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Perspectives on International Conflict: Analyzing the Causes and Containment of Wars

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Funding: No specific funding was received for this work.

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Abstract

This paper provides a comprehensive survey and analysis of perspectives on international conflict, focusing on the causes and containment of wars. The study delves into the concept of the "security dilemma" and the paradoxical nature of the contemporary international system, as identified by Herbert Butterfield. It explores various theoretical responses to the question of war causation, categorizing them into psychological, sociological, and political theories. Each perspective attributes the causes of war to different factors, such as human nature, the internal organization of states, and the anarchical nature of the international system. The paper critically evaluates the relevance and limitations of each perspective, highlighting the interconnectedness of these causal factors in understanding the complexities of international conflicts. Moreover, it emphasizes the evolving role of military power and diplomacy in conflict management, considering the impact of modern military technology and the growing emphasis on conflict avoidance and prevention strategies. The study concludes by emphasizing the need for a multifaceted approach to conflict management, integrating diplomatic, economic, and psychological instruments of power, to effectively contain and resolve international conflicts in the global society.

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Keywords: Theoretical Perspective, International Conflict, War, Containment, Global Security, Conflict Resolution.

Introduction

The history and trajectory of International Relations is an ongoing process. People review their past in the light of contemporary experience, and they ask which of the relics of the past have any significance for the present and the future. They modify the past to make it meaningful for the present and functional in preparing for a better and more positive future. Likewise, past perspectives in international conflicts are modified in the light of new evidence and, in the process, we ask new questions. Given the spate of international conflicts around the globe in recent years, it is important to examine the Perspectives on International Conflict by analyzing their Causes and past containment of Wars" before they are exacerbated and transformed into violent conflicts and seemingly permanent tensions.

The study of international conflict is a critical aspect of both Conflict Studies and International Relations, aiming to unravel the intricacies behind the causes and containment of wars in the global context. This multifaceted field of inquiry delves into various theoretical perspectives that shed light on the complexities of conflict escalation and resolution. In the intricate tapestry of today's global landscape, the enigmatic "security dilemma" stands out as a tenacious and contradictory thread, weaving its way through the fabric of the modern international order: a concept highlighted by Herbert Butterfield, which underscores the absolute predicament arising from the structure of international society. To comprehensively analyze the causes of international conflict, this paper explores the three main theoretical lenses: psychological, sociological, and political theories, each offering unique insights into the factors driving conflicts between nations. The interplay between military power and diplomacy is also central to conflict management, and the study recognizes the evolving role of modern military technology in shaping international relations. Ultimately, this research emphasizes the need for a multifaceted approach, integrating diplomatic efforts, economic incentives, and psychological insights, to effectively contain and resolve international conflicts, thus contributing to a more stable and peaceful global society

Within the realm of Conflict Studies and International Relations, the intricate puzzle of the "security enigma," characterized as the "fundamental quandary" intricately woven into the very tapestry of global interaction, emerges as a timeless and intricate facet within today's intricate world stage, as elucidated by Herbert Butterfield (1952). This paradox unfolds as governments invariably embrace strategies deemed the "bare necessities for their survival" in response to this predicament, inadvertently birthing the unfavourable outcome of intensifying the very "security predicament" they aim to mitigate. Unfolding across the annals of human history, this dilemma perseveres as a phenomenon as ancient as society itself, displaying resilience beyond the most imaginative societal experiments.

Due to this, some modern thinkers claim that there has been a spiralling increase in global insecurity. Thus, the vortex of global instability, which certain modern scholars contend has been made worse by the rigid perceptions of both the intents of the decision-makers and their counterparts that these perceptions cause. The mind-boggling variety and tumultuous impacts of battles throughout human history are unquestionably highlighted by this psychodynamics.

The intricate discourse surrounding international conflicts and warfare has been a central theme in the realm of social sciences and Humanities. Diverse analyses have diligently endeavoured to unravel and grasp these complexities through varying lenses. These divergent perspectives illuminate distinct facets of conflict dynamics. One strand of thought raises myriad inquiries concerning the essence and fundamental origins of conflicts (Waltz, 1959; Wright, 1968). A second narrative accentuates the visceral toll of warfare – its somatic violence, relentless death, and all-consuming devastation

(exemplified by initiatives like the Correlates of War Project spearheaded by Richardson, 2012). A third vantage point casts a spotlight on the far-reaching political reverberations that conflict impacts upon the global order (Schelling, 2008; Abrahamson, 2003). However, a fourth scholarly strand (explored by Denton, 1966; Singer and Small, 1972; Zines, 1976) utilizes the occurrences of war, their scale, and duration as the underpinning for identifying discernible patterns in state interactions characterized by conflict. Lastly, the ultimate analytical category shifts its gaze to the operational stratum of warfare – the realm of technology, logistics, and the intricacies of warfare management.

This article is, therefore, relevant to current issues in International Relations. Understanding the causes and containment of wars is crucial for policymakers, scholars, and anyone interested in global politics. Here's why this topic remains relevant:

Conflict Prevention: In an increasingly interconnected world, the prevention of armed conflicts is paramount. Analyzing the root causes of wars helps identify early warning signs and develop strategies to prevent conflicts before they escalate. By studying historical and contemporary conflicts, scholars and policymakers can draw lessons and apply them to current situations.

Conflict Resolution: Ongoing international conflicts often require effective resolution mechanisms. Understanding the various perspectives on international conflict can inform negotiations and peace processes. Knowledge of successful containment strategies can be applied to ongoing conflicts, such as those in the Middle East, Africa, or Eastern Europe.

Geopolitical Shifts: The dynamics of international conflict are influenced by shifts in the global balance of power, changes in alliances, and emerging actors. As these geopolitical factors evolve, analyzing the causes and containment of wars becomes crucial in adapting foreign policy and security strategies to new realities.

Resource Scarcity and Climate Change: Growing concerns about resource scarcity, environmental degradation, and the impacts of climate change can contribute to conflicts. Understanding how these factors interact with political and economic variables is essential for addressing contemporary security challenges.

Technological Advancements: The advent of new technologies, including cyber warfare and advanced weaponry, has added new dimensions to international conflicts. Analyzing the role of technology in modern conflicts and strategies for containment is vital.

Humanitarian Crises: Armed conflicts often lead to humanitarian crises, including displacement, refugee flows, and human rights violations. A comprehensive understanding of the causes of conflict can inform international efforts to address these humanitarian challenges effectively.

Multilateral Diplomacy: Multilateral diplomacy and international organizations play a critical role in conflict containment and resolution. Studying the causes of wars and containment strategies can enhance the effectiveness of international institutions such as the United Nations and regional organizations.

Security Policy: Governments and security organizations rely on academic research and expert analysis to formulate their security policies. Research on the causes and containment of wars can directly impact the development of national and

international security strategies.

Public Awareness and Advocacy: Informed citizens and advocacy groups play a role in shaping foreign policy and international relations. Educating the public about the complexities of international conflict can lead to more informed discussions and policy decisions.

In summary, this paper remains highly relevant to current issues in International Relations. It provides valuable insights into the challenges facing the international community, helps develop effective policy responses, and contributes to a more peaceful and stable world.

Again, in the pursuit of unravelling the intricate tapestry of international conflicts, this article undertakes the ambitious task of offering a concise yet comprehensive overview of the array of viewpoints and prognostications surrounding the causal intricacies of these global discordances. Concurrently, it delves into the requisites indispensable for constraining or terminating such conflicts, as delineated within the ongoing discourse permeating the scholarly arena. Drawing upon the lexicon coined by Charles Pentland (1973), this endeavour can aptly be described as a "second-order" or even "parasitural" endeavour, meticulously aimed at extracting flaws and limitations inherent in the content, contextualization, and structural underpinnings of specific theoretical constructs propounded within the existing body of literature.

War Causation: Explications and Projections

Evident within the substantial body of literature focused on this subject, the theoretical responses aimed at unravelling the enigmas regarding the origins of conflicts/wars have unfurled a tapestry of intricate variations, resonating with the idiosyncratic subcultures embraced by the contributors entrenched in these intellectual discourses. As aptly phrased by the astute commentator (Waltz, 1959:12), should one dare to inquire:

What are the major causes of war to be found? The answers are bewildering in their variety and their contradictory qualities. To make this variety manageable., the answers can be ordered under the following three headings: within man, within the structure of the separate states, and within the state system.

According to Waltz's classification, current theories that attempt to explain the causes of war can be divided into the following categories:

- i. Psychological and phylogenetic theories,
- ii. Sociological theories
- iii. Political theories.

With a shared emphasis on the anarchic dynamics of international systems, the structure of states, and the complexities of human nature, all three tiers of theories converge on the fundamental drivers of conflicts. Consequently, it follows logically that the prognostications stemming from each of these paradigms, aimed at laying the groundwork for policies

fostering global harmony, inherently diverge from one another. Within this context, the central concern of assessing these prescriptions rests upon elucidating the following inquiries:

- a. The viability of a prescription hinges on its rational alignment with the underlying analysis, rendering any disjunction unsatisfactory.
- b. A prescription rooted in a flawed analysis is improbable to yield the desired outcomes, thereby calling into question its efficacy (Waltz, 1959, Linder, 1979)

For purposes of exposition and analysis, the three levels of the theory of war will be considered sequentially below,

In the realm of Conflict Studies and International Relations, the gamut of psychological and phylogenetic theories of war, while diverse in their analytical approaches, ultimately converge in attributing the origins of the conflict to the intricate interplay of human nature and behaviour. For these theorists, the emergence of warfare finds its roots in mankind's inherent inclinations towards aggression and combativeness, as illuminated by Freud's seminal work in 1953, (Earnest, 1961) wherein the mechanisms of displacement and projection intertwine to shape the trajectory of conflict. Echoing this sentiment, Thomas Hobbes (1952) poignantly captures the essence: The essence of war does not lie solely in active combat, but rather in the persistent predisposition towards it, in the absence of assured alternatives.

While phylogenetic theorists attribute the human instinct of aggression to a biological inheritance from our animal ancestors, psychological theorists consistently place human bellicosity within the depths of subconscious psychological complexes. Emerging from this foundational premise, the common assertion arises that "to cultivate a more peaceful world, individuals must undergo change, whether in terms of their moral and intellectual perspectives or their psychosocial conduct" (Waltz, 1959: 18).

The apparent irrationality inherent in the core tenets of this particular cluster of theories has become the subject of vehement critique within scholarly discourse. Detractors of these theories contend that human nature is so "intricately multifaceted that it can rationalize any hypothesis we may contemplate" (Aron, 1962: 202). In essence, if human society were consistently in a state of conflict or perpetual harmony, the very query of "Why does war exist?" or "Why does peace prevail?" would never arise. As articulated by one of these critics (Laswell, 1962: 81), "If human nature is the root cause of war, and if human nature is immutable, then aspirations for peace remain eternally elusive." Human nature alone cannot sufficiently account for both the origins of war and the emergence of peace. Should human nature be deemed merely one among several factors driving conflict, the premise of its unalterable nature would not deter a rigorous pursuit of the prerequisites for establishing lasting peace (Buzan, 1983: 31)

The psychological or "phylogenetic theories have also been berated for their veritable reductionism. As Osgood and Tucker (1972:6) contend: "Regardless of whether these instincts are basic sources of violence among individuals, they need not lead to violence among states, since the functions of fighting within a community and among individuals are not the same as the functions of war between political units". These apparent weaknesses of theories in terms of their explanatory and predictive relevance have shifted systematic focus to the sociological and political theories of war.

In the realm of Conflict Studies and International Relations, the lens of sociological theories concerning war illuminates the

intrinsic role of a state's internal organization, particularly its political structure, in unravelling the enigma of war and peace dynamics. In essence, the "internal configuration of states wields influence not just over the manifestation and utilization of military might, but also resonates within their overarching external conduct" (Waltz, 1959:125). Another strand of thought, rooted in anthropological insights, delves into diverse acculturation and socialization patterns that diverge across societies. Margaret Mead (2016) contributed to this narrative, asserting that "Warfare stands is only an invention, not a biological necessity."

Among the panorama of perspectives within liberal scholarship, Quincy Wright (1964:161-162) proffered one of the most perceptive portrayals of the sociological theory of war causation

Absolutistic states with geographically and functionally centralised governments under autocratic leadership are likely to be most belligerent, whereas constitutional states with geographically and functionally federalized governments under democratic leadership are likely to be most peaceful.

Drawing upon Wright's analysis, it becomes plausible to assert that certain legal and constitutional facets, both broad and specific, inherent in the democratic frameworks of governance within multi-state federal entities like the United States or the Second Republic of Nigeria, fundamentally exhibit diminished inclination toward resorting to military force as a means of settling international conflicts compared to autocratic or totalitarian political systems. Take, for instance, the "War Provisions" delineated in a presidential system's constitution, which explicitly restrains the Chief Executive from unilaterally declaring a state of war with another nation, unless endorsed by a concurrent resolution from both legislative houses.

Furthermore, even though the President wields considerable initiative powers and assumes the mantle of Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, the National Assembly retains vital fiscal oversight via control over budgets, encompassing appropriation and authorization of funds earmarked for military endeavours. In practical application, however, these constitutional and legal constraints on the Executive, as demonstrated vividly by the American experience, often prove malleable, functioning effectively only in exceedingly exceptional circumstances—specifically, when the President's employment of force encounters significant unpopularity. As succinctly observed by R. V. Denenberg (1976), "In the face of external threats, the intricate web of checks and balances regresses into a tribal reliance on the leaders of war".

In the sphere of strategic discussions, the fluctuation between conflict and harmony in the contemporary global arena persists, unaffected by the current political landscape. The control over matters of war and peace, regardless of the governing structure, consistently resides in the unrestrained authority of governing bodies, where the initiator of action inevitably holds the scepter of authority. While in theoretical discussions, variations in political frameworks may seem to influence the inclination to use force, historical records lack a substantial reservoir of comparable data to conclusively support such a connection.

Indeed, as Henry Bienen (1980) cogently contended in his groundbreaking survey of the African narrative, the intricate interplay of factors unfolds with the finesse that:

If there is a military mind or a military disposition in foreign policy matters, it is hard to fathom it. Militaries in Africa have not been more willing to use force across borders than civilian regimes. Somalia committed forces to the Ogaden and Amin's Uganda to Tanzania but so did Tanzania to Uganda and Morocco to [Mauritania... Nor can we conclude that militaries in power necessarily could more easily dispatch troops abroad than civilians, the latter would have to have military compliance, but so would military rulers. The Nigerian military considered sending troops to Zambia during the Zimbabwe struggle. Elements within the military leadership opposed this.

The above scenario, especially, where the Nigerian military considered sending troops to Zambia during the Zimbabwe struggle, showcases the complex nature of military intervention in the affairs of other countries, especially within the context of regional and international politics. This historical context can be related to the current situation involving the Niger coup and the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) calling for military intervention in West Africa. Elements within the Nigerian military opposing intervention in Zambia might have been concerned about the principle of state sovereignty and the norm of non-interference in other countries' internal affairs. This principle is also relevant to the current situation. ECOWAS' call for military invasion/intervention in Niger raises questions about respecting Niger's sovereignty while addressing the need for stability and democratic governance.

In summary, historical cases of military intervention and their underlying complexities can provide insights into how decision-makers might approach current situations, such as the Niger coup and ECOWAS' response. The lessons learned from the past can help inform strategic choices and considerations in handling contemporary conflicts within the framework of perspectives on international conflict.

The emphasis placed on the "anarchical" nature of the international system as the primary cause of international conflict has generally increased as dissatisfaction with micro-level analyses (human nature and the state) of war causation has grown (Bull, 1979; Modelski and Morgan, 1985; Gilpin, 1981). In the intricate realm of international dynamics, the "power-security" conjecture, often referred to as the geopolitical doctrine of conflict, posits that within a global framework characterized by competing sovereign entities, the very foundation of diplomacy and all binding agreements that transcend national confines is firmly rooted in the aptitude to wield force. This proficiency serves a dual purpose: safeguarding the integrity of the state and advancing its objectives in the presence of resistance from fellow states (Reynolds 1973:174). According to this mainstream realist viewpoint, war does not appear to be "weird but rather to be essentially regular in international politics."

According to Blainey (1973), a state may only be considered secure if it has the "ability to wage successful wars against any conceivable assailant, and defence policy is concerned primarily with relative military capacities and not the intentions of other states." Here, Blainey statement reflects a realist perspective in international relations, emphasizing the importance of a state's military capabilities over the intentions of other states. A practical example of this scenario could be the Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union.

In contemporary contexts, there is a discernible trend of prioritizing military capabilities over the intentions of other states

in various international relations scenarios. A prominent illustration is evident in the United States' interventions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria. Another classical instance is the ongoing military tensions and power competition between the United States and China in the Asia-Pacific region. While intentions and diplomatic efforts remain relevant, both nations have significantly invested in military modernization and strategic capabilities to safeguard their interests and discourage potential aggression. Here are a few illustrations

South China Sea Dispute: China's assertive claims in the South China Sea have led to tensions with neighboring countries and the United States. While diplomatic efforts have been made to address these issues, both China and the US have also taken measures to enhance their military capabilities in the region. China has built and militarized artificial islands, expanded its naval presence, and developed anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) strategies to control access to the South China Sea. The US, in response, has conducted freedom of navigation operations and increased its naval presence in the region to demonstrate its commitment to regional stability and security.

Taiwan Strait Tensions: The situation involving Taiwan is another example where the relative military capacities of China and the United States play a significant role. China considers Taiwan a part of its territory and has been increasing military pressure and conducting military exercises near the island. The United States, while officially recognizing the "One China" policy, has also supplied arms to Taiwan and conducted naval patrols in the region to support Taiwan's security. Both sides are aware of the potential military implications of any escalation, highlighting the emphasis on military capabilities as a factor in maintaining regional stability.

North Korea's Nuclear Program: The case of North Korea's nuclear program demonstrates how the international community, including the United States and its allies, has focused on North Korea's military capabilities rather than its intentions. Despite diplomatic efforts to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile capabilities has led to concerns about its potential threat to regional and global security. The emphasis on capabilities is evident in discussions about missile defense systems and deterrence strategies in response to North Korean provocations.

In these recent examples, while diplomatic efforts and intentions remain important, the relative military capacities of the involved parties have played a significant role in shaping the security dynamics of the respective regions. This aligns with the concept that a state's security is influenced by its ability to effectively defend itself against potential adversaries, irrespective of their intentions

The inevitable implication of the above position is that until the nation-state system is fundamentally altered and replaced by a new international order, war and the capability for military coercion that it perpetuates are likely to play a substantial role in world affairs. Because of this, it is now considered conventional to view military might as only one of the many methods of statesmanship, alongside diplomacy, trade embargo, advocacy, and insurgence as evident in the ongoing Russian-Ukraine war.

Arguably, the quintessential and extensively acclaimed (albeit contentious) elucidation of the intricate relationship between military tactics and policy objectives finds its most penetrating embodiment in the aphorism attributed to

Clausewitz (1989): "War is but an extension of politics through a blend of alternative means." This doctrine encapsulates the viewpoint that war, according to Clausewitz, functions as a deliberate and utilitarian tool, one among the diverse instruments within the "symphony of power" that nations wield strategically at opportune junctures to advance their specific policy aims or "national interests." Noteworthy in this regard, Bieno de Masquita expounds this hypothesis with concision and acumen, situating it within the theoretical framework of the rational choice model, as expounded in his seminal work, *The War Trap* (1981).

Major Central Premise as shown below (Morrow, Price, & Simowitz, 1991): Decision-makers confronted with choices during crises opt for courses of action they perceive as most advantageous to their interests.

- **Supporting Assumption 1:** When deliberating whether to initiate warfare, actors assess two options: armed conflict or maintaining the status quo (SQ).
- **Supporting Assumption 2:** The status quo outcome (SQ) rests in the middle of the potential consequences stemming from triumph and loss for the instigator.
- **Supporting Assumption 3:** The normalization of utilities has been uniquely achieved using " $u(SQ) = 0$ ".

From a Clausewitzian perspective on the philosophy of war, the concept of war emerges as a rationale within a nation's policy toolkit. Nevertheless, for various reasons, the one-sided association that previously cast military might as an instrumental aspect of foreign policy (as articulated by Clausewitz) has lost its adequacy. Not all political objectives can be translated into military strategies, leading to a realization that the dynamic between politics and strategy involves nuanced interactions. Thus, instrumental means frequently become guiding parameters for potential political actions. Henceforth, the Clausewitzian tenets, encapsulating his profound war philosophy, have gracefully relinquished their once unassailable stance in delineating the intricacies of military prowess within the realm of global interactions. This evolution gains remarkable prominence in tandem with the burgeoning embrace of strategic studies, a panoramic voyage that delves comprehensively into the myriad facets – ranging from the political, economic, and social to the cultural, ideological, and technological – encompassing defence policy and strategic foresight.

However, whether examined within the conventional Clausewitz-Lenin formulation or in the broader reconceptualization by neo-realists (such as Kissinger, Howard, and Kaufman), the notion that military power forms the essential backdrop for international political interactions – a tenet underlying most strategic thought—has faced considerable contestation in recent years. The core contention, especially during the "Cold War" era, questioned whether military power could continue to fulfil its traditional roles of security, dominance, status, and influence in light of transformative developments in military technology, notably the thermonuclear revolution. This raises the pivotal inquiry: Can war still be deemed a rational, national instrument of policy in the tradition of Clausewitz and Lenin, given the profound shifts in technology? Klaus Knorr (1975:325) highlights divergent schools of thought that have presented starkly opposing viewpoints:

According to the modernists, growing international interdependence, as well as the enormous destructiveness of modern weapons, make international violence less and less, relevant to human aspirations. According to the classical school of thought, these developments stressed by the modernists, are observed rather than inferred, as

merely surface perturbations. Fundamentally, nothing has changed. As long as autonomous states are militarily sovereign, force will remain the ultimate arbiter in the settlement of interested conflict.

In other words, according to modernists, escalating international interdependence and the colossal destructiveness of modern weaponry have diminished the relevance of international violence as a means to human goals. In contrast, classical perspectives dismiss these shifts as surface disturbances, asserting that the fundamental dynamics remain unaltered. As long as sovereign states wield military power, force will persist as the ultimate determinant in resolving conflicts of interest.

However, the transformations since World War II – be they technological, normative, or rooted in intricate interdependence – the effectiveness of utilizing a country's military strength as a strategic tool has been notably diminished in contemporary times compared to earlier historical periods. The spectre of thermonuclear capabilities has naturally prompted introspection into whether war still embodies a "policy continuation by other means" or, as R. G. Collingwood phrased it, "policy breakdown." Here, Collingwood examines the breakdown of policies and institutions in the context of societal collapse and the threat of barbarism. The phrase "policy breakdown" is used to describe the failure of governing systems and the resulting challenges and consequences for society.

Nonetheless, these shifts do not necessarily negate military power's conventional functions. Modern military technology's impact has not been as "radical, simple, or novel" as the modernist perspective contends. The primary shortcoming of the modernist stance lies not solely in downplaying war's utility but also in its inability to recognize the multifaceted role of military power outside of overt conflict—roles aptly described by Thomas C. Schelling (2008) as "the diplomacy of violence," "manipulation of risk," and "diplomacy of ultimate survival."

Indeed, national military forces can be valuable without active deployment. Paradoxically, the use of brute force may signify the inadequacy of military power. A government resorting to military violence often reveals the weakness of its forces in deterring attacks or successfully employing threats or strategic signaling. Moreover, deducing that all military force is futile from the destructiveness of powerful weapons is illogical and oversimplifies the argument.

First, post-1945 international conflicts have rarely involved nuclear powers or capabilities directly. Second, even when a nuclear-armed nation enters a conflict, the opposing side may lack nuclear capabilities (e.g., U.S.- China in the 1950s, Britain-Argentina). Third, even in conflicts between nuclear-capable adversaries, political manipulation of military force remains a viable strategy.

Asymmetries in capabilities persist; mere possession of nuclear weapons does not guarantee mutual deterrence or a stalemate, disparities in capabilities still exist (e.g., French and British nuclear deterrence against the Soviet Union during the Cold War). Even during nuclear stalemates (e.g., U.S.-USSR from the 1960s to 1980s), options like the "limited war" doctrine and NATO's hazy flexible response strategy, which was created to "counter Soviet aggression across the entire spectrum of conflict" (Brodie, 1939, Kissinger, 1959) maintain significance.

This assessment of the "modernist" viewpoint regarding the impact of military technology on the deployment and

effectiveness of military force deviates from supporting the realist claim that the fundamental role of military power remains constant throughout historical periods. The contemporary global order is undeniably undergoing a rapid and tumultuous transformation characterized by technological progress, socio-economic changes, normative recalibrations, and political dynamics. A substantial portion of this transformation cannot be easily dismissed as superficial disruptions. The widespread proliferation of transnational forces and entities since the aftermath of World War II, coupled with the increasing interdependence among nations, has indisputably heightened the shared awareness and vulnerability of states concerning matters of war and peace.

Similarly, the renewed emphasis on liberal moral values and the diminished acceptance of force as a means of conflict resolution, largely driven by the atrocities of World War II, especially the tragic events in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, has clearly restricted both the approval and use of force. As a result, unlike in previous eras, the support for war is no longer universally embraced as a "built-in national obligation, an unavoidable destiny, and an unquestionable entitlement." This shift centers on distinguishing between the offensive and defensive use of force.

Notwithstanding these undeniable shifts, the concept that the global framework embodies a "system of menace," wherein the military might reign as the ultimate determinant, persists as one of the most prevalent influencers on international relations, foreign affairs, and defence strategy formulation. However, what has transformed (as evidenced by the perspectives of the aforementioned "renaissance" strategists) is how these interactions among military dynamics, means, and policy objectives have been reconceptualized to encompass the "complete array of policy instruments." This integration encompasses economic, diplomatic, subversive, and psychological facets of power

Examining the current perspectives on the roots of conflict in contemporary academic discussions provides a profound understanding of a crucial aspect: when observed from different angles, these viewpoints can offer vital yet incomplete explanations of warfare on a global scale. It becomes clear that a synthesis involving the three layers of explanation (war stemming from inherent human tendencies, arising from internal state dynamics, and sprouting from international anarchy) is essential, going beyond singular attributions. This fusion has the potential to provide a more accurate understanding of the complex fabric of international relations. To express it differently, a thorough comprehension of the potential consequences of any single cause may intricately depend on its complex interaction with other causal factors. This intricate web of interdependencies renders the assessment of diverse propositions notably more intricate, as underscored aptly by Waltz (1959:23), who asserts that:

The third image describes the framework of world politics, but without the first and second images there can be no knowledge of the force that determines policy; the first and second images describe the forces in world politics, but without the third image it is impossible to assess their results.

In a comprehensive examination, warfare stands resolute as an enduring facet of human civilization's fabric. The origins may find footing in the intricacies of human nature's frailty, the calculated or erratic inclinations of governance stewards, the inherent volatility of juxtaposed military might, or the enigmatic machinations of historical currents (Claude, 1971:288). Within this realm, as diverse instruments of influence – ranging from diplomatic manoeuvres and economic embargoes to

the realm of propaganda and clandestine operations – yield disparate outcomes, their efficacy remains unequal. Confronted with scenarios impervious to peaceful methodologies, governing bodies are predisposed to ascribe paramount significance to the realm of military prowess. Thus, the echelons of the military might persevere as the cornerstone of the interstate power tableau, for there exists scant recourse against force except through equivalent or superior opposing might (Knorr, 1975:19)

In the future, nations will persist in developing, modernizing, and expanding their military capabilities, using them strategically in global conflicts. The significant challenge with non-military methods of persuasion, aside from military strength, stems from their historically inconclusive and ineffective nature. This challenge is particularly evident in diplomatic efforts and the diverse use of domestic or collective economic influence and propaganda to influence or manipulate foreign governments. As a result, the potential deployment of military power, or even the mere threat of it, continues to be an occasional last resort in a broad range of international issues.

It is important to underscore that the reliability of military might as a foreign policy instrument is not an absolute axiom, manifesting only when diplomatic avenues fall short in achieving policy aspirations. As posited by Drab (2018), in the world of global relations, something interesting happens: when war doesn't do the job of foreign policy goals, diplomats step up to find a political solution. And even when war works, it's the diplomats who figure out how things should settle down after the fighting, considering what happened during the war.

The above statements reflect the complex and interdependent relationship between diplomacy and warfare in the realm of international relations. Both diplomacy and warfare are tools that states use to achieve their foreign policy goals, but they serve different purposes and are often employed in different stages of conflict as shown below.

Diplomacy as a Conflict Resolution Tool: Diplomacy involves negotiations, discussions, and agreements between different states or actors to address conflicts, solve disputes, and achieve mutual goals. In many cases, when war cannot achieve the desired objectives of a country's foreign policy, diplomats may step in to find a peaceful political settlement. This can involve negotiations, treaties, or other diplomatic agreements that aim to bring about a resolution without further military escalation.

Diplomacy Post-War: Diplomacy is not limited to conflict resolution but also plays a crucial role in shaping the aftermath of conflicts. After a war has concluded, diplomats often take the lead in designing the terms of the post-war settlement. This can involve determining territorial boundaries, reparations, demilitarization, and establishing new political structures in the defeated or affected regions. The goal is to create a stable and sustainable framework that prevents future conflicts and promotes lasting peace.

Diplomacy and War Success: Even when war achieves the intended foreign policy goals, diplomats still play a critical role in shaping the post-war landscape. While the military might have achieved certain objectives, it's the diplomats who negotiate the terms of surrender, establish conditions for rebuilding relationships, and address the concerns of various parties involved. This ensures that the peace achieved is not temporary but enduring.

Overall, diplomacy and warfare are not mutually exclusive; they are interconnected tools that states use strategically to pursue their interests on the international stage. The role of diplomats is particularly crucial in times of conflict, both to prevent unnecessary bloodshed and to shape the transition to a more stable and peaceful future

The intricate interdependence between "the authority to engage in external relations and the capacity to wage warfare" finds its most illustrative manifestation within the persistent Arab-Israeli enigma. Moreover, what accentuates the imperative for a synergistic rapport between military and diplomatic modalities is not solely the fact that, as articulated by Ken Booth, warfare has assumed a "lethal enterprise" status, but also that to a significant extent, both mechanisms reside at the foundation of the "equal sovereignty of a political community", rendering their execution by governing bodies inherently intertwined. In the contemporary epoch, the crux of conflict resolution has evolved into a discourse bridging political sagacity and martial acumen. Segregating these aspects, in the words of Kissinger (1959:422), "can only yield harm to both factions. It steers military might towards being synonymous with the most unmitigated demonstrations of power, while simultaneously tempting diplomacy to an excessive preoccupation with artful manoeuvres."

Nonetheless, the Hobbesian perspective of our world as an anarchic realm where violence stands as the final resort — serving both as a shield for the state and a tool for advancing its interests amidst opposition from fellow states — persists as the prevailing doctrine among diverse governments and populations. Within the tumultuous framework of such a planetary order, it comes as no surprise, echoing the words of C. R. Mitchell (1981:7), that "the twentieth century (termed the most brutal by Sorokin) lingers as an era that has widened the avenues for conflicts among individuals, spurred on by mechanisms that foster interactions, rivalry, varied manifestations of group divergence, and thereby, a heightened visibility of disparities and hierarchies." The primary trial confronting contemporary global society then centres on formulating methods to ensure that this seemingly "inherent proclivity" towards conflict within the construct of the international system is effectively curbed through conflict management mechanisms, thus averting the immeasurable repercussions of escalation.

Conflict Management Process

As observed in the preceding passage, the persistent presence of conflict within the global community and the pressing need to effectively navigate the increasingly intricate landscape of the multistate framework has prompted the emergence of innovative collaborative approaches aimed at managing and curbing conflicts. From the historical context of the "concert of Europe" to the intricate mechanisms of the "Hague system," and further encompassing the evolution through the League of Nations to the United Nations, the central challenge has consistently revolved around refining and integrating previous methodologies and structured systems designed to mediate inter-state relationships within the inherently chaotic realm of international politics. These institutional embodiments, resembling early-stage "proto regime" models, reflect the dynamic progression of the security paradigm. This evolution unfolds from the transitioning concept of "national security" to the broader horizon of "international security," ultimately culminating in the concept of "global security." Each of these phases is underpinned by distinct theoretical and political assumptions that intricately correspond with the evolving intellectual advancements in their interpretation, as expounded by Haftendorn (1991:5)

The conceptualization and formal establishment of conflict management frameworks, coupled with their underpinning philosophical premises, have permeated scholarly discourse, manifesting as the "Kantian imperative," advocating the diminishing role of force as a tool of national strategy, and the "Grotian imperative," positing that the recognition of "mutual vulnerability fosters the emergence of consistent patterns" and the evolution of security arrangements. These concepts emerge organically from the dynamics of a systemic environment characterized by a "quasi-anarchic" state, devoid of a central authority that would impose constraints on the pursuit of sovereign interests (Buzan, 1991:410).

Positioned as a stratagem to arrest the unfolding and escalation of volatile international scenarios, the technique of conflict management encompasses an extensive array of measures to exercise control over conflicts, encompassing avoidance, prevention, settlement, and resolution. C. R. Mitchell (1981:257) elaborates

Any processes operating to avoid the development of contentious issues and goal incompatibilities represent conflict avoidance; any which contribute to the prevention of undesirable conflict behaviour once some situation of goal incompatibility has arisen, conflict prevention; and any activated at the manifest stage, when a conflict involves incompatible goals, hostile attitudes and disruptive behaviour either conflict settlement or, in special circumstances, conflict resolution.

Within the realm of analytical dissection, the strategic paradigms often assume the guise of solitary artefacts. However, the tangible landscape reveals veracity where distinguishing between conflict avoidance and prevention becomes a daunting endeavour in practice. Furthermore, the intricate choreography of grappling with myriad conflicts necessitates the simultaneous deployment of a rich tapestry of management methodologies (Mitchell, 1989:279).

An alternative conceptual portrayal envisions the trajectory of conflict management as a series of interventions unfurling in succession:

- i. Facilitation of Conciliation (fostering communication);
- ii. Deliberative Consultation (enhancing relational dynamics);
- iii. Empowered Arbitration (mediation imbued with authority);
- iv. Stalwart Peace-keeping (reigning in the forces of violence).

In practical terms, these phases act as the sinews linking "peace-making" and "peace-building," orchestrating an overarching strategy that orchestrates the regression of conflict through its developmental stages (Keashly and Fisher, 1990:438). The modus operandi for each conflict management phase diverges in consonance with the typology of the conflict and the requisite strategic blueprint. It is observed that the distinct modalities of the conflict management process wield influence over the facets of conflict they primarily target (Mitchell, 1989:277). Following H. Prein's assertion (1987:689), this dynamic synthesis resonates

One of the reasons for the failure of a particular third-party intervention may be that its application was

inappropriate to the stage of escalation at which it was attempted, as identified by changes in relationship, communication, and substantive issues. Another reason may be the lack of follow-up with other interventions designed to deal with the other elements not focused upon by the previous intervention.

In terms of specific policy, the multiple and multiform attempts by the international community to cope with global 'flashpoints' have spanned numerous approaches, which all, at one point or another, served as the foundation for the stability and security of the global system. As Inis Claude (1971) in his path-breaking treatise has documented, these include pacific strategies, collective security, disarmament, preventive diplomacy, the grand debate, trusteeship and functionalism. The distinctive contribution of these approaches to conflict management as well as their practical significance in the current systemic conjuncture could be appreciated when situated within the specificity of their historical and philosophical context.

As a trailblazing methodology for conflict management initially introduced by the League of Nations, the concept of "collective security" sought to uphold global tranquillity and stability through the united front against those who dared to instigate aggression. Nonetheless, the setbacks witnessed during the Korean War spanning from 1950 to 1953 did not signify the absolute futility of this approach. Instead, as articulated by Stanley Hoffman (1973:61), it underscored the jarring contrast between the United Nations envisioned pluralistic international system at Dumbarton Oaks and San Francisco and the post-World War II international landscape that ultimately materialized.

In a similar vein, the principles and assurances encapsulated within "preventive diplomacy" (termed peacekeeping) derived greater potency from its anticipatory rather than remedial actions. This experimental strategy in global "conflict management" thrived when it could successfully impede the eruption of strife, contingent upon the conflicting parties choosing to suppress rather than indulge their inclination toward discord (Claude, 1971:315). Thus, instances where the prerequisites for peacekeeping operations – both in subjective and objective dimensions – converged, such as witnessed in ONUC (1960) and UNTEA (1962), yielded commendable outcomes, effectively extirpating the root causes of conflict. Conversely, scenarios, where belligerents in a dispute favoured the "unrestrained expression of their propensity for conflict" (UNMOGIP, UNFICYP, UNIFIL, ECOMOG, UNPROFOR), have regrettably yielded disheartening results.

In delving into the realm of conflict management, it becomes apparent that despite the diverse strategies employed, there is a common thread emphasizing a unique interpretation of the essence, rationale, and trajectory of war. At its core, these approaches collectively assert that war functions as a tool of statecraft, representing a form of "political discourse through alternative means." This perspective transcends viewing war merely as a violation of national leadership or an ailment affecting the international community. Instead, it positions war as a time-honored mechanism for addressing inevitable disputes within both international and domestic spheres. The focal point of these perspectives underscores the fundamental duty of international organizations. According to Claude (1971:220), their principal role lies in the prevention or intervention in the utilization of force, with an emphasis on curbing the escalation of conflicts.

Consequently, the process of conflict management inherently necessitates the provision of a "functional equivalent": the quest for, cultivation of, institutionalization of, and persuasion towards alternative approaches for resolving disparities

among nations (Deutsch, 1973:39). As methods for conflict management, constructs such as "collective security," "preventive diplomacy," "disarmament/arms control," and "trusteeship" all aspire to present a substitute of similar functionality to war. These techniques serve as mechanisms for addressing circumstances of existing or potential turmoil wherein opposing societal forces or powers "find themselves so intricately entwined that they are unavoidably propelled toward violent confrontation, despite their rational intentions to circumvent such an outcome" (Ury, 1987:226)

In the realm of conflict resolution strategies, while the notion of pacific dispute resolution aims to strip states of contentious issues, the concept of collective security strives to strip nations of the means to engage in conflicts. Concurrently, preventive diplomacy seeks to thwart the emergence of scenarios that could trigger the need for collective security interventions (Claude, 1971:289). These operational frameworks share interconnectedness rather than mutual exclusivity, much like the interlocking pieces of a jigsaw puzzle that only form a coherent image when assembled and considered in tandem. Each vantage point, however, carries its distinct contributions and challenges as an avenue for fostering global peace and security. When examined holistically, they could be perceived as facets of the same revolutionary phase in managing the progressively intricate state system.

Ultimately, war endures as a fundamental facet of human society. Whether attributed to human frailty, rational or irrational leaders, military equilibrium, or historical forces, conflict remains a constant concern. Hence, governments will invariably prioritize military force, particularly when non-military means falter. However, military power's efficacy isn't absolute. Diplomacy often assumes a central role, in shaping post-war settlements and offering alternatives to conflict. The synergy between political and military considerations is indispensable, as they are two sides of the same coin. In a world marked by global turbulence and heightened possibilities for conflict, striking a balance between these dimensions becomes paramount, ensuring effective conflict management and averting potentially catastrophic escalation.

Conclusion

The study "Perspectives on International Conflict: Analyzing the Causes and Containment of Wars" has provided valuable insights into the complex nature of conflict in global society. The examination of various theoretical perspectives, namely psychological, sociological, and political theories, has shown that the causes of international conflict are multifaceted and interrelated. Each perspective contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics behind the outbreak of wars.

In other words, the above examination of the underlying dynamics driving international conflicts and the necessary prerequisites for their containment has shed light on the intricate and persistent nature of the challenge posed by global peace and security. The diverse array of strategies for handling conflicts often implicitly or explicitly encapsulates distinct perspectives on the origins of warfare and the corresponding requisites for achieving lasting peace. The multitude of these conflict management approaches doesn't merely indicate a lack of certainty about which among them holds the definitive solution to the enigma of war. It also signifies a nuanced intuition that war constitutes a multifaceted phenomenon, stemming from a multitude of factors, and can only be effectively addressed through the simultaneous

implementation of a meticulously interwoven set of methods, as astutely observed by Garnett & Wright (1970:31). Nonetheless, the scrutiny and evaluation of these conflict management methodologies encompass the overarching quandary inherent in the realm of international politics: the formation and utilization of theories in international relations – essentially, the nature of the queries posed by scholars of international relations and the methodologies that underpin their formulation (Most and Starr, 1989:16).

The pursuit of security by states often leads to actions that inadvertently exacerbate tensions and further contribute to the spiral of insecurity. The paper underscores the significance of military power and diplomacy in conflict management. It acknowledges the changing role of military force, influenced by technological advancements and global interdependence. Diplomatic initiatives, conflict avoidance, prevention, and resolution strategies are recognized as essential tools for containing and mitigating conflicts.

In conclusion, addressing international conflicts requires a holistic approach that acknowledges the interconnectedness of various causal factors. It necessitates the integration of diplomatic efforts, economic incentives, and psychological insights to foster cooperation and foster lasting peace. Only by recognizing the complexities of conflict and embracing multifaceted strategies can the global society hope to effectively contain and resolve the challenges of international conflict in the pursuit of a more stable and peaceful world.

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Statements and Declarations

Conflict of Interests

I have no competing or conflicts of interest to disclose.

Funding

The author has no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

Data Availability Statement

Data sharing does not apply to this article as no datasets were generated or analysed during the current study.

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