

COVID-19: SHIFTING GLOBAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC DYNAMICS AND FOREIGN POLICY DECISION-MAKING; SECOND IMAGE REINFORCED

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Abstract

Pandemic has again hit humankind hard in the form of Covid-19 and its variants. COVID-19 did not take long in transforming from an epidemic to a pandemic, and affected countries in unprecedented and undocumented ways. Socioeconomic dynamics, which play significant role in policy making in any society, have been considerably affected, unearthing the flaws of policy making process. This research studies the relation between the pandemic and global socioeconomic dynamics, and their impact on the foreign policy making of the states. Kenneth Waltz's level of analysis approach within structural realism provides the basis to analyse the role of second level i.e, the state - mentioned as second image by Waltz. This research reinforces the importance of second image and argues (using the case studies of USA and China) that in the post Covid world, the relevance of second image in states' foreign policy making is reinforced.

Keywords: Covid 19, Socioeconomic Dynamics, Decision Making, Relevance of Waltz Second Image,

Introduction

Covid-19, has caught the world by surprise when mankind was dealing with challenges of globalization and human development. The pandemic has reinforced the fear of the unknown. The impacts of pandemic on domestic and international environment vary from simple to complex. The massive outbreak of Covid-19 has exposed unpreparedness of states despite all the scientific and technological advancement. Besides, inconsistencies of foreign policy decision making of states with regard to addressing the non-traditional security threats have been exposed. States have traditionally understood national security as

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being synonymous to military security and to some extent, relating to economic and political stability. There has been lesser focus on non-traditional security i.e., epidemiological, environmental, mechanical, and cyber threats. Hence, the outbreak of Covid-19 has forcefully brought out the limitations of states' traditional approach to national security. This research argues that the spread of Covid-19 has emerged as a non-traditional security challenge for states at global level with multiple consequences for states. Waltz, level of analysis approach presents an effective tool for ascertaining states' priorities in foreign policy decision making.

This is a qualitative research based largely on secondary data sources. A remarkable volume of research on almost every aspect of pandemic has surfaced since its outbreak. These have covered purely economic features, medical aspects and research policies related to Covid-19 or have given policy recommendations to deal with emerging challenges. Nonetheless, there are several related issues that need to be addressed. One important research gap lies with regard to the analysis of states' varied foreign policy decision making during pandemic despite the similar context- an anarchic pandemic-stricken international system. The research studies the relation between Covid-19 and global socioeconomic dynamics in the first place, and then the impacts of those dynamics on foreign policy decision making of states. This research uses Waltz's levels of analysis approach to ascertain the impact of pandemic on foreign policy decision making of states. The approach has been used as a framework to study the role of these images in foreign policy decision making of states since the outbreak of pandemic. The research is significant as it enhances our understanding on long-term effects of pandemic on foreign policy decision making.

Waltz' Levels of Analysis Approach

Theories, as basis for scientific inquiry, provide direction to research. Kenneth Waltz propounded a levels of analysis approach to explain causes of wars. These three levels of analysis have been identified by Waltz as 'images' i.e. the individual, the state, and the system. Though these images were identified as a framework to determine the reasons of wars, later these images were used by researchers and academics from different disciplines to study causality of different phenomenon. Consequently, Waltz' three images or levels are used widely to analyse issue areas and to seek answers to research question as a research approach.

The first image that Waltz identifies is 'individual' about which classical realism assumes that individual behaviour is selfish and strives

for self-interest resulting into increased anarchy.¹ Whether war or peace, Waltz tries to seek explanation of certain behaviours,² and links it with individuals. The second image talks about states and their role and behaviour, since it is state which decides about its foreign relations and even about use of military in case of conflict.³ And the third image is international system which is anarchic and conflict prone. It encompasses analyses of every phenomenon taking place within or due to international system like policy or behavioural changes, formulation or dissolution of coalitions, power configurations, formal political institutions, and norms and culture.⁴ Singer, who has devised his own levels of analysis approach following Waltz, says that third image of international system is better suited to study overall interactions taking place between international system and its resulting environment. However, Singer, after reviewing Waltz' approach of three images endorses that state remains 'dominant – if not the sole-actor' in political arena.⁵

In Waltz' levels of analysis, first two levels or images reflect the 'forces that determine policy' while third image is inevitable to analyze the cause or impact of the policy. This opens vistas for using these images by setting priorities as per requirement, that which image would be focused during what times. If this is considered as an established reality then it gives flexibility to organization of variables while applying the three images as methodological tools, simultaneously providing a ground within neorealism.

In essence, this school of thought determines that pressure either comes from outside or is reflected by the anarchic international system due to which states behave in certain manner, i.e., self-interest, making it outside-in approach; whereas considering it flexible would not mean that approach could be changed. The emphasis over any one image is flexible, but the order of approach would be the same as outside-in. If individual or state, anyone of first two images is put on first place and their role is prioritized similarly, this change in order would make it reflective of inside-out approach. This would mean that states' behaviour of being selfish makes international system anarchic, which not only jeopardizes neorealist thought but also drains realist thought its explanatory potential. Therefore, neorealism functions as outside-in approach in which emphasis on images could be changed, but working order remains same.

¹ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, December 2018), 16.

² Ibid., 29.

³ Ibid., 125.

⁴ J. David Singer, "The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations," *World Politics* 14, no. 1 (1961): 79-81, *The International System: Theoretical Essays*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2009557>.

⁵ Ibid.

Outbreak of Covid-19 and State's Response

Coronaviruses was first identified by scientists in 1965. There are several strands of animal and human related coronaviruses of which seven are identified as infecting humans.⁶ The world had witnessed outbreak of SARS with etiology of pneumonia caused by coronavirus in 2003, which spread to 65 countries starting from China. Another contagion MERS caused by coronavirus emerged in 2012 in the Middle East. The recent deadly spread of coronavirus started in December 2019, from an animal market in Wuhan, China, and soon became a pandemic.

Covid-19 shocked the world by swamping countries at rapid pace despite advancement of medical sciences and technology. It compelled the world to halt businesses, trade, industries, educational activities, religious gatherings, sports, and social events. This in turn led to other challenges and shifts at global levels. Covid-19 forced the states to revisit their foreign and security and shifting their focus traditional to non-traditional challenges.

States which were already being influenced by international system, regional geopolitics and preferences of individual leaders had now to deal with additional consideration caused by the pandemic. Many of the important stakeholders (domestic level) in state decision making had to take a back seat so as to protect lives of the people. Foreign policy is an extension of domestic interests which determine the scope and nature of states' external relations. When pandemic caused an upheaval for states at domestic level, foreign policy choices also changed. Economy being the sector worst-hit by this pandemic, further affected the existing patterns of socio-economic development. This foreign policy-economy linkage became a major reason for a shift in state's approaches and practices in the wake of Covid-19.

The pandemic has hit countries at both domestic and international levels. Domestically, states have faced disrupted economic activity, unemployment, increased debts, decreased trade and commercial activities. The collapse of informal employment sector has posed the greatest challenge. On other hand, at international level, the countries have suffered from decreased tourism, supply and demand decline, cancellation of trade orders, over pricing of raw materials, increased prices of crude oil and fuel, and decaying financial investment and remittance inflows. All of these have had adverse effects on states economies, impacting their interests, preferences, and choices. According to Baldwin and Weder di Mauro, "(E)conomies are connected – not physically –by beliefs. All these things (goods, services, knowhow, people, financial capital, foreign direct investment, international banking, and exchange rates) are also

⁶ Linda Rath, "Coronavirus History: How did Coronavirus Start?" WebMD (2020), accessed on April 12, 2021, <https://www.webmd.com/lung/coronavirus-history>.

mechanism for the propagation of economic shocks, or economic contagion”.⁷ Keeping in view the gravity of emergent issues, different perspectives can be used to determine “scale of socio-economic and geopolitical ramifications”⁸ which have intensified competition between states in many ways. For example, the price war between the USA and Saudi Arabia emerged due to decreased demand of fuel caused by ‘the cessation of industrial and transport activities’.⁹ As an aftermath, societies too have been affected in a complex manner. Issues ranging from psychological problems due to social isolation and constricting resources; from closure of industries, businesses and work places due to lockdowns to massive unemployment and resultant rise in violence and crime rates, and border closures have best the world.

The pandemic has altered the patterns of interaction among people and states, and different measures were taken to improve the domestic and foreign policies. Travelling, political and diplomatic activities, exchange of students, social gatherings were restricted or banned, and even health and medical treatment protocols were modified. Since then, the world is facing successive waves of variants of the virus and disease. There are number of efforts underway to deal with Covid-19 at global level, and vaccination for earlier variants has either been completed or is in process in majority of the states. This pandemic should be considered as a warning against redundancies present within states’ decision making choices and priorities vis-a-vis traditional and non-traditional challenges, at both domestic and foreign policy levels. It is time to recognize the changing realities. It will take time for countries to achieve immunity for their population against the disease. This is high time when states must start working on revising their traditionalist policies, and revisit their decision-making choices. Since states have undergone major challenges particularly related to economy – further affecting the social structures, the pandemic has brought a major shift in socioeconomic dynamics at global level, and has emerged as the gravest non-traditional challenge to national security.

Shifting Socio-economic Dynamics at Global Level

Historically contagious diseases and epidemics like malaria, cholera, plague, Spanish flu etc. have brought significant changes to

⁷ Richard Baldwin and Beatrice Weder di Mauro, eds. *Economics in the Time of COVID-19* (London: CEPR Press, 2020), 18.

⁸ Rizwan Rasheed, Asfra Rizwan, Hajra Javed, Faiza Sharif, and Asghar Zaidi, “Socio-Economic and Environmental Impacts of Covid-19 Pandemic in Pakistan-An Integrated Analysis,” *Environmental Science and Pollution Research* 28, 19926-19943 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-020-12070-7>.

⁹ Ibid.

socioeconomic conditions of states; even major political shifts, and wars could be noticed in post-epidemic eras in the past. Covid-19 too, has brought a major shift in socioeconomic dynamics globally. Understanding this shift is pivotal for effective foreign policy decision making of states. The shift in global socio-economic dynamics follow as:

Increased Focus over Public Health and Immunity

According to Hanming Fang, “The tradeoff between health and economy is real and needs to be discussed front and center”.¹⁰ Covid-19 has challenged states’ sustainability and preparedness regarding all kinds of threats, bringing more attention to public health and immunity. Public health has become a prime concern amidst this pandemic due to the vulnerability of the health care system. The medical staff including health workers, doctors, paramedics, and even ambulance staff and drivers meant to provide assistance, support and medical treatment also became prey to this deadly disease. This made human security more precarious issue for states. Given these vulnerabilities in health sector, providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), treating the affected and preferential vaccination of health workers has been prioritized at global level.

Now that vaccines are there, it is being expected that within couple of years, a major proportion of world population would be vaccinated. This entire situation has underscored the need to work on measures to deal with such unprecedented public health emergencies in future. The outbreak of Covid-19 has identified public health as a flash point and an important socioeconomic dynamic, previously overlooked – now states are paying special attention to public health and immunity knowing the cost of ignorance. Public health has emerged as a vital issue-area on foreign policy decision making agenda for states. This trend has ensured the extension of scope of foreign policy making into the field of public health which has become a common discussion point within and among states. Furthermore, putting foreign relations and diplomacy to use for dealing with similar medical or public health emergencies in future has evolved into the new normal.¹¹

¹⁰ Interview with Hanming Fang quoted by Kristen De Groot, “Covid-19 and Lesson for Public Health,” *Penn Today*, April 14, 2020, <https://penntoday.upenn.edu/news/covid-19-and-lessons-public-health>.

¹¹ African countries have been feeling neglected by the world for not being provided with support in immunization against Covid-19 which has resulted in the next variant starting from South Africa and now spreading across the world. According to a report by the Economist published in August 2021, Africa which is dependent on Covid-19 vaccines from abroad has “received only 103m doses for a population of almost 1.4bn.” “Why are African Countries Destroying Covid-19 Vaccines?” *The Economist*, August 12, 2021, <https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/>.

Productive Capacity Enhancement

Covid-19 has caused major economic crisis as forced work stoppages in form of overall or smart lockdown have left serious implications on economic sustainability of states¹² regardless of their socio-economic development. This economic crisis is a core cause of numerous challenges facing societies, reflecting lapses in states' policy decision making processes at all levels. The economic insecurity caused by Covid-19 has serious implications for states' wellbeing. Statecraft is therefore now more focused on building capacity in all areas of public good. Productive capacity¹³ is a fundamental component of socioeconomic growth, which contributes to economy on the whole. Productive capacity relates to and envelops all kind of activities including political support, industrial production, trade and commercial goods, agriculture related planning, and human capital development. Investing in health, education, skill development, social services and commodities, infrastructure and access to markets, all cumulatively enhance the productive capacity.

It has become imperative for states to explore all means for enhancing productive capacity, ranging from investing on human capital to enabling people deal with unexpected changes such as sudden rise in unemployment, especially in informal sectors (domestic help, labor, unskilled workers, daily wagers or people with no job security). Focus on productive capacity enhancement for people in a country has now become a cornerstone of a dynamic and efficient foreign policy decision making.

Shifting Socio-economic Trends

Covid-19 has brought major socioeconomic dynamism at global level and new trends are now replacing traditional ones. A significant change is the evolving tool-kit for performing routine activities like education, businesses, seminars and conferences. Interactions, which were once considered unimaginable to take place without physical presence of relevant people, have been replaced by electronic means and virtual platforms. Hybrid classes and business meetings, online shopping and economic activity, webinars and online events are being held while participants sit isolated in their homes explains this change. Since Covid-19, it has been accepted as new normal and such activities are being performed mechanically and electronically.

On one hand established businesses have regressed and several newly established ones have been swept off by recession and insolvency. On the other hand several opportunities have emerged in the shape of e-

¹² Khurram Iqbal and Muneeb Salman, "Impacts of Covid-19 on Comprehensive Security in Pakistan," *The Journal of Political Science* 38 (2020): 181-2.

¹³ Adam Szirmai, "Socio-economic Development," Youtube Video, June 15, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDr9u7xiY3Y>.

commerce trends. E-commerce involves less foot traffic and more electronic and cyber connectivity.¹⁴ It has opened up newer enterprises bringing dividends to initiatives like online shopping of food, groceries and things with longer shelf life. The pandemic has also rocketed both innovation and earning in cottage and regular industries like protective gears, masks, gloves, ventilators, pharmaceutical industry, to fulfill medical requirements, hygiene and preventive equipment. Lifestyle and recreation industry have seen novelties like vlogs related to cooking, travel, beauty, gym equipment etc., and content writing.

Number of traditional employment sectors have gone obsolete leaving space for innovations. The UK has observed massive number of startups, more than 407,510 taking grounds during 2020.¹⁵ It is a shift from manual to digital domain. Import and export would now be functionally related to IT and Computer infrastructure including supporting machines, computers, laptops, smart phones, bluetooth enabled ear-pods, headphones and microphones, smart boards, and other digital services. These will all eventually change the socioeconomic dynamics that is a determining force in foreign policy making.

Newfangled Domains for Research and Development Vis-à-vis Non-Traditional Security Challenges

Pandemic has induced a shift in traditional research and development agenda. The traditional research agenda was primarily focused on high politics. However, the pandemic has brought the non-traditional threats and related challenges to the forefront in research. Since the outbreak of pandemic, non-traditional security threats like infectious diseases and viral infections have been given weightage, as strategies and policies are being formulated to deal with them. Besides public health and hygiene, immunology and epidemiology, and several other non-traditional security challenges directly or indirectly linked to pandemic have got prominence. These include food security, hunger and poverty, entrepreneurship, training and skill development, utilizing untapped resources to enhance economic activity, psychological issues, vulnerability of various segments of population, water insecurity caused by depleting fresh water resources, and environmental degradation's adverse effects on human existence. Dealing with all these domains needs research and development.

¹⁴ "Why Some New Businesses are Springing up during Covid-19," *Financial Post*, May 05, 2020, <https://financialpost.com/personal-finance/taxes/why-some-new-businesses-are-springing-up-during-covid-19>.

¹⁵ Aisha Zahid, "Covid-19: 'Record Number of Businesses' Predicted as UK Comes out of Coronavirus Lock Down," *Sky News*, March 06, 2021, 2021, <https://news.sky.com/story>.

Similarly, there are opportunities having economic potential like the wider business of healthcare technologies, equipment to provide health related assistance, online medical appointments for basic diagnosis, e-pharmaceutical supplies, boosting of fintech (financial technology) industry involving digital money (like ethereum, cryptocurrencies, non-fungible tokens (NFTs)), and block-chain mechanisms as basis of digital economy. Sustainable progress in all these sectors requires effective policy making as developing states are not attuned to these innovative ideas. Developing states need to learn to deal with these emergent non-traditional challenges and opportunities in the socioeconomic domain and might lag behind if policies for ensuring inclusiveness are not properly placed. Thus the need for newer knowledge is the key to manage such challenges and so shall these dynamics be reflected in foreign policy decision making.

Enhanced Role of Non-State Actors

One important shift ever more visible globally is enhanced role of non-state actors like multinational companies and global tech, shipping and pharmaceutical giants. These actors are heavily investing into digital marketplaces, pharmaceutical businesses, and related logistics like extended supply chains or cold supply chains through modified shipping industries. International organizations and their humanitarian efforts aimed at providing assistance and support to conflict or disaster affected areas is also a case in point. Simultaneously, there emerged another impression of IOs becoming a part of international competition or geopolitics as evident from US allegations of WHO's being a Chinese stooge. Additionally, the role of transnational organised criminal groups is also increasing and another dimension has been added to their illegal, undocumented businesses, e.g., smuggling and trafficking. Due to border closure or lockdowns, some areas faced shortage of commodities which provided opportunity to organised criminal groups. Challenge of these non-state actors has reinforced the role of socioeconomic dynamism on foreign policy decision making.

Analysis of Foreign Policy Decision Making of USA and China in the Pandemic Era

The outbreak of Covid-19 has put the state-system's sustainability to test. At the same time, it has given world several opportunities as well. In age of globalization where the world has been connected, the epidemic too has gone globalized and infectious viruses permeate the borders no matter how far they are located on the map, turning a localized outbreak into a pandemic. The most evident impact of pandemic has been on states' resolve to fight against disease and for this purpose, almost all states have

been seen re-formulating their public policies, i.e., domestic policy and foreign policy.

Since neorealism talks about structural pressures coming from international system making states behave accordingly, the process of foreign policy decision making during pandemic has proved an outside-in approach in which pandemic and its consequences shape states' behaviour. The things have gone worse given the absence of any regulatory authority at international level which even reflected anarchy during this epidemiological crisis. Subsequently states need each other to deal with challenges emerging from Covid-19; effective contribution of diplomats matters "to drive international collaboration and data sharing."¹⁶ Foreign policies of states are a core instrument to communicate and extend these cooperative objectives to others and thus encouraging all states to realize the significance of cooperation through revising their foreign policies. For studying foreign policy decision making during and post pandemic eras, Kenneth Waltz' levels of analysis approach is helpful to understand nature of decision making, through viewing the process using all three images (levels).

The first image, individual, is the most complex level of analysis. It involves multitude of facets and approaches to interpret human behaviour, and to understand reasons due to which individuals behave in a certain way. From family background, including educational and financial history, to psychology and cognitive behaviour, to impact of diseases, medications, addictions, and several others are to be brought into analysis to establish personality of individuals who have role in foreign policy decision making. Their decisions are reflection of their overall personality and cognitive behaviour. Predominantly the US decision making under President Trump depicts the role of first image.

In Pandemic's first year, approximately 27 million COVID-19 cases were documented, and at least 471,000 people lost their lives in the USA; it is believed as undercounted tallies.¹⁷ As soon as Covid-19 outbreak occurred, American sentiment about Trump's poor role and incompetence to handle crisis became intense. This was because instead of taking timely measures, Trump started giving misinformed statements regarding safety measures to stop spread of disease. He also encouraged people to not use face mask or hygiene care which caused careless attitude in public regarding pandemic which made the USA as one of the worst hit countries.

¹⁶ Bill Gates, "Responding to Covid-19: A Once-in-a-Century Pandemic?" *The New England Journal of Medicine*, February 28, 2020, <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full>.

¹⁷ John Haltiwanger and Aylin Woodward, "Damning Analysis of Trump's Pandemic Response Suggested 40% of US COVID-19 Deaths could have been Avoided," *Business Insider*, February 11, 2021, <https://www.businessinsider.com/>.

Since Trump was skeptical and distrustful of World Health Organization (WHO), he even threatened to stop its funding on account of being favourable to China.¹⁸ That skepticism hindered rationality-based decision making and the USA could not take appropriate measures to deal with challenges of the pandemic. Trump's focus had been on blaming China for spreading virus, and irrational blaming of WHO had put masses in opposite camp. The shortcoming of Trump's decision making left the USA in trouble, which further reflected that individual incompetence can have serious implication for states.

This implies that the role of first image in fighting Covid-19 and effectively structuring post pandemic foreign policy to deal with unprecedented challenges requires intense pondering. As Gates stated about leaders' two responsibilities: to "solve the immediate problems and keep it from happening again", it is leadership who has to take responsibility to make right decisions at the right time and to include state machinery and public sentiment in his considerations.¹⁹ Therefore, it can be established that first image can be useful in foreign policy decision making if individual approach could be regulated or guided through some mechanism.

The state (as second image) and foreign policy decision making are inseparable, rather they are directly related to each other. The role of second image is core of statecraft, and statecraft is highly dependent on effective foreign policy. This decision making is one prime responsibility of states through which states establish and maintain their foreign relations. It is done as a coherent process based on few major factors like: type of government or political culture of state, actors involved in decision making, stake holders and their influence over policy making, and role and preferences of different departments and organizations. Domestic factors fundamentally determine the features of foreign policy of the state. The foreign policies are receptive to influences coming from ideology, geography, culture, nature of government, political/opposition parties, parliament, civil and military bureaucracies, and interest groups from domestic as well as international system.

When pandemic broke out, states' policy decision making was questioned everywhere. It came under immense pressure not only from international environment, but inside pressures too were difficult to handle. States' capabilities in terms of military, economic, or political influence went useless in terms of the capability to deal with non-traditional challenges, i.e., Covid-19. The unpreparedness and the level of responsiveness to the challenge became Rorschach test for states. Even USA had to face questions regarding its late response or irresponsible

¹⁸ "Donald Trump Threatens to Suspend US Funding to WHO," *Teller Report*, April 08, 2020, <https://www.tellerreport.com>.

¹⁹ Gates, "Responding to Covid-19."

decision making about treatment and precautions. The Trump administration eliminated big sums of money meant for health and global-disease fighting in Spring 2018 along with suspending 'Pandemic Response Chain of Command'. US \$30 million Complex Crises Fund of government and US \$15 billion of national health budget were disregarded too, whereas global-disease fighting operational budgets of the CDC, NSC, DHS, and HHS were cut down.²⁰

All these budget eliminations and dismantled system of pandemic response were criticized by people which decreased operational preparedness of the country quite significantly. The wrong policy decision making left the US administration in murky waters at domestic front, and its citizens paid heavy price for its poor choices. On other hand, China which was origin of pandemic was praised due to its fast and effective strategic response, including 'placing some 100 million citizens under lockdown, shutting down a national holiday, building enormous quarantine hospitals in days' time, and ramping up 24-hour manufacturing of medical equipment'.²¹ Not only that, but for rest of world, it extended help and support to handle the crisis.

China's humanitarian aid to Italy - when it was facing wrath of Covid-19 and its EU and its partners were reluctant to sell protective gear and life-saving medical equipment - was one example of China's robust foreign policy. It not only brought global acknowledgement of China's soft power; but also shifted Italy's public opinion in China's favour.²² After successfully developing its vaccine, China launched it on lower cost in comparison to those by other countries. This can also be seen as Chinese attempt to use its soft power as essential approach to reinforce its image as an efficient decision maker, impressing others. China's foreign policy since Covid-19 breakout has not only reflected its global responsibility through "pandemic diplomacy", but has also created economic opportunities through increasing its production of required medical equipment and drugs which proved a supporting factor to its population in the times of economic crisis.

Comprehensively, it is the state which has responsibility and skills to make foreign policy based on national interests. Particularly after one year, states should have rearranged their priorities and this reorganization would task the foreign policy decision makers to act profusely now in post pandemic era to repair the damages keeping in view the recent experiences. Second image, the state, has immense role to play in this

²⁰ Laurie Garrett, "Trump Has Sabotaged America's Coronavirus Response," *Foreign Policy*, January 31, 2020, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/01/31>.

²¹ Garrett, "Trump Has Sabotaged America's Coronavirus Response."

²² British Council, "Covid-19 and Soft Power," August 2020, <https://www.britishcouncil.org/research-policy-insight/insight-articles/covid-19-and-soft-power>.

dimension, and foreign policy decision making must address all socio-economic and non-traditional security challenges in this age.

The level of international system is third image, also a tool of analysis for this research. On the whole, it is dominant power(s) which shape international system and try to run world affairs according to that order. But the pandemic has exposed a major faultline within international system making it more anarchic and conflict prone. This image, as discussed earlier has capability to act as a methodological tool to analyse cause or impact of policy at interface of first two images with international system. Soon after the dawn of new century, world entered into difficult phase of violence, terrorism, wars, and geopolitics by and large, but by end of first decade of new century, international system was showing signs of imbalance of power. Soon features of power transition started getting clear proving Organski right in his approach. Organski had predicted about rise of China and based the power transition theory on this proposition in 1958. Organski deliberated about dynamics of war between the USA and China as result of transitioning power from declining USA toward rising People's Republic of China as challenger.²³ Kim and Gates establish that Organski has linked power transition with Chinese strategy to work on its internal development, and that 'international system is decisively shaped by the dominant nation, the hegemon',²⁴ and this is the point from where conflict arises. The USA which had established international system under its order after the end of Cold War has felt challenged by China's continuous yet strategic rise in economy, politics and military, which are influencing states in international system. It took another turn when China got blamed for the outbreak of epidemic, and then Trump accused China to vie for influence over WHO to neutralize the US-role from organization. That portrayed true picture of anarchy within system as the third image, and the way it can disseminate conflict and competition over non-traditional security challenges.

Conclusion

Covid-19 pandemic has adversely affected world at large. One big insinuation has been the shift in socio-economic dynamics which are an unavoidable factor determining the effective foreign policy decision-making. Global socio-economic dynamics have been varied covering different dimensions. Among these, five significant dynamics have been identified for this research: 'increased focus over public health and immunity,' 'productive capacity enhancement,' 'shifting socioeconomic trends,' 'newfangled domains for research and development vis-à-vis non-

²³ A. F. K. Organski, *World Politics* 2nd edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), 338-76.

²⁴ Woosang Kim and Scott Geoffrey Gates, "Power Transition Theory and the Rise of China," *International Area Studies Review* 18, no. 3 (2015): 219-26.

traditional challenges,' and 'enhanced role of non-state actors.' The foreign policy decision making in the right direction to attain national interests and objectives is inescapable for states, and it would only be possible if identified socio-economic dynamics could be incorporated with the right image ascertained to play leading role in the process, which is state, the second image for all the right reasons.

Foreign policy is multi-dimensional as it not only deals with diplomacy but also includes issues involving economy, trade and commerce, culture and religion, education, politics and many more. Knowing their own strengths and weaknesses, states decide their course of action and adopt foreign policy according to their needs. State as second image has ability to focus, evaluate, and structure its timely response related to significant issues, which is known as statecraft. If state loses its focus and does not perform its responsibility effectively at the right time, it will be on losing side on power quotient of the world. Nevertheless, second image is at a pivotal position in foreign policy decision making which needs to be reinforced in the process. This pivot balances first image, international system's anarchy and the defective approach of third image: it brings in individuals too, whether leaders, small group members, people from bureaucracies, and other stake holders.

The pandemic as a non-traditional challenge has become a reason for further deliberations over dealing with unprecedented challenges. This has empowered states to make effective choices while formulating foreign policies aimed not only to maximize gains, but to adopt strategies which enable them to handle the most uncertain conditions and unprecedented challenges. This is time to reinforce second image to sustain the external pressures of international system and to counter nuisances of individuals having stakes in foreign policy decision making. Post pandemic foreign policy particularly needs increased role of states, and reconfiguration of policy objectives too would be vital to deal with multiple socioeconomic challenges unfolding with great magnitude. Without reinforcing second image, states would remain vulnerable to these non-traditional security challenges.

