

Interdependence: an important issue for nations



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Nowadays, the countries are worried about expand their trade relations with other countries, the interdependence is becoming an important issue for the nations, every day the linkages between them are increasing. The actors are more cautious in the decision making process because in a world interconnected those decisions can affect the whole planet. The interdependence is a way in which the countries open their markets; they can improve their trade relations and the investment between them.

The foreign policy is relevant in a world characterized by the interdependence because, the foreign policy is the measures that states have to conduct their international relations and at the moment not only the national actors like the congress, the parliament, the civil society and the companies are the ones guided the international relations, at the contrary every day there are more actors involved in the international relations like, Non Governmental organizations (NGOs), the international organizations, the terrorists, the church, inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), among others.

Now, there are issues that matter not only at the domestic level, they matter at the international level as well, those issues are called intermestics and it includes the oil, the energy, the security, the environment, and the migrations. With the globalization the world is interconnected and the issues that affect one country can affect the world too.

Interdependence is a term used to describe global interactions. It means, that events and situations in one area depend on, or are influenced by, those in another and, most importantly, this relationship can be reciprocal. In

addition, there is the understanding that groups increasingly need each other, for various reasons, in order to function and exist (Rogerson, 2000)

According to the encyclopedia Britannica (2011), foreign policy is “ the general objectives that guide the activities and relationships of one state in its interactions with other states. The development of foreign policy is influenced by domestic considerations, the policies or behavior of other states, or plans to advance specific geopolitical designs”.

As Fowler said (1997) “ The success of foreign policy depends increasingly on the interdependence of government and business, sharing, as they do, a joint stake in international finance, international investments, international trade, and international monetary and energy problems.”

Nowadays, the countries are very conscious of open their markets to the world, eliminating the trade and the non tariff barriers. The most developed countries assist the less developed countries and there is transference of resources between them.

Keohane and Nye in their book Power and Interdependence (Cited by Brown & Ainley, 2009) proposed the term complex interdependence as a new account of international relations to run alongside realism, and set out 3 important differences between the realism:

1. Complex interdependence assumes that are multiple channels of access between societies including different branches of the state apparatus as well as non state actors, as opposed to the unitary state assumption characteristic of realism.

2. Complex interdependence assumes that, for most international relationships, force will be low salience, as opposed to the central role that force is given in realists accounts of the world.

3. Under Complex interdependence there is no hierarchy of issues; any issue area might be at the top of the international agenda at any particular time, whereas realism assumes that security is everywhere and always is the most important issue.

The State is not the central authority of the world; there are multiple channels that make the relations flow and that control the States if something is going wrong with them, for example the International Organizations.

Complex interdependence assumes force will be low salience, it means that the states only will use force only when it is necessary; they changed the view of a strong power into a view of soft power which implies the cultural and social attraction and the political persuasion. In world characterized of complex interdependence the actors are less concerned about security and power, they do not worry too much about nuclear weapons and war, at the contrary they are thinking more in finance, the industries, banking, multinationals, trade, environment; new issues that make that the States open their foreign policy and interconnect the world actors every time more.

Keohane and Nye suggested the terms sensitivity and vulnerability (Cited by Renda, 2011) to explain how power politics works between the mutually dependent states. They explained that sensitivity is the "liability to costly effects imposed from outside before policies are altered to try to change the

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situation," it means, the degree to which actors are sensitive to changes in a given issue area. On the other side, vulnerability refers to " an actor's liability to suffer costs imposed by external events after policies have been altered." It refers to the extent to which they are able to control their responses to this sensitivity.

The neoliberal theory (Cited by Fowler, 1997) says that there are factors that improve and maintain the interdependence between the developed countries, like the similarities between the politic, economic, and military interests in order to assure a profit for all the parties and reduce the worries of long term conflicts, generally if there is more cooperation between the parties the probabilities of having a conflict in future may decrease.

But, not everybody is agree on that the interdependence is always beneficial for the countries, because in an interdependent world the countries will lose their sovereignty gradually and will create more conflicts among them. In example, Waltz (1998) argues that it is illusory to hope that the international System would become more peaceful as a result of greater interdependence, because the interdependence between the countries only gives them more conflict, because the states are selfish and they want to achieve their goals over everything.

Kaiser (1971) is another author that has a disagreement with the interdependence, because the formation of transitional links may limit the power of the states, it also can inhibit the domestic process of democratic control and it will restrict the autonomy too.

“ The most visible disadvantage is that the reciprocal relationship includes the notion of dependence, which means that each group relinquishes some ability to completely control its own activities. In other words, sovereignty can decrease. It could become more difficult to make foreign policy decision by completely relying on one’s own national interests. Other interests and groups outside national boundaries may have an increasing in influence on the foreign policy-making process” (Keohane 1975) (Cited by Rogerson, 2000)

The interdependence is a method in which the economic relations of the states can generate benefits for the states, but the interdependence may cause negative variables because of the unique characteristics of each state. The interdependence may produce an unequal grow between the industrialized and non industrialized countries; the developing countries would suffer a dependence of the countries that have better economic situations. The most powerful countries have imposed always their needs over the common welfare and in this way the developing countries would suffer because of the superiority of the other countries.

Is appropriate to clarify that in the relationships of interdependence the states may have a loss of their state sovereignty because they have to take into account the new requirements imposed by the other states that are involved in the interdependence.

On the other hand, there are some actors that are agree about that the interdependence between the states because it benefits them and the foreign policy of each country too, they say that in a era of globalization the

countries should make linkages between each other in order to open the commerce and the trade relations.

Nowadays, the world is in an age of interdependence and relationships. The cooperation among the actors would optimize the quality of life of all of them. The economic globalization is something that plays an important role in the international agenda, because it creates economic integration and liberalizes the commerce.

Foreign policy is a term that refers an interaction between the governments concerning the territorial integrity and the security of their citizens. In the political and in the economic order it provides a guidance in which the states take decisions for their well being and for maintain good relations with other nations. The economic interdependence has important implications for the foreign policy of the countries, because it creates a unit of decision making among them and they can focus on issues that matters at the international level.

It is very important that one state participates in the game of the interdependence of the states, where all the actors win if they open their commerce to the international trade, or the foreign policy may help a lot to the countries to manage their conflicts and solve them in a pacific way and nowadays the countries prefer to solve all the conflicts diplomatically because their economies depend on the other countries' economies and the states will create benefits between them.

The foreign policy also has help many states with their internal problems because having interconnection and communication among the states, it can
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help to manage the security and social problems that are affecting seriously the population of the majority of the countries of the world, therefore it helps to improve the security and the welfare of most of them, also the efforts of the states are directed in the same direction when they want to fight for a common objective, such as the common well being of the people and the peace in the same way, where the international relations play an important role.

In order to conclude, one big advance is that the states are more concern about preserve the life and the peace of the world, nowadays the force that the states use there is no longer the weapons or the armies, at the contrary the new force that guides the states is the interdependence which is the best element for achieve the peace and have the best relationships with the states, but the interdependence at the same time can be a double edged sword, then the countries could lose their own sovereignty in the way that they depend on what the others states need or think of the other states in order to make internal decisions, furthermore, when all the hopes are put in one country or in certain economies, it turns in something dangerous because, when something unexpected happens in this country the internal economy of the countries that depend on this country may flag.

The foreign policy and the interdependence of the nations are terms that have gone arrive slowly and have took their place in the international relations, and for that each state should adopt them in their political, financial and economic situation, looking for the balance where they bring a benefit and they can help the other states, but without making other states

the marionette of the most powerful states and lose their sovereignty in the future.