

Example of 7. in what ways have global environmental problems such as climate cha...

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The debate between the neorealists and the neoliberals had swept the international relations theory for the past decade, especially in the United States. The ' neo-neo' debate had shifted the views of many theorists regarding the international system and the definition of what is international politics. Both neo-realism and neoliberalism are considered the progeny of the main theories of realism and liberalism respectively, presenting a new definition and framework to determine the nature of issue. Under these two progenies are also several versions, which diversifies the debate of both IR theories on issues pertaining to international relations and politics. However, while there are some differences on how both these theories assess the role of the international system and the state, there are some instances wherein neo-realism and neo-liberalism converge as to how they see how the international system must act and the role of states in ensuring the balance of power and maintain their interests.

Neo-realism was established in the 1980s under the name " structural realism" under the work of Kenneth Waltz and his colleagues. In his work, " Theory of International Politics" written in 1979, Waltz emphasizes the importance of the international system's structure and how it could influence state behavior on important issues. Waltz's neo-realism varies greatly with realism considering neo-realism tries to provide unit-level explanations in understanding the benefits and consequences of the structure. Neo-realists argues that structure could be defined by the organizational nature of the international system, which is anarchic. Structure is also defined by the distribution of capabilities across states, emphasizing that there should be no differences in terms of function between states. Neo-realists also argues that

the structure of the international system shapes a state's foreign policy. In an example, neo-realists would explain the nuclear testing as anarchy or there is a lack of central power that would enforce order in the system. In this end, the competitive structure would require a need to generate weapons to enforce peace and survive. It is also argued by neo-realists that states with greater power would have more influence in the anarchic system, given that they have more capabilities to redefine the structure of the international system. Aside from providing unit-level discussions and the importance of the structure of the international system, neo-realism also differs from classical realism from their perception of power. While realists believe power is an end in itself, neo-realists see power is more than just military capability, but it also is concerned to the capacity of the state to use this capability to coerce and control other states. Waltz sees power as the pinnacle of the capacities of a state, given that they could be differentiated through their capacity and not by how they work or function. Power is also what gives a state influence and position in the international system, shaping as to how the state should act prior to their position. This can be seen in the Cold War wherein the US and the USSR were the only two superpowers given their similarities and capacities. Both had also tried to adhere to their position and went to war, showing off their military and political capability, however, the USSR had lost its position by the end of the Cold War, upsetting the balance of power, increasing uncertainty in the international system in the process. Finally, neo-realism also emphasizes on anarchy, considering it an integral factor that influences the entire system. Neo-realism also ensures that states are functioning to their capacity and

could act immediately upon the influence of anarchy .

Aside from Waltz, other neo-realists who had created their own variant of neo-realism are Joseph Grieco, John Mearsheimer, Robert Jervis and Jack Snyder. Grieco had introduced the concept of relative and absolute gains. In his perspective, Grieco stated that states are interested in improving their influence and power (absolute gains) and would even cooperate with other states to increase their power and influence. States are also concerned with understanding the capacity of other states to gain power and influence (relative gains) once a cooperation agreement is put into force. Grieco's argument is considered one of the main reasons as to why neo-realism and neo-liberalism vary from the other. Neo-liberals claim that cooperation is not attained when cooperation is not achieved by states who cheat for their national interests. They believe that two factors would influence international cooperation: cheating and relative gains from the other. Finally, once states fail to comply with the rules, it is likely that states would abandon international cooperation and act on their own accord. John Mearsheimer, Robert Jervis and Jack Snyder, on the other hand, introduces the security and defense arguments on neo-realism. Mearsheimer, a known offensive realist in the field, suggested that relative power is more important to the states than absolute power because it would enable states to flush out countries that can become future enemies to the state. Leaders, under Mearsheimer's explanation also stated that states must be prepared for the revival of an expansionary state that would challenge the balance of power. In the case of defense neo-realists Robert Jervis and Jack Snyder, they argue that leaders understand the consequences of the costs of war and know how it would

counteract with the benefits attained from the war. Defensive neo-realists also argue that conflict is not needed and is caused by additional consequences of events. They are also more concerned over the cheating on issues concerning security policy .

On the other hand, neo-liberalism is an off-shoot of liberalism as noted by David Baldwin, identifying that neo-liberalism or neo-liberal institutionalism is one of the four varieties of liberalism. The first three are commercial liberalism (economy), Republican liberalism (politics), and sociological liberalism (society). In this end, neo-liberalism or liberal institutionalism is mostly focused on the concept of rationality and contracting and giving emphasis to the institutions or the international organizations. The theory could be traced back in the 1980s when the book " International Regimes (1983) and Robert Keohane's book " After Hegemony (1984)" was released, discussing the importance of international institutions in the international sphere. The books showcased the observations done by neo-liberalists pertaining the international cooperation between states in the 1970s despite the shifts of power and distribution in the international economy, and the influence of institutions such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in molding the economic sphere. In this case, Keohane and others had presented their argument that both of these instances are interrelated, explaining that institutions and IOs strengthens the idea of economic cooperation. Neoliberals argue that for states to cooperate, they must be able to resolve several collective-action problems before it can be attained. There must also be self-enforcing agreements between states as there are no enforcement bodies that could execute these agreements. States must

keep finding ways to avoid cheating, which may require intelligence gathering pertaining to the other states and use these information to understand the possible consequences of cheating to these agreements. States, under neoliberalism, must coordinate with others in terms of their actions. The institutions or the IOs would serve as the proper forum for states to discuss solutions for problems that would influence cooperation. IOs are also the ones that could serve as the monitoring and assistance actor that would ensure that states would be supported with policies that would be accepted by others and influence conflicts to some degree .

While both neo-realism and neo-liberal institutionalist or neoliberalist argue in several perspectives pertaining to the role of states, influence of institutions and the nature of power and interest; there are several instances wherein both neorealist and neoliberal institutionalists converge or meet in agreement. They would only vary in terms of how the international system could be aided or influenced by states, especially by their decisions. Both neorealism and neoliberalism/liberalist institutionalist are created under similar premises. Both theories are classified as state-centric structural theories as they both use the state as their fundamental unit to analyze, considering their behavior, actions, and their position in the international system. States also become their reference in terms of how the international system is to be categorized and analyzed. Both theories are also working with the rational choice model, showcasing the assumptions as to what actions or decisions could entail the mode of cooperation and the persistence of anarchy in the international system. The rational choice model also enables both neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism to understand

the nature of human action pertaining a specific mode of political issue .

Aside from this, both theories also use three assumptions to ensure their analysis over the international system. In the first assumption, political actors are assumed to be self-interested and rational. Their interests are considered autogenous as they are considered pre-social or still assessing the nature of the international system and the conflicts caused by anarchy. Actors are self-interested in the extent that despite cooperating with each other and the possible conflicts and constraints they would encounter throughout the ordeal. The second assumption shared by both theories is the fact that actors' interests are exogenous to social interaction, meaning that actors engage into cooperation or institutions with the notion that there is already a defined interest pursued. Finally, society serves as the strategic realm wherein interests are attained. Actors, while in the society, are not social as they are atomistic beings that would only become sociable with other states to pursue their interests. In the end of neo-liberal institutionalism, it also mirrors these assumptions with the difference that states could meet into a cooperation agreement and their interests are not influenced by their social interactions .

Convergence of both theories can also be seen in the neo-neo debate itself, what varies is their attack on the issues presented in the debate. The first convergence seen in the main debate itself is the nature of the international system and whether or not it is anarchic or Both neorealism and neoliberalists agree that the international system is anarchic, meaning that there is no common authority or actor that influences states in sustaining the rules and implementing laws that would determine the behavior of states.

Both theories also agree that anarchy influences states to act on their own accord and follow a self-help behavior that would cause them to see the importance of cooperation. With anarchy prominent in the system, it makes it hard for cooperation to be attained by states even with the help of institutions or agreements. Neo-realists also argue that anarchy influences foreign policy, influencing cooperation and balance. Neo-liberals states that anarchy constraints cooperation as it would disable institutions and interdependence. Both theories would only vary in terms on how they perceive the nature of the world as the neo-realists tend to prefer a world that has more competition and conflicting in nature as they see international relations as a medium wherein survival is the main key. Neoliberal institutionalist, on the other hand, recognize that the international relations is competitive, however, cooperation can be attained by states as an impact of anarchy .

Both neorealism and neoliberals also agree upon the notion that international cooperation is plausible between states, however, the capacity and nature on how it is attained may vary. Both theories also showcase that states would influence as to how they would prosper or deny international cooperation despite the benefits it can present to their nation. What only differs with both neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism is the fact that neorealists believe that unless states themselves find ways to ensure the possibility of a cooperation, then international cooperation would not be possible. Many neorealists also state that international cooperation is difficult to pursue, maintain, and states would have to constantly power it up to maintain. There is the possible change in national interests pursued by the

state and the shift in influence, which greatly affects how cooperation could work for states. On the other hand, neo-liberals believe that cooperation can be attained in areas wherein states have a common interest and be assisted by institutions that could regulate anarchy and subsequent influence of states with enough power to change the international system. Neoliberals also believe that cooperation can be attained given that collaborating with other states would foster equal development and change that would reduce the possibilities of states cheating against the other .

Aside from cooperation and the impact of anarchy, both theories are also concerned with the possible impact of the relative and absolute gains states considering that states may use these two goals to improve their chances of influence and influence the entire system in the process. Neorealists believe that states, especially those with enough capacity to influence and defend its image and position, would try to obtain relative gains from being allied with another nation to sustain its interests. The neoliberals also asked the question “ will both of us gain?” with regards to their action, considering that there is a possibility that the other state could implement policies that may influence the programs of another state. On the other hand, neoliberals persisted that states are motivated to cooperate with one another for the very reason they wish to create a means to produce total influence and power within the international system for all parties once cooperation is met. In terms of what national interests should lean towards, both neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism support the impact of promoting national security and political economy as the main goals of the government. However, in the case of the neorealists, they tend to lean towards national security issues

considering that without the protection of national security, all sectors of government and its influence to the international system would be greatly affected. However, in the case of neoliberal institutionalism, they state that economic welfare should be the goal of many states as without the backing of a strong and self-sustaining economic system, the state cannot fund its security force and cripple the entire country.

With regards to the debate on capabilities versus intentions/perceptions, both theories are concerned with the capacities and intentions of states with regards to what their decisions would entail and change. Neorealists see that distribution of state capability would be the key weapon in ensuring their position in the international community and their overall behavior towards other states. They also use their capacity to sustain and protect security and independence which is threatened by anarchy. Being unprepared regarding the true intentions of states may cause further conflict, forcing states to use their capacities to pressure the other states. On the other hand, neoliberals state that the state's intentions are influential than capability of states considering that a state's intentions could influence the status-quo in the international system and even show who would gain the upper influence over a particular issue .

Finally, both theories also converge in the issue of institutions and regimes, seeing that the international system now plays host to international regimes that would handle the changes fostered after the Second World War. Both neorealists and neoliberal institutionalists had recognized that states have used the lessons of the Second World War to improve their relationship with each other, building cooperation despite varying national interests. In this

end, neorealists emphasize that institutions or regimes built in the international system such as the United Nations, NATO, IMF and the World Bank is the arena wherein states could settle their national interests and use their capabilities to influence the course of action of the international community, as well as ensure continuous competition and rivalry to ensue for the sake of influence which balances the international system. On the other hand, the neoliberal institutionalist believe that institutions and international organizations are created to serve as a foundation or arena to create common and acceptable norms that can be binding and flexible for members, which can also influence international politics . Neoliberals are staunch supporters of international organizations and institutions, seeing that it enables states to reduce transaction costs for obtaining information regarding other states and achieve its goals of promoting cooperation and order .

While both neorealist and neoliberal institutionalism are considered variants of the main theories of realism and liberalism, it is visible that the modernized versions present challenges that has not been answered by the main theories. It may be agreed upon that the theories contradict with one another given their notion of power, state influence, state behavior and the international system's structure; however, there are instances that show that both theories actually agree upon certain points regarding the international community. One can even denote that both theories complement each other, sharing the same rational-choice model to analyze the international system and its actors. They also share the same sentiment over the nature of the international system, seeing it as a system with no central authority to

manage order and policy. There is also the similarity when it comes to the nature of states, their interests, and how the international system works for each state and their interests. Therefore, it is safe to say that neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism can indeed converge with one another and support their arguments how the international system works.

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