues as to how a given country will react in a particular set of circumstances. The experienced diplomat may be able to say how this or that country will respond to this or that move of his own country, because he is familiar with the habitual manner in which it reacts to situation of this kind.”(Russet and Starr, 1981:23)

Style leads to the formulation of consensus on partial terms we see certain consensus which is basically artificial for example in USA two views generally arises on many world affairs and an imperfect consensus comes out in the for of attack or intervention in different countries. Thus it is clear that in the formulation of foreign policy, domestic sources play their role in the forms of adjustments and compromises between social structure and elements of government. Role of domestic factors may vary from one country to another country mainly depending upon political, social, economic, cultural and many other variables. By controlling domestic constraints next step is about its implementation through skilful manner or by sticks and carrots.(Russet and Starr, 1981:30). For making foreign policy, internal political situation, opposition role, the constitutional channels through which the decision making process works, public opinion, pressure groups acting as lobbies, media all have their part to play in the decision making process. On the domestic front, foreign policy is a series of adjustments and compromises between different actors of government and social system. Foreign and domestic policy issues are related things of the same political system. “The ability of a nation to exert military strength in the pursuit of its foreign policy objectives in turn depends upon a diversified and sound domestic industrial structure or help from allies that possess that resources.”(Padelford,1976: 213). With the help of available resources, state is able to shape its relations with different countries.

While foreign policy choices affect domestic interests, domestic policies may also affect a nation’s relationship with other states.(Russet and Starr, 1981:214).

Domestic issues may have a bad effect on a nation's foreign policy position. For example in 1998 Pakistan tested nuclear weapons in response to Indian tests. USA and Japan immediately imposed sanctions on Pakistan. But these days Pakistan has joined hands with the U.S against terrorism and relations are friendly. Robert Putnam has pointed out that foreign policy is at least a two level game, but the diverse manifestations of domestic society make interaction much more than a game. (Putnam, 1998: 427-60). "The domestic and foreign are two ends of a continuum rather than being sharply demarcated" There is no hard and fast rule for demarcation". (Rosenau, 1997: 142-145). It's a two way flow, foreign policy has its domestic sources and domestic policy has its foreign influences. (Rosenau, 1967: 70) States own structures, developments and political structure represents a link between domestic inputs and foreign outputs.

The foreign policy is the way in which political action in international relations occurs along with its benefits on its problems and citizens demands protection, change and development. The domestic environment provides both inputs and constraints to foreign policy. The interest of French farmers, inhibiting any wish a Paris government might have to reform the common Agricultural policy of the EU is a good example of constraint. Christopher Hill pointed out that four Ps i.e. Parliament, Public opinion, Pressure groups and Press (including other media) as well as social classes and regime type as the major problems in executing foreign policy. (Hill, 2003: 224-225) Thus domestic processes produce a set of positions and attitudes which amount together to a foreign policy tradition. Domestic policy provides the key starting point in understanding the state's foreign policy. There is interplay between the domestic sources or inputs and the international relations. The Domestic dimension directs the question of choice that is how far a people can control their own foreign policy executive and how much influence it will put on foreign policy making. (Hill, 2003: 249). Foreign policy starts in the state but does not finish there. The relationship between foreign policy making and its domestic environment is unpredictable and can erupt in ways which disturb both the governing elite and the pattern of international relations. Domestic policy is an interior to foreign policy and through success in the former may lead success in foreign policy but the reverse is not necessarily the case. (Younus, 2003: 110). It is necessary for every state to set its house in order and then hope for positive results from foreign policies.

### **Domestic Constraints**

According to Oxford Dictionary, "Constrain" means to restrict severely as regards action, behavior etc, bring about by compulsion.

"Constraint" means something that constrains, a limitation on motion or action.

According to Accurate and Reliable Dictionary on line,

- "Constraint" means the act of constraining, or the state of being constrained; that which compels to, or restrains from, action, compulsion; restraint; necessity.

- The act of constraining; the threat or use of force to control the thoughts or behavior of others.

The Cambridge Dictionary defines “constraint” as something which controls what you do by keeping you within particular limits.

Farlex Dictionary defines it as

- The threat or use of force to prevent, restrict or dictate the action or thought of others.
- The state of being restricted or confined within prescribed bounds.
- One that restricts, limits, or regulates a check.
- Something that limits a person’s freedom of action.

Constraint basically limits the choices and options rather than a large, random collection of possibilities.

State is constrained not only by its own capabilities, interests, policies and actions but also by those of the state with which it interacts. Relationships between states can be seen as how two states stand in terms of resources, capabilities, size, politics, location and so forth. Governments have to choose between those constraints in which they might make a difference and those where their involvement might prove counterproductive. “State requires that it maintains political, social, and economic structures that will allow it to mobilize or to use, the resources that exist within its borders.”(Younus, 2003: 154). All these systems should be under the command and control system as designed by the state. Here the question is how one can mobilize the resources in order to get the state goals. Certain information about the world must be obtained before making relations with states. How well a state collects and uses the information will affect the utility of all its other capabilities. It also affects the goals and interests of the state and how it seeks to get or fulfill them. Foreign policy decision makers influence other states in order to achieve their goals through the implementation of foreign policy decisions.

Harold & Margaret Sprout discuss three elements which are the basis of this world, first, an actor of some sort, second, an environment that surrounds the actor and third, the actor-environment relationship. When we discuss foreign policy, the decision maker in the foreign policy making is the most important actor who operates in a very complex environment.(Harold and Margaret, in Rosenau, (Ed.),1969:41-56). There are different kinds of environments which surround the policy maker, it effects and also constrains the foreign policy decisions. The Psychological & physical environment must be checked for the true functioning of decision makers. The decision maker works in an environment created by his role within a governmental organization, the environment created by government or by the society in which he is operating and world system.(Russet and Starr, 1981:19). The condition under which the decision maker is working always affects his functions and it varies from state to state.Following are some of the constraints which act as hurdles for formulating foreign policies of different states. One country’s constraint may be the source of power for an-other country.

## **Location of the State**

A nation-state exists within the context of many other states. Some are large and some are small, some are developed some are poor; some have vast natural resources and so on. The physical location of states also means that some states are located in areas that have historically been very busy such as Egypt and Afghanistan and some states are far away from the centers of world activity for example Australia. States are also concerned with the fact who are their neighbours, how close or how far, how big and how small, how many they are and also with the features of land and sea. Being an island, or at the centre of continent or at the end, land locked or having rivers, mountains, deserts etc.

All these conditions limit one state's action towards an-other. The choices or options provided to states, what is possible to states and what is not are all influenced by the location of the state. It is clear that the location of a state constraints interaction with other states. Afghanistan and all Central Asian States are land locked which is a great hurdle for its interaction with other states. The State should be most concerned with its immediate neighbours and less with those far away.(Starr and Most, *quarterly* 20, 1976:581-620).The greater an interaction with the neighbour state the more would be the chances of war with it. Nepal is always bullied by India. India is also a major threat to Pakistan.

## **Size of the state**

“The most relevant measure of size may be population, area, wealth, economic capacity, military capabilities, some other or some combination of these.”(Russet and Starr, 1981:75). Large size which is enough to provide an adequate standard of living for a population and to maintain an adequate conventional military capability. Each of these factors may be an advantage, a constraint or have no effect. Sheer size has positive advantage of depth for military advantage or distant from hostile neighbours. It provides longer borders but if it does not have rivers, swamps, mountains as natural barriers then size is a negative feature. A Large size would permit a large population, industrial bases and domestic resources of food and natural resources, without these features it is not enough to become a super power. The USSR in World War II showed both features of size. Its long border was an invitation to a successful armored attack from Germany but its vast size provided it with depth to absorb the Nazi invasion, regroup and rearm for a victorious Soviet counter offensive.(Russet and Starr, 1981:140)As for India and Pakistan, India had the benefit of its large size in 1965 as well as in the 1971 war.

A large population can be an asset or a liability; it requires enough talented people, man power and technical people while making relations with different states. Population must be taken in many ways, like age and sex distribution, density, population growth, health, education and morale etc. It must also include the capabilities of the people which could be used towards the development of a

state. The Greater the number of the skilled population, the higher the development rate.

### **(i) Natural Resources**

Natural resources such as oil, gas, petroleum, coal, uranium, nuclear power, material and metal are very important sources of every state. States with greater needs are most vulnerable to influence from other states that control or affect the resources that satisfy those needs. (Russet and Starr, 1981:142). If a state can be self-sufficient, it reduces its vulnerability to influence others. All the powers of the world depend more on resources found elsewhere. Natural resources along with skilled population and level of technology determine the state's level of development. A uniform climate is also an ideal situation for a state. Natural barriers such as forests, mountains, oceans, rivers also determine foreign policy of a state.

### **(ii) Military Capabilities**

One more common thought, when investigating the constraints on foreign policy is military capabilities. It varies from defense armaments to the number of air crafts, tanks, submarines, nuclear weapons, missiles, defense budget. Soldiers in a developing state may be poorly equipped and less effective in battlefield as compared to trained and heavily equipped soldiers of developed states. The Greater the military capabilities of a state the more its influence in foreign policy decisions. The effectiveness of military power increases with small distances like India is better able than Pakistan to put forces on Kashmir. And also India is having large number of troops and supplies there. Military capabilities could be constrained due to dependence on wealth, industry, scientific and technological facilities, people's health, education, morale and politics, etc.

### **Economic System**

Does the economic system and structure reduce loss? Is it efficient in the use of the state's resources? How does the economic system affect the foreign policy output of the state? Marxist theory explains that capitalist countries have more aggressive foreign policies as compared to socialist countries. Foreign investors or the military-industrial complex may have an interest in an aggressive or expansionist foreign policy that produces benefits for them. J.A. Hobson, the English economist explains that unequal distribution of income and wealth in capitalist states, especially England, as leaving the poor unable to consume much, forced capitalists to invest their capital abroad and to compete with others to control foreign markets. (Hobson, 1902:41-42). The gap between the rich and poor is widening in the developing states and the state's economic capabilities deteriorating and these states are becoming dependent on the developed states in

## **South Asian Studies 29 (2)**

all respects especially regarding foreign policy issues. Harvey Starr and Bruce Russett pointed out that,

“Individual capitalists may have genuinely desired peace at any particular time and place; it still may be that economic expansion (under a capitalist economic and social system) produced political pressures that led to war inducing crises. It is essential in this kind of thinking to distinguish a capitalist’s desire for peace from the perception that the national economy must expand with access to markets and resources. If war then looms, no one may want it but in crisis, decision makers may find their menu so constrained that they must take actions they would prefer to avoid.”(Russett and Starr,1981:217).

Industrially advanced states have good relations with other states as they import different raw materials and commodities to them. Their trade relations are sound, they also have technical knowledge. As a result these states have great influence on foreign policy. Economic development could be checked by trade, investment, industry, imports and exports of any state.

### **Social System**

National morale and homogeneous society makes strong national unity. Social integration, social cohesion and stable political institutions shapes the successful foreign policy of a state.

Does the social system, its structure, its values promote a united national effort for foreign policy? Is the society ready to cooperate or coordinate with the governmental policies? Is the society oriented towards fairness or a privilege system? How the societal constraints affect the foreign policy output? All these questions affect how much society is concerned or united with the government for its foreign policies. This leads towards the national morale, like what the nation is thinking and their commitment of people for any policy of the government. “Shifts in national morale occurred in both France and United States during their respective involvements in Indo-china. In each country as the war progressed support for military involvement decreased and general governmental policy was more and more subjected to challenge.”(Russett and Starr, 1981:156).

Characteristics of a society will be more influential in effecting foreign policy in open or democratic societies. In authoritarian, closed societies, public opinion and political interests are less likely to have an impact on foreign policy. Through its influence on the government, societies affect foreign policy in many ways.

Society affects the amount of resources available to government. Then leaders decide which societal group or official will use these resources. In a developed state Society through public opinion and interest groups constrain who will use the resources and how much resource should be used.

## **Technology**

According to Margaret Sprout, “technology is the application of human skills or techniques to accomplish human purposes.”(Harold and Sprout,1971:72).Due to technologies, man has overcome space and time, made computers, airplanes, radio, TV and mobiles. Technology has overcome the obstacles and limitations imposed on states by the natural resources available to them. Technologies in the system of government at any time are an important factor in the constraints on what is possible. Technology affects the bases of a state’s power, the scope of that power, and the areas in which the state is interested in using that power.(Harold and Sprout,1971:73). Technology indirectly influences the foreign policy making. Technologically advanced states are able to dominate the less advanced states. The emergences of new technologies of satellite broadcasting and inter-net have transformed the relationship among people, media and state. The governments who are the architects of foreign policy are less able to manipulate information due to the explosion of communication technology. An example being Dr. Aafia who is imprisoned in United States, her case is open to the whole world due to the technological advancement of media. Many more cases are now open in front of the whole world.

## **Political System**

Democracies behave differently from authoritarian systems. There are theories that democracies are more likely to form alliances with other democracies than with authoritarian states and democracies go to war with authoritarian states. It is important to see which system provides for efficient administration of the nation-states resources. That is, what is the performance of political leadership at all levels? What’s the people and government relationship? Are people ready to sacrifice in order to increase military or economic capabilities? To check leadership loyalty towards the state and nation. These issues involve the manner in which resources may be molded into economic and political capabilities and how to use them in order to achieve the goals of the government.

Thus the structure of the political system of a state is one aspect of the mobilization of resources but leadership itself is very important. Leader’s abilities like diplomacy and negotiation are important in order to influence other states. Democracy or authoritarian system, which form of government, will provide highest quality of life to citizen? Which government is best in dealing with other states? A flexible government is or a rigid one while dealing with other states? No

one has firm answers to these questions but these questions should be kept in mind while studying foreign policy.

Bureaucracy's skills and efficiency must be checked for having good relations. Their education, training, devotion, expertise and dependence on political leaders influence one state's dealing with other states. The Reputation of a government determines its dealing with other states. A State's capabilities and potential are directly related to its reputation. A State's leadership, political system and bureaucracy all are responsible for creating good or bad relations with other states. Openness of the political system is necessary; it means the extent to which a government is open to influence from society, accountability of government, it must satisfy people, where the opposition is free to express its view regarding state policies. In America, the President shares foreign policy powers with Congress.

In France the President has full control over the parliamentary system and foreign policy process. There is no authentic evidence available about which system shapes foreign policy more appropriately. Some observers say that authoritarian governments act more quickly and efficiently, others argue that democracy works slowly, and gets accurate information from society and it better produces foreign policy issues. Thus it all depends on its handling by individual decision makers. They produce their own constraints on foreign policy.

### **Historical Experiences**

The past plays an important role for making futuristic policies. The Past is stored in the historical experiences of states while interacting with other states. Foreign policy is a changing process but it carries the past and provides limited alternatives from which the policy maker or decision maker has to choose. China's history shows that its foreign policy is based on the peaceful co-existence and its policy of self reliance. Pakistan's past and historical experience regarding its relations with India is full of hostility and animosity. Muhammad Younus pointed that repetition of a policy is then taken for granted and tends to stop scrutiny in the light of experience for example when Marx predicted that capitalism will collapse and this expectation was taken for granted and policies were made accordingly.

The worst historical experiences of the past pulled states towards confrontation rather than for compromise. This is the case of India-Pakistan relations. Their defense budget is increasing in order to show readiness in a competitive relationship with the enemy. Since this is done on both sides, neither can stop it for fear of attack. The policy maker allocating national resources to the defense budget cannot take a chance for there would be no explanation for not being ready if the attack did in fact materialize. The role of the past in foreign policy is fundamental. No decision maker can start with a clean slate. Changes of policy have to be slow and gradual and the past cannot be discarded altogether. (Younus,2003:183). Kissinger changed U.S policies over a period of time when U.S was trapped in Vietnam but it took time.

**Individual/ Leadership Role**

Individuals, groups, a class and the elite will always differ on beliefs, attitudes and policy selection for making foreign policy according to their own interests. All these would have different views on what is in the national interest of a state. Leadership has the responsibility to shape, organize, and implement the state's foreign policy in the best possible way. In less developed states the leaders' role is greater as compared to developed states. Authoritarian governments also revolve around an individual mostly the leader of a state. Hitler is the individual national leader who had a great influence on world politics. The personality trait of the leader has an impact on the foreign policy.(Ray, 1992:172). The goals, experiences, capabilities and decision making of each leader/individual differ with the other.

The personal characteristics, personality, experience and leadership style matters in determining what choices such a leader will make. Leadership relationship with subordinates and advisers, who provide information; help in decision making are also important decision carrier. The individual foreign policy decision maker is surrounded by both external and domestic environments which constrain him in a number of ways for doing this or not doing that. From an individual or the leaders, a number of constraints come in the way of foreign policy process. The Individual's position within the government is important because it determines its role within the foreign policy making machinery. An Individual or leader is involved in decision making. "Decision making focuses on the people involved in the foreign policy process and on the part of the process that deals with choosing among alternatives courses of action."(Russet and Starr, 1981:267).

The Decision making body is important and its selection of actions shows the worth of the decision makers. An Individual can make a difference in the foreign policy process of a State. It means that foreign policy making process permits a single individual to have an impact on it. An individual behavior is made up of values, personality, political style, intellect and past experiences etc. Margaret G. Herman explains the condition under which an individual is expected to affect foreign policy behavior.

**Table 1.2 Nature of Situation**

High –Level Policymaker	Has wide decision latitude	Personal Characteristics → Government’s foreign policy behavior
	Is forced to define situation	
	Is likely to participate in F.P. decision making	

Source: Hermann, Margaret G. (1978). ‘Effects of Personal Characteristics of Political Leaders on Foreign Policy’ in East, Maurice. et al., (Eds.), *Why Nations Act. Theoretical Perspectives for comparative Foreign Policy studies*, London, Sage Publications, (2), 54.

The figure indicates how the nature of the situation involved affects the decision maker, his/her choices, values and finally his status or level in foreign policy making machinery.

**Political Parties**

A party is defined as a group, a community or an association. It works within a larger society having meaningful and patterned activities. Political parties developed in Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They have shaped representative democracies. Political parties are generally based on four types of cleavages i.e. urban/rural, religion, language and class. The issue of foreign policy was then absorbed into the cleavages. In European states like Finland, Ireland and Federal Republics, foreign policy had been structured into the party system.(Paterson,7(4), 1981:228-229). In the case of Pakistan, major political parties are against Pakistan’s alliance with U.S.A on the war against terrorism and on the other foreign policy issues of the state.

In authoritarian systems, there is only one political party which has a prominent role in the decision making hierarchy. But in a democratic system political parties are more than one and their role is limited in the foreign policy. The role of the governing political party for selecting choices of foreign policy is extensive. In Britain, the role of the political party depends upon the judgment of government leaders who are advised by the bureaucracy.(Paterson,7(4), 1981:192). Jensen in his book *Explaining foreign policy* pointed out that political party’s role in foreign policy is less as compared to the executive and bureaucracy.(Jensen,1982:135). It varies from state to state. When time is a constraint then bureaucracy usually by passed the political parties and the bureaucracy alone made decisions.

**Interest Groups**

Interest group is a group of people, who are joined together by more or less common interests in order to influence the decision makers with regard to specific policies for safe guarding their interests. Jensen agreed with the view point that interest groups do not directly influence the foreign policy objectives. Their pressure would be felt by the decision makers to the extent they manipulate public opinion, including the role of news media in their own interest/ side. International political economy explains that there is a direct link between economic interest

groups and foreign policy formulation. In democratic as well as in authoritarian societies, the role of economic interest groups has been increased in the foreign policy formulation. USA's domestic economic policy and politics are driven by the implication of managing foreign capital flows and the exchange rate of the U.S Dollar.(Younus,2003:193). In the age of globalization, economic interest groups play their role for making relations with different countries. "Computerization and standardization of financial economic and commercial information provides a mechanism that makes policy coordination between competent decisional units and economic interest groups possible."(Younus,2003:193-194).These domestic decisions some times directly and sometimes indirectly effect foreign policy of any state.

### **Public Opinion**

Does public opinion really have influence over policy makers or it is a constraint on governmental decision makers. Leaders have their own interests but it is also in the interest of the government to seek public support in order to implement their policies. When all information is controlled by government in any kind of political system, then public opinion plays a supporting function but in a democracy considerable attention is given to public opinion. Leaders must hear and fulfill the demands and needs of the people e.g. to provide subsidy on electricity, high tariff for protection of certain industries. Sometimes public opinion limits the leader's attributes. For example in early 1960's President Kennedy of America showed the desire of friendly relation with China but it was supposed at that time that public opinion was against it. Sometimes people constrain governmental leaders as the desire their leader must win the election. Leaders gain the support needed to remain in the government.

Jensen highlighted the following points regarding public opinion,(Jensen,1982:140-147).

- Public opinion is ill informed and not interested in foreign policy matters.
- Public opinion can be easily manipulated and it could be used as a bargaining chip between states.
- Manipulation of mass opinion may backfire on decision makers.
- Only organized public opinion has an effect on foreign policy.

Some interests of the people are taken into account for the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. If public support for a particular government is lacking then it stops a government from pursuing different policies then the worth of that government decreases in front of other states. At what extent in democracies, do the foreign policy decisions accept the public opinion?Does public opinion constrain the government performance? Does public opinion matter to leadership?

It is very important to note that in Pakistan mostly the people have little or no interest in or information about foreign affairs. They are unaware of most international events, only the matters of major importance to the state or as a

whole are known. The people who are aware of many major events, but not deeply informed about them are called attentive public. The public who have knowledge about foreign affairs have their own opinion. They discuss foreign policy with other people and communicate their view point are called opinion leaders like teachers, scholars, civil servants etc. There exist other types within the opinion leaders called mobilizables, who give time to political activities and communicate their opinion to general public.(Hughes,1978:23). Under certain circumstances, public opinion plays a greater or lesser role in foreign policy. Over all, the range of positions on questions of public opinion and its influence upon foreign policy seems contradictory. In the 2003 Iraq war, public polls showed opposition to the war among the UK public but the government proceeded with the war. But on the other side those who think that public opinion has an influence could say that the governments of UK and US had lost in the elections.

America had lost public support regarding its war policy in Iraq. It is important to note that public opinion is shaped or controlled by elites who command public attention and media. Decision makers depend on subordinates and subordinates act as a constraint on policy execution as they will change policies which they do not like. The longer the issue stays alive, the more public attitudes are likely to matter as in the case of the Kashmir issue between India and Pakistan. On the issue of the recognition of Israel, Pakistani public opinion is very much against it. Different governments tried to build a consensus but people are strongly against it, they are against Israel's atrocities on Palestinian people. In previous time periods America had public support for stopping communism from its spread. U.S troops fought in Vietnam in the name of democracy and ended by creating alienation among the American people that forced policy change. So it could be said that public opinion might act as an internal constraint on foreign policy. Over all, public opinion is a complex phenomenon that depends on different issues, circumstances and types of government. There is no clear evidence that in any type of government, public opinion has more effect on foreign policy. Leaders themselves shape opinion through television, news papers. Public opinion has few opportunities to get to grip with the substance of foreign policy.

### **Media**

Media is supposed to provide complete and open debate on important domestic as well as on international issues. Media influences the public opinion as well as it keeps an eye on government. News media help to inform, educate and facilitates debates on different issues. It includes newspapers, television news, current affairs programmes etc. It is considered as a watchdog, who watches government as well as the public. Media should be free and independent. The Importance of media is increasing day by day but not much work is seen in the relationship between media and foreign policy. Some scholars believe that media helps in shaping foreign policy. But others believe that many journalists exaggerate their importance; politicians make wrong statements due to media pressure and so on.

There is a diverse array of argument concerning the relationship between media and foreign policy and between media and public opinion.

The pluralist model believes that public opinion and media have had a great impact on foreign policy but the other elite model argue that media and public opinion are subservient to the government and do not have an impact on foreign policy. Like these, the realist school of thought accounts that public opinion and media should be mobilized in favour of the government but on the other side the liberal school of thought believes that media and public opinion provide an input to foreign policy decision making body and can change international relations. Daily newspapers are considered as important instruments of providing information and mobilizing the public whether for constructive or manipulative purposes. Politicians use newspapers in order to express their viewpoint / strategy regarding domestic politics as well as for making relations with other states.

The successful lawyers' movement against the president Musharaf's 3rd Nov. 2007's emergency and overthrow of Chief Justice Iftakhar Chaudhary from his office was supported and promoted through media. Television is used to express the views of analysts, politicians, the masses and journalists on state's relations with other states. For example many programs on Pakistani Television are broadcast in which Pakistan's relations with India, America, and China are discussed very often.

Sometimes media influence over foreign policy is positive and sometimes it's exaggerated or constraints the foreign policy decisions. Media can easily be manipulated by policy makers. In times of war, disinformation is frequently reported faithfully by the media. Many foreign trips by high level officials are basically media events, designed to use media (radio, press, television) as instruments of projection at home and abroad. (Dickie, 1992:84). Some critics claim that media persons are part of the government and are not presenting the true picture. Media on foreign policy issues can put pressure on the government but it's a process of hit and miss. Media creates hype on any foreign policy issue but as time passes by pressures merely cancel out, leaving governments free to go their own way.

## **Conclusion**

Concluding all of the above discussion, some important factors can be highlighted. The description of foreign policy as a concept and the description of domestic constraints on foreign policy have been described. In the beginning, the concept of foreign policy and its objectives has been the focus of the discussion. In the foreign policy implementation phase, various domestic constraints have been discussed.

The various aspects of the domestic setting limit the foreign policy like location of a state, size, technology, economy, political system, social system, public opinion, media, historical experiences, interest groups etc. There are the

constraints on foreign policy decision makers, as they expand or contract the alternatives open to leaders.

In the light of the whole discussion an effort has been made to formulate a theoretical frame work for the present study. Each of the various constraints blends into others that sandwich it. There are number of connections between government and social system, which play its role in the development and execution of foreign policy.

**Fig. 1.3 Domestic Constraints**



Generated by the researcher

This figure shows that different domestic constraints limit the foreign policy choices which further limit the foreign policy decisions and finally all these constraints limit the capacity for action.

## References

- Chandra,P and Arora,P.(2008). *International Relations*, New Delhi, Cosmos Bookhive Pvt. Ltd.
- Dickie,J.(1992).*Inside the Foreign Office*, London, Chapman.
- Hill, C. (2003). *Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan Press.
- Holsti, K. (1997). *International Politics A Framework for Analysis*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Englewood Cliffs, N.J. Prentice Hall.
- Harold and Sprout, M. (1969). 'Environmental Factors in the Study of International Politics" in Rosenau.J. *International Politics & Foreign Policy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., New York, Free press.
- Hobson, J. (1902). *Imperialism: A study*, London, Allen and Unwin.
- Harold and Sprout, M. (1971). *Towards a Politics of the Planet Earth*, New York, Van-Nostrand Reinhold.
- Hughes,B. (1978). *The Domestic Context of American Foreign Policy*, San Francisco, W.H. Freeman and Company.
- Khana,V. (2005). *Foreign Policy of India*, New Delhi,Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd.
- Kogan, N. (1963). *The Politics of Italian Foreign Policy*, New York,The Free Press.
- Lloyd, J. (1982). *Explaining Foreign Policy*, New Jersey, Prentice Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs
- Northedge, F.(1974). 'The Nature of Foreign Policy' in *The Foreign Policies of the Powers*, London, Faber and Faber.
- Padelford, N. (1976). *The Dynamics of International Politics*, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.
- Paterson, W. (1981). 'Political Parties and the Making of Foreign Policy: The case of the Federal Republic' in *Review of International Studies*,( 7) 4, Cambridge University, 228-229.
- Putnam, R. (1988)'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games', in *International Organization*, (42), 427-60.
- Rosenau, J. (1997). *Along the Domestic-Foreign Frontier: Exploring Governance in a Turbulent World*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Rosenau, J. (Ed.), (1967). 'Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy' ,in *The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy*, New York, Free press.
- Russet, B and Starr, H. (1981).*World politics : The Menu for Choice*, San Francisco, W. H. Freeman & Company.
- Ray, J.(1992). *Global Politics*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Shahid. K.(2006). *International Relations and Political Theory*, Lahore, Ferozsons Pvt. Ltd.
- Starr, H and Most, B. (1976). 'The Substance and Study of Borders in International Relations Research',*International Studies*, ( 20) December, 581-620.

## **Biographical Note**

**Dr. Mubeen Adnan**, is Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab, Lahore-Pakistan.

---