

Realist theory of international relations assignment



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Realist theories the following key assumption: 1 The international system is anarchic. There is no authority above state capable of regulating their interactions: states must arrive at relation with other state on their own, rather than it being dictated to them by some other higher controlling entity. 2 Sovereign states are the principal actors in the international system and the social attention is afforded to great power as they have most leverage on the international stage.

International institution, non-governmental organization, multinational co-operation individuals and sub-states or trans state actors are viewed as having little independent influence. 3. States are rational unitary actors each moving towards their national interest. There is a general distrust for long term co-operations or alliance 4. The overriding national interest of the state is its national security and survival 5. In pursuit of national security the state strive to amass resources 6.

Relation between the states are determined by their comparative level of power derived primarily from their military and economic capabilities 7. There are no universal principles that all states can use to guide their actions. Instead a state must be ever aware of the actions of the states around it and must use pragmatic approach to resolve the problem that arise 8. the injection of morality into international relations cause reckless commitments, diplomatic rigidity, and escalation of conflict. In summary, realists believe that mankind is not inherently benevolent but rather self-centered and competitive. This Hobbesian perspective which views human as selfish and conflictual unless given appropriate conditions under which to cooperate, contrast with approach of liberalism of international relations.

Further they believe that states are inherently aggressive and obsessed with security and territorial expansion is only constrained by opposing power. This aggressive build up however leads to security dilemma where increasing one's security can bring along greater instability as the opponent builds up its own arms in response. Thus security is a zero sum game where only relative gains can be made