



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Name of Student

Course Title

Date

International Relations

Question One: The Formation ASEAN

The establishment of the Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) took place during the year 1997.[1] Southeast Asia was experiencing the economic crisis as well as other political challenges that significantly impacted the stability of the countries within the same region.[2] The issues of economic crisis, as well as the significant political challenges, has led to the creation of the organization that would allow them to consolidate their position at the international level.

This discussion is about the use of multiple international relations theories to offer the explanation as to why ASEAN decided to pursue regional integration. Four critical theories are used to justify the ASEAN integration. Major approaches in the international relations namely neorealism, constructivism, neoliberalism and the global society approach can offer critical information on the reasons why ASEAN adopted the regional integration.[3] Notably, all the theories of the international relations play a critical role in providing justification for the conduct of states in a more rational manner. The different paradigms that offer the explanation on the ASEAN's development also suggest the reasons that help in validating the sustainability of neorealism.

According to the theory, one of the significant driving forces for countries to come together is the ability to take care of their interests at the international level. Individuals who believe in neorealist theory argue that on the international level, activities of various nations are characterized by anarchy. In the presence of extensive conflict, for instance, when a region is experiencing adverse political strife, the countries involved will remain less stable.[4] In any case, the establishment of ASEAN was viewed as one of the major ways through which the Asian countries could address their issues by getting some guarantee on their security. Again, the integration according to neorealist view helps in facilitating cooperation of the countries not only within the political sector but also within other critical areas such as the economy and thus can help them to retain stability in several aspects.

The neoliberalism approach challenges the idea that institutions are vulnerable within the international system. In any case, neoliberalism argues that the states should have the power to cooperate with one another despite the fact that there is anarchy within the international system.[5] Through the influence of norms and institutions, states can achieve proper cooperation among

themselves; for instance, the ASEAN can help the states to acquire the economic and political strength that makes them look strong in the international arena.

From the constructivism perspective, states tend to focus on the role, norms, and ways through which they can build their identities. The direction that a country takes to define their way in which they conduct their activities is significantly influenced by the manner majority of the leaders within key influential posts (mostly political offices) see the entire international system. In relation to the formation of ASEAN, the countries that are members of the organization focus on the notion of championing common goal and identity.[6] Nonetheless, the ASEAN has remained united over the years because the countries are driven by the common agenda. In the modern society, ASEAN has managed to overcome certain issues such as insecurity and economic difficulties. Based on the views provided by different theoretical approaches, especially the neorealism theory, it is more likely that members of the ASEAN will pursue matters that can enable them to remain united in the future. The main reason why deeper integration should work is because of the sense of security that individual countries receive as members of the organization.

Question Two: Globalization and “Erosion of the State”

Globalization is one of the fundamental areas of concern among many countries. The concept of globalization has been a topic of discussion in many fields.[7] It has attracted several researchers to look on the matter from the different standpoint. In the study of international relations, investigators seem to pay a lot of attention to globalization and seek to establish whether globalization is influencing the nation-state.

Political factors related to globalization play the significant role in undermining the establishment of the nation-state. The expansion of globalization across the world is one of the reasons why there is a weakening of the sovereign status of many countries. Notably, nation-states usually have the legal authority to handle matters that are international ways that they best understand. In any case, the fact that a country has the full authority to conduct its activities, for instance, to make choices in the political direction, is an indication of sovereignty. One of the critical things that happened over the years due to globalization is the rise of various organizations at the international level that perform important roles in matters of governance. The organizations play significant roles across multiple sectors such as economic, cultural and even technological. This has the capacity of undermining the roles of the nation-state. In such cases, the international organizations are allowed to conduct specific government functions, which undermines the potential of various countries to have independent nation-state functions.

In the modern society, many international organizations have acquired the power to develop specific policies in multiple areas of the economy. The globalization factors have influenced the establishment of the organizations such as the World Trade Organization, World Bank, The United Nations and European Union.[8] Notably, some of the organizations have played the roles that would otherwise be the functions of the state. Intervention in areas of regional conflict as well as the disarmament are among the activities of the international groups that appear to undermine the existence of Nation-State across the world.[9] In some cases, the international organization can develop certain policies that regulate the level of government involvement in specific areas of interest. Apparently, the power of international organization also seems to be increasing in terms of managing various affairs that were previously under the direct control of the nation-state, for instance, peacekeeping and weapons inspection.

From the economic viewpoint, globalization has forced countries to engage in foreign investments as well as use some leading technologies to change their industrial structure in multiple ways.[10] At the domestic level, the country controls fundamental areas of the economy through designing and adopting policies that meet their goals without having to operate under the instruction of other

international bodies. Notably, because of the globalization, many organizations at the global level have acquired the specific economic role that seems to undermine the foundation of the nation-state. To some extent, numerous countries have reduced the level of control on matters of domestic economy because of the globalization effects. In fact, the idea of globalization emphasizes the concept of the market economy that focuses more on the concept of the free market. The organization such as World Trade Organizations has laid a lot of emphasis on managerial authorities that undermine the foundation of the nation-state in many ways. One of the points that seem more convincing is the expansion of the political responsibilities among various international organizations. Once the transnational bodies acquire some political responsibilities, they can develop policies that undermine direct involvement of a country on various matters.

Scenario Three: The Success of Social Movements at International Level

The transnational social movements and advocacy network are one of the key players in the international relations.[11] The activities of those particular groups significantly influence the way in which various countries conduct specific actions on the international stage. One of the critical areas where transnational social groups provide a lot of benefits includes expanding accountability on how leaders participate in the politics of a country and even beyond the specified borders.

Notably, influencing the government to change their stand regarding particular issues is critical because it can ensure that the country engages only in activities that uphold the widespread interest at the international level.[12] Besides, advocacy and transnational movements can ensure that all the individual states involved at the international level have the capacity to increase their level of accountability. During the year 1975, for instance, the Soviet Union adopted accommodative policies towards its neighbors through citing the Helsinki Accord.[13] Several scholars have extensively argued that Helsinki Accord is one of the initiatives that was developed through the effort of transnational social movements with the aim of promoting human rights.

The transnational network and social movement contributed to developing proper behavior among states officials as well as ensuring that policy change takes places within several areas of operation of the state.[14] In any case, the way in which countries respond when there is a political crisis in neighboring countries depends on several factors. One of the fundamental elements that influence how countries react to any related situation is based on findings that were published by advocacy groups. It is significant to take action after evaluating independent reports before intervening in affairs that are beyond the domestic boundaries.[15] Again, the effective strategies used by the advocacy groups at the international level, support the empowerment of people from particular groups such as professionals in various fields. The opinion presented by special envoys will, therefore, help to shape the new political system on the international stage.

To summarize, the transnational social movement has the capacity of promoting the goals and policies that encourage the development of political space. The advocacy groups (social movements) have played a critical role in ensuring that there is the expansion on matters of transparency and new political opportunities that help countries within the international stages to improve the welfare of the domestic population as well as cooperation among various countries thus promoting harmony.

Scenario Four: Clash of Civilizations

The basic argument of Huntington is that conflicts are likely to occur thus separating civilizations. He uses some broad concepts which are effective in understanding what actually civilization is and its impact on the society. These concepts include language, history, religion, customs, as well as institutions. The use of these concepts is regarded as the most important differentiator of civilization.[16]

Conflicts are likely to occur along cultural fault lines which have an impact on civilization. This argument can be linked to the conflicts which have risen in Russia and Ukraine and among the Shi'a and Sunnis in Iraqi and Syria. There is evidence of cultural connections among these communities, but they have been separated by various aspects (fault lines in this case) which include mentality or ethnic differences. [17]

Development can be hard in an environment that is full of conflicts. [18] Huntington's thesis can be very dangerous especially in a situation whereby the aim is to establish peace between conflicting countries. According to Huntington, the fault line that exists between civilizations and differences in political ideologies had an impact on the general life quality.[19] Civilization had different values on the existing relationships between God and Man, husband and wife, as well as differing views which are directly related to the importance of rights as well as responsibilities, liberty, and authority. [20] There is an aspect, which was introduced by Huntington, and is known as civilization identity. The civilization identity focused on providing an attachment and sense of belonging between two or more individuals.

Finally, even though there have been a variety of arguments connected to the issue of western civilization and conflicts, it would be better to understand the origin of the situation that can be seen between Russia and Ukraine and among the Shi'a and Sunnis in Iraqi and Syria. Having an understanding of these aspects is important because it will help in the process of providing a lasting solution to these types of conflicts. The "clash of civilization" by Huntington acts as an eye opener to the potentials that exist in civilized nations and what needs to be done in order to end conflicts. As proposed by Huntington, it is possible to deal with that through strengthening the fault lines that exist between people from different cultural backgrounds. This will also help in strengthening the ties that exist between various individuals.

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5. Ibid., 86.

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