



ISSN NO. 2320-5407

Journal homepage: <http://www.journalijar.com>
Journal DOI: [10.21474/IJAR01](https://doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01)

**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
OF ADVANCED RESEARCH**

RESEARCH ARTICLE

ANALYSIS OF THE FOREIGN POLICY OF AZERBAIJAN IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF INTERDEPENDENCE THEORY.

Agil mammadov.

Assistant Professor, Azerbaijan State Economic University, Turkish World Business Faculty, Economy and Business Department, Baku, Azerbaijan.

Manuscript Info

Manuscript History:

Received: 19 May 2016
 Final Accepted: 21 June 2016
 Published Online: July 2016

Key words:

Azerbaijan, Foreign Policy,
 International Relations Theory,
 Interdependence Theory.

***Corresponding Author**

Agil mammadov.

Abstract

Increasing interdependence after the end of the Cold War due to emergence of new issues and new actors has lead to traditional state-centric approach hypothesizes in analysis of the international system to fall short. In the issues where the states that are key actors of the international system fall behind and come short, undertaking of these functions by non-state actors has made the approach to the interdependence theory important.

While the foreign policy of Azerbaijan may also be clarified by various approaches, this paper studies it in the Perspective of Interdependence Theory. It is believed that this theory is the most explanatory one in clarification of the matters happened since the start of independence until today. Any theory, when clarifying the foreign policy of any country, should have a sufficient capacity to clarify many affairs of longer term in the process of foreign policy, rather than clarifying a short term or single matter. That's why Azerbaijan intends to settle the economic relations it has developed on the basis of interdependence, its relations with international organizations, and even the Nagorno Karabakh problem which is one of the most important problems in the both domestic and foreign policies on the basis of interdependence also with contribution of international law, with an active participation of international organizations.

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Introduction:-

Being mainly an extension of any country's domestic policy into overseas, the Foreign Policy is also closely related to international relations or the international system due to the nature of its scope of application. The key characteristic of foreign policy decisions is that they necessitate application in an external environment, that is, in the area where there are also other international actors. The Foreign Policy is not a process emerging within a single country. It forms and develops within a system comprising of very complex official and non-official relations, conflicts and collaborations. The more the losses that may arise from an inadequate foreign policy are risky and significant, the more the benefits that may be brought with an adequate foreign policy are significant. While making of wrong foreign policy decisions by any government affects all individuals of that country negatively, making of right foreign policy decisions has a positive effect on the individuals of that country.

After announcing its independence on October 18, 1991, the Republic of Azerbaijan was officially recognized in a short period by a range of countries in the world. Recognition of Azerbaijan by world countries successively late 1991 and throughout 1992 and establishment of diplomatic relations paved the way for its systematic integration into the world to a considerable extent. Establishment of bilateral political relations had built a favorable foundation for development of economic relations then.

The foreign policy of the independent Azerbaijani government also distinguishes for its specific characteristics. The key scope of Azerbaijan's foreign policy in the political sphere includes respecting civil international relations that are regulated by international law standards and principles; settling international, regional and intergovernmental conflicts peacefully and amicably; respecting the sovereign rights of all governments; cooperating mutually beneficially in the economic sphere; balancing economic interests; and establishing a mutual guarantee mechanism and maintaining it.

Importance of Theory in International Relations:-

A Theory may be characterized as a necessary and useful framework in understanding and analyzing the interconnection between facts and matters in any area of review in any science. Besides being suitable for clarifying and analyzing the interconnections between the facts we study, theories also enable foreseeing the future of these relations. Surely, applying any analytical model or theory in scientific studies has many advantages. (Ari, 2008). Furthermore, each theory has interests and priorities differing from each other in key issues forming international relations (Balta, 2014).

No theory is completely adequate. And none of them is completely well-suited to reality. However, all of them contribute to our methodological knowledge by teaching us to be sceptic towards any views. Different theories necessitate different analysis levels (Roskin et al., 2014).

People working in the sphere of international relations agree that theories are fundamental and indispensable for clarifying the future of international relations and the global policy and trying to foresee it. As any person generally approaches to any issue which s/he is interested in according to his/her already adopted hypotheses, viewpoints or visions, the theories become indispensable. Any analyst should be theoretically informed by being conscious of his/her viewpoint to any issue and of even his/her decisions. And theories say us on what we should focus and what we should ignore when making our environment meaningful. Without theories, we may fail to act by getting overwhelmed and buried under avalanchefully comprising of realities. The meaning that we give to our observations is shaped by our viewpoints, concepts and theories. In this sense, a theory is an intellectual setup which assists us in explaining our observations or making estimations by interpreting realities and determining the authenticity and recurrences or repetitions of the observed facts (Viotti et al., 2014).

Theoretic approaches in the discipline of international relations, where the interaction between the practice and a theory is clearly observable, get directly influenced by the structure of the international system; the international conjuncture; the number of actors in the system, the quantity and quality of the actors in question as well as their relationships with each other (Sandikli., 2012). All new changes emerging in the structure of the international system have paved way for establishment of new theoretical frameworks and all new hegemonic powers emerging have tried to establish new ideological basis with the aim to justify their policies. (Kan., 2011).

Hypothesis of Interdependence:-

"Dependence means a state of being determined or significantly affected by external forces. Interdependence, most simply defined, means mutual dependence" (Keohane et al, 1977). The model of 'Complex Interdependence' was developed by Robert O Keohane and Joseph S. Nye in the late 1970s. It was a major challenge to fundamental assumptions of traditional and structural realism which focused on military and economic capabilities to explain state behavior (Rana, 2015).

Liberal theories on interdependence base on ideas relating to trade and economic relations. Such ideas may be taken from Richard Cob (1804-1865) and on the basis of ideas of John Bright (1811-1889), called classic economy and Manchester liberals of David Ricardo (1770-1823), until generation of commercial liberalism in the 19th century (Heywood., 2013)

Being an analytical word, Interdependence refers to situations where the actors or matters in various areas of a single system influence on each other. If expressed simply, interdependence means being dependent on each other. Such a situation is neither good nor bad internally: interdependence may be less or more.

There are four divisions offering an insight into the dimensions of interdependence: the sources, advantages, relative costs and symmetry of dependence. Interdependence may be based on physical (natural) or social (economic,

political or perceptual) facts. Generally, the both exist in parallel. They assist in clarifying the degree of choice in cases of differentiation, or mutual or bilateral dependency. (Nye et al., 2015).

And those adopting the pluralist approach in international relations analyze the interconnection between economy and politics in the context where two or more parties such as individuals, governments and transnational companies become mutually dependent on each other in particular in the sphere of economy in the process of interdependence. The pluralist approaches of which roots derive from Liberalism underline multi-actor structure in international relations. According to Pluralists, the actors not being governments in the global politics are important beings. According to theorists of interdependence, international economic relations play a vital role in determining the framework of the international politics.

According to the Pluralists, who argue that the relations between governments are influenced by complex economic dependence increasing day-by-day, this situation leads to decrease in conflicts in the global sphere and expansion of economic cooperation processes. (Ari., 2002)

The more the trade between governments expands, the more these governments will recognize that they are become dependent on each other. (Goldstein et al., 2015).

Keohane & Nye distinguish two sides of interdependence: 'sensitiveness' and 'vulnerability'. Sensitivity is measuring the degree of influence of the change in the conditions of any actor on other actors, which demonstrates to what extent the results in terms of these individual actors may control. And vulnerability is measuring the price for which any of the actors shall pay in case of terminating this relationship. Where one of them is highly asymmetric, we can talk on dependence rather than interdependence. Although sensitivity seems more close to the key concept of interdependence, vulnerability is the key factor in how governments will respond to. It is more probable that defenseless governments will receive vulnerability in a higher extent than the governments which are not defenseless. Interdependence is a matter of measurement which is related to the 'dynamic intensity' of interactions in the same context high density means more interdependence. However, interdependence is related to a separate issue and increase in any sphere, e.g., economy, may not always bring for example, security to other spheres (Wendt., 2012.)

According to Keohane and Nye, if power is the ability and capacity of a government to influence on the behaviors of another government and make changes, it does not always show a real sound parallelism. According to observations, sometimes the relationship of interdependence accordingly may lead to change in the behaviors of smaller governments and greater governments in foreign policy. According to the Theory of Interdependence, the sources of the influencing and power are dependence and its degree. Therefore, in this context, the concepts of sensitivity and openness to influence are concepts that demonstrate the determination level and conditions of greater governments the policies of other smaller governments (Ari., 2008)

In manipulation of the economic interdependence, the winner is not always the greatest government. If a smaller or weaker government has more interest in any issue, it may be quite successful. In order to handle with their relative defensiveness in asymmetric interdependence, smaller governments may frequently use their bigger conclusiveness and determination. A natural result of the increasing interdependence is expansion of commercial agreements. (Nye et al., 2015).

As interdependence starts economically and its political benefit arises out spontaneously, it is not feasible to divide interdependence into economic and political categories. The factor making countries dependent on each other is their foreign business relations rather than diplomatic friendship agreements. In order to maintain these relations, hostility of governments to each other decreases. Gradually increasing influence of economic progress on foreign policies has transferred foreign economic relations from low intensity politics to high intensity politics, which has in its turn made arguable the role of governments in foreign policy and their populations as well as the borders of these populations. The developing interdependence has eliminated the difference between the domestic and foreign policies over time. Any development in the domestic policies has a close relation with the foreign policies. (Bakan., 2004)

Briefly, today governments have to have dealings with each other, as it is impossible to only growth in a closed environment internally, which result in economic ties getting gradually stronger between governments. Both

Rosecrance and Keohane and Nye underline this point that as long as this complexity and interdependence continues in the global system, conflicts and wars become distanced from being a rational alternative contributing to their interests. (Balta., 2014).

Relations of Azerbaijan with International Organizations and Interdependence:-

Intensive development of interrelations with organizations is important in terms of enhancing the options to have a considerable influence on both implementing multisector political, economic, scientific-cultural and humanitarian cooperation with other governments efficiently and forming an unbiased public opinion on the processes arising in the countries.

In the foreign policy of Azerbaijan, expansion of multiparty cooperation within international and regional organizations is also an important place, in addition to development of bilateral relations with world countries. After becoming independent, the government of Azerbaijan became a member of UN, OSCE, Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Association of Turkish Governments, CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States), International Monetary Fund, Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, International Reconstruction & Development Bank, and Islamic Development Bank, and built bilateral relations in a short period with a range of international and regional institutions such as Inter-Parliamentary Union, EU, CoE, European Parliament, and NATO, and etc. in order to solve a range of emerging important problems, in particular, maintain and strengthen its independence; solve the NagornoKarabakh problem peacefully, make reforms toward market economy and benefitting from the role of international organizations in getting closely integrated into the global integration process.

Not only cooperating with these organizations in the spheres of economy and military, but also mutual action with them in enforcing the fundamental principles of establishing democratic societies is another important direction of the cooperation of Azerbaijan.

Cooperation with these organizations in formation and development of democratic institutions in Azerbaijan; establishment of a legislative basis on the basis of the best global practices; protection of the rights of citizens; and guaranteeing the freedom of speech is very significant.

The key organizations with which Azerbaijan cooperates in the sphere of democratization are commissions within the CoE and organizations operating under it, special groups, OSCE and its Human Rights Bureau engaging in human rights and freedoms, government and non-government organization of Western governments, democracy and human rights institutions, their accredited embassies in Azerbaijan, and etc. institutions. And the organization implementing the most systematic and purposeful work in democratic transformation of Azerbaijan is the Council of Europe. Azerbaijan tries to benefit from the political and economic capacities of these organizations in also settling the problems it faces in the process of independent government building. Today, UN, CoE, OSCE, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, NATO and other international organizations play a significant role in integration of Azerbaijan into the world closely.

Today, there are UN's Development Programme (UNDP), High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Office of Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Population Fund, Public Information Department, Children's Fund (UNICEF), International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Food Programme operating in Azerbaijan through their representative offices they opened here.

NagornoKarabakh Problem in Foreign Policy of Azerbaijan and Interdependence Theory:-

The key problem for national security of Azerbaijan is to settle the conflict with Armenia, solve the NagornoKarabakh problem, get the lands under occupation back, return the sovereign rights of the government in the entire country; and ensure the security of the borders of the government.

Today, the most important and significant structure of the OSCE for Azerbaijan is the Minsk Group founded in March 1992. The key objective of the Minsk Group is to settle the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and draft a relevant document for settlement of the NagornoKarabakh problem through peaceful means as well as eliminate this conflict completely by convening a special Minsk Conference. The Group consists of 11 governments, including Germany, France, Italy, Sweden, Czech Republic, Turkey, Belarus, Russia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. Its co-chairmanship functions are implemented by the representatives of two governments, Russia and Finland since December 1994; and the representatives of three countries, Russia, USA and France since 1997.

The extreme military expenditures that Azerbaijan spends as an underdeveloped country result in wasting away significant resources that may be used towards more efficient economic development goals. And the NagornoKarabakh problem creates obstructions for economic development of the country as well. The military spending comprises a considerably part of the government budget. The NagornoKarabakh problem particularly destroys investments in the areas affected from the conflict. (Votti et al., 2014; 442-443) if this problem were solved, Azerbaijan would be in a position that would enable it to benefit from interdependence much more.

However, Azerbaijan does not step back from its position for settlement of the conflict peacefully within the OSCE, by continuing the cooperation with this organization. And today, Azerbaijani officials continue on their same position which defends the settlement of the problem in compliance with international law provisions.

Economic Interdependence in Foreign Policy of Azerbaijan:-

Gradually increasing influence of the economic process on the foreign policy has brought the foreign economic relations from low intensity politics to high intensity politics, which has in its turn made arguable the role of governments in foreign policy and their populations as well as the borders of these populations. International economic relations have become the gradually increasing and key affairs of governments. Thus, the Theory of Interdependence has attributed a great importance to the global order, in particular, economic order. (Bakan, 2001; 15)

Since the first years of its independence, Azerbaijan, in both the short-term presidency period of AbulfazElchibay and the processes starting since the receipt of the governance by HaydarAliyev's government, has started initiatives towards development of economic relations with the external world. As the start point of the economic interdependence process of Azerbaijan, the Baku – Tbilisi – Ceyhan natural gas pipeline project may be given as an example. Although the negotiations on the Project started since the period of Elchibay's government, the contract was signed in 1994. In 2005, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan contract became effective and Baku petrol was started to be put in the world markets. Since particularly 2005, the funds coming from petrol started to fill the major part of the government budget of Azerbaijan. It is an economically beneficial project for Azerbaijan. It has been accepted as an important start point in the interdependence process.

The Republic of Azerbaijan has undertaken an active role in several significant projects since the start of independence up to now. It has seen the responsibilities undertaken under these projects to continue it with other countries in a balanced way. Following a balanced politics in order not to draw the reactions of its neighbors, Azerbaijan has endeavored to build an action area in the context of interdependence with other countries or freedom. While Azerbaijan has always had to take the interests of the regional and global powers in all significant contracts and agreements concluded since the date of independence up today, we may assess the recently signed TANAP (Trans Anatolia Natural Gas Pipeline) project as a significant project also in terms of protection of the interests of the country in the global scene. While the TANAP project supports the security of supply with its natural gas capacity, it also brings such considerable gains as putting of the natural gas resources that Azerbaijan holds to new markets.

When considering the advantage of interdependence from the financial point of view, the TANAP project is much more advantageous than the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan petrol pipeline project signed in 1994, as Azerbaijan, which had not an adequate government budget for implementation of the BTC project in the first years of its independence, will get more gain from the latter, where the significant part of the project will be covered by Azerbaijan by itself.

Conclusion:-

We can define the Foreign Policy as a full body of the policies, which any government follows against another government or governments, or in a greater sense, against the global scene. Governments seek certain means in order to ensure their security. Governments that have become newly independent and have a weak military power, try to protect their independence by applying to one or several of these means. 'If the military power of any government is less or weak, the vital importance of diplomacy increases.' In the first years of its independence, Azerbaijan also tried to express its advantageous position due to natural resources in the global system through diplomacy. In order to ensure its security by using these means effectively, Azerbaijan has tried to implement a balanced politics. That is, it has tried to reach its goal by basing on a strong government against another strong government or governments, or even managing its associate governments to play against each other. The foreign policy of a government, on the one hand get influenced by its own domestic conditions, while on the other hand, is

determined by the conditions of the global system, the external world where any country in question is also a party to. Particularly, the matter of interdependence gradually developing nowadays increases the importance of this issue more.

And Azerbaijan, as a small government benefitting from the advantages of interdependence, tries to influence on regional and global powers in the global system. We can say that the process of interdependence is advantageous in both Azerbaijan's economic relations and relations with international organizations. And Azerbaijan intends to settle the NagornoKarabakh problem, which is its key problem in the foreign policy, not through military forces, but in compliance with international law. As the theory of Interdependence creates more opportunities for also smaller governments in terms of being successful in their foreign policies, this paper is discussed from the perspective of this theory.

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