

Q) Discuss the main principles of constructivism in IR. Give a comparative analysis of constructivism and realism with examples.

## INTRODUCTION:

The theories of constructivism and realism are the great debates of International Relations. These both are state-level theories which explain the nature of interactions on the state level in global context. Constructivism has a more post-positivist approach, while realism has roots in a conventional and positivist approach. There are certain similarities and dissimilarities between them, which will be discussed further.

## INTRODUCTION TO CONSTRUCTIVISM

Constructivism is the 4<sup>th</sup> Great Debate of IR and it is a state-level theory. This explains the social construct of international society rather than focusing on structural mechanism. Nicholas Onuf coined the term "constructivism". But



Alexander Wendt wrote an article in 1992: "Anarchy is what makes of it: the Social Construction of Power Politics" laid the grounds for theoretical development of constructivism.

Constructivism emphasizes on that, "There is neither Anarchy, nor cooperation, there is only one reality, that is construct". This indicates that the international structure is not based anarchic and nor based upon cooperation. The only factor that leads to ~~cooperation~~ relations is "construct", that means the identity based upon norms, development, values and ideational power.

## WORLD AS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT:

Alexander Wendt explains the social construct by illustrating an example about the nuclear threat imposed by other states. The 500 British nuclear weapons are considered United Kingdom's.



less destructive or threat to United States than 5 nuclear weapons of North Korea.

Add realism first

Give a main headings of comparison

The only factors that shapes <sup>reality</sup> the perception is by their historical interactions and actions.

## CONCEPT OF ANARCHY AND VIEW POINTS ON IDENTITY IN CONSTRUCTIVISM:

The concept of Anarchy in constructivism is not upheld, rather it says that state's behaviour changes over their change in ideas, values, norms and developments. Therefore, the international structure shapes respectively constructivism states that

Furthermore, the behaviour of a state depends upon its identity. For instance, the small-state focuses on its survival, while the large-state focuses on dominating global politics, influence on global economy and attain military power capabilities.



# INTRODUCTION TO REALISM:

Neo-Realism is a state-level theory and it is rooted in 3<sup>rd</sup> great Debate of IR. Realism approach is positivism and it emphasizes on the international anarchic structure. It states that the international anarchic structure leads to maximization of power.

## COMPARASION OF CONSTRUCTIVISM AND REALISM:

### BASIC IDEA

In neo-realism, the persuate of power is due to the international system is anarchic and attainment of maximum power is essential for the survival of the state.

In constructivism, the factor which shapes the actor's relations is its identity, norms, interactions with other states. These can be changed by changing the beliefs.



## EXAMPLE

For instance, the power maximization of North Korea is threat to US. To overcome this threat, US will increase its power capability, in realist perspective

For instance, the power attaining of North Korea is threatening to US, while UK's power gaining isn't threatening. In constructivism, it is the matter of perception.

## INTERNATIONAL ROLE

The power maximization leads to international hierarchical structure, which will eventually disrupt the equal capabilities of the states. ~~These~~ This unbalance of power will foster polarity. Thus, the states will focus on power maximization to secure their national interests.

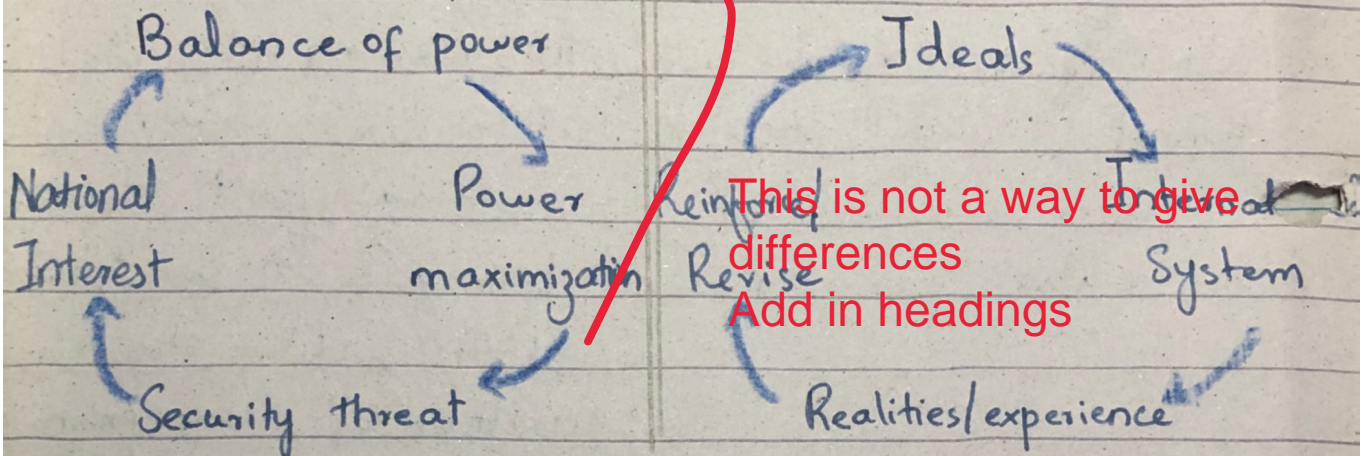
The ideas, beliefs, values, norms, actions, interactions, developments and historical identity shapes a state's identity. This identity shapes the global relations. These factor can also be changed, so does their international relations.



## CYCLE OF IDEA

Loop of vicious power cycle

Iterative loop of construct



## CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, it can be said that, ~~there are~~ the principles of constructivism supports the state's behaviour and declines the international structure. However, there are few similarities between realism and constructivism, these are: these both theories consider state as an actor rather than individual's behaviour. Thus, the theories of IR shapes the perspective to analyze international relations.