

Question:- What are the changing dimensions of security? How they vary from classical concept of international security? Write its strengths and weaknesses for nation states?

1) Introduction:-

The concept of security has undergone a profound transformation in the 21st century, evolving from a state-centric, militarized framework to a multidimensional, human-centric approach. The changing dimensions of security go beyond traditional military threats to address non-traditional and transnational challenges such as climate change, cyberattacks, terrorism etc. This broader approach enables nations to address diverse threats, it also introduces new complexities and trade-offs, redefining the role of states in ensuring security at both national and global levels.

2) Defining the concept of "Security" :-

Security is defined as :-

"Security is about the ability of states and their societies to maintain their independence or functional integrity."

(Barry Posen)

3) Changing dimensions of Security :-

The concept of security has evolved significantly over time.

3.1) Traditional Security :-

Realism focuses on the state as the primary actor, emphasizing military power, sovereignty, and national defense. Security is seen as protection from external aggression and threats in an

anarchic international system.

Example:-

While non-traditional threats are gaining prominence, realist ideas remain relevant in addressing conventional conflicts, such as Russia-Ukraine war in 2022, which underscores the importance of territorial defense.

3.2) Human Security :-

"Liberalism" expands the concept of security to include the protection of individuals and communities. Human security focuses on economic, environmental, health and food security, promoting global cooperation and multilateralism.

Example :-

Human security is increasingly prioritized in global frameworks like UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which address poverty, health and environmental sustainability.

3-3) Environmental Security:-

“Constructivism” emphasizes the role of ideas, norms and identity in shaping security concepts. Environmental security is framed as a collective global threat, requiring shared norms and cooperative solutions.

Example:-

The Paris Climate Agreement (2015) reflect constructivist principles, as it seeks to establish shared norms and commitments among states to combat climate change.

3-4) Cyber Security:-

“Constructivism” highlights framing of cyberattacks as a security threat that has redefined the role of states and private corporations in global security.

Example :-

Cyberattacks like the 2021 Colonial Pipeline ransomware incident disrupted critical infrastructure.

3.5) Economic Security :-

"Critical Theory" critiques traditional security frameworks for ignoring economic inequality and structural injustices. Economic security emphasizes stable access to resources - jobs and fair trade systems.

Example :-

The 2008 global financial crisis demonstrated how the economic instability can undermine national and international security by exacerbating unemployment and social unrest.

4) Differences between classical concept & changing dimensions of security:-

Aspect	Classical Concept	Changing Dimensions
Focus	State sovereignty	Individual, societal and global security
Primary threats	External military aggression	Climate change, cyber attacks, pandemics
Theoretical lens	Realism, balance of powers	Liberalism, Constructivism, Securitization
Key Actors	Nation- States	States, NGOs, International organizations, private sector
Example	Cold War arms race	Paris Climate Agreement, COVID-19 response

5) Strengths of Changing Dimensions of Security for Nation-States -

Following are some strengths of the changing dimensions of security for nation states:-

Comprehensive Threat Mitigation

Global Cooperation

Enhanced Human Security

Early Warning and Prevention

Adaptability to New Challenges

5.1) Comprehensive Threat Mitigation:-

Nations can address diverse and interconnected threats, ensuring broader societal well-being.

e.g., Climate action reduces risks of migration and conflict over resources.

5.2) Global Cooperation:-

Security promotes multilateralism, enabling states to pool resources and expertise to tackle transnational threats.

e.g., International coalition against terrorism, such as the Global Coalition to defeat ISIS.

5.3) Enhanced Human Security:-

The changing dimensions of security focus on individual well-being, strengthens societal resilience and stability.

e.g., Investments in healthcare and education improve pandemic preparedness.

5.4) Early Warning & Prevention

Broader security frameworks encourage proactive measures to address risks before they escalate.

e.g., Disaster risk reduction initiatives for climate-related crisis.

5.5) Adaptability to New Challenges:-

Security enables states to respond to emerging threats like cybercrime and hybrid warfare.

e.g., NATO's enhanced cyber-security initiatives.

6) Defects of Changing Dimensions of Security for Nation-States:-

There are some defects also in the changing dimensions of the security for nation states. These are described as follows:-

6.1) Resource Constraints:-

Expanding the scope of security places financial and technological burdens, especially on developing nations.

e.g., Many African nations lack resources to address both traditional defense and climate security.

6.2) Coordination Challenges:-

Multilateral efforts can be slowed by conflicting interests among states and stakeholders.

e.g., Disputes over funding in Paris Climate Agreement.

6.3) Dilution of Military Focus:-

Overemphasis on non-traditional threats may weaken preparedness for traditional military conflicts.

e.g., Russia's invasion of Ukraine exposed vulnerabilities in Europe's

military readiness.

6.4) Erosion of Sovereignty:-

International norms and frameworks may infringe on a nation's autonomy.
e.g., Cybersecurity regulations imposed by global organizations may conflict with national interests.

6.5) Potential for Over-Securitization:-

Expanding the definition of security risks framing social and economic issues as security threats, leading to authoritarian measures.

e.g., Immigration policies in Europe framed as a security issue.

7) Conclusion:-

The changing dimensions of security represent a critical evolution in addressing the

multifaceted threats of modern world. These dimensions offer nations the tools to tackle complex challenges like climate change, pandemic etc. However, it also introduces new complexities such as resource constraints and risk of over-securitization etc. Innovative and collaborative approaches are needed to ensure sustainable peace and stability in globalized era.

Concise your conclusion

Good

You have got potential

Good luck!