

Q. NO1.

What are the essential differences between the Liberal Internationalist and Realist theories?

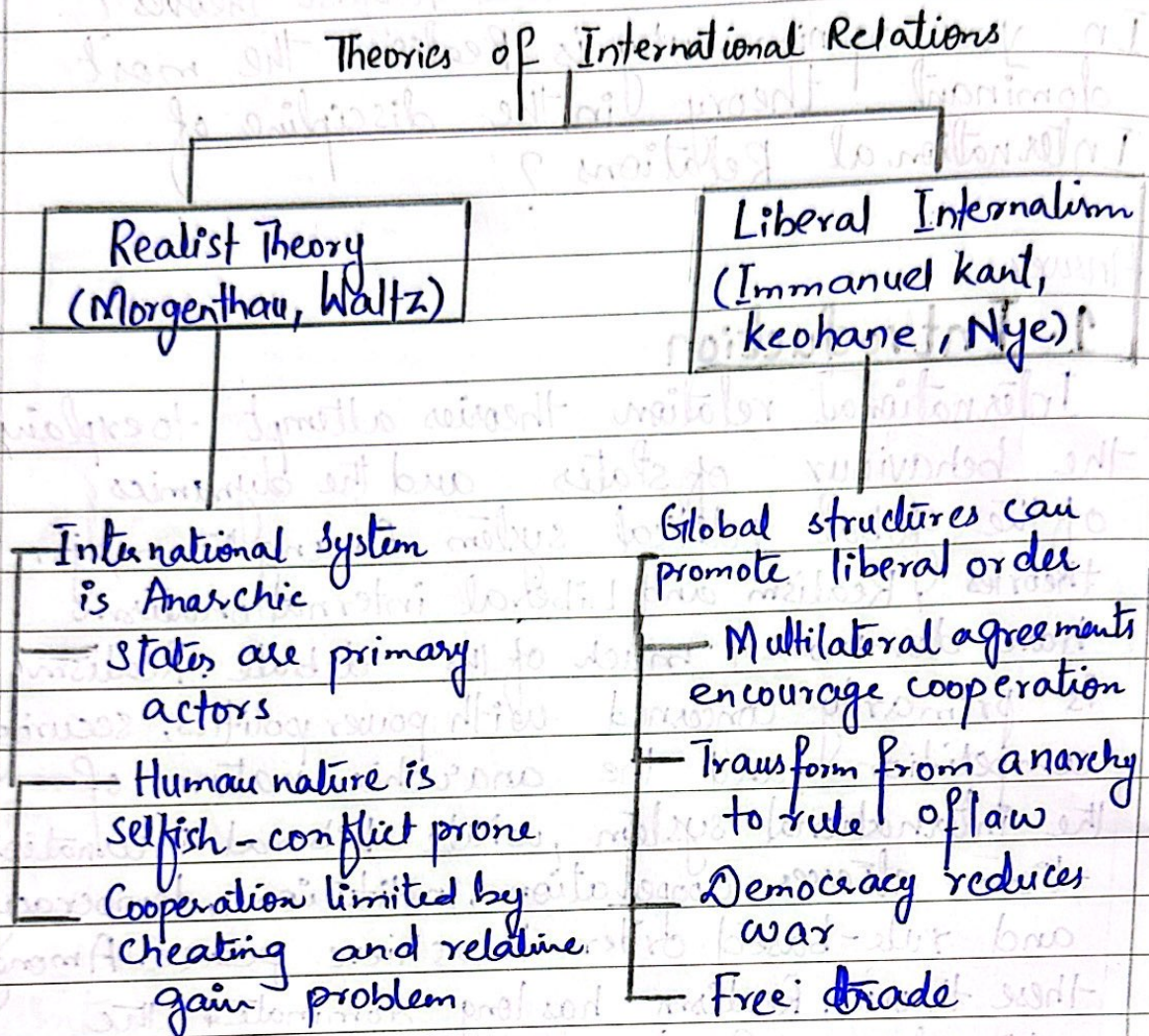
In your opinion, why is Realism the most dominant theory in the discipline of International Relations?

Answer:

1. Introduction

International relation theories attempt to explain the behaviour of states and the dynamics of the global political system. Among the major theories, Realism and Liberal internationalism have dominated much of the debate. Realism is primarily concerned with power politics, security competition, and the anarchic nature of the international system, while Liberal internationalism stresses cooperation, institutions, democracy, and rule-based order to achieve peace. Among these theories, Realism has long dominated the discipline of international relations, such as it provides a practical and historical accurate explanation of power politics, conflicts, and security dilemmas that have repeatedly shaped world affairs.

2. Overview of Liberal Internationalist and Realist Theories.



3. Essential differences between Liberal Internationalist and Realist Theories

3.1. Understanding of Human Nature

Liberal internationalism assumes that human are capable of cooperation and moral progress, believing that diplomacy, education, and international law can lead to perpetual peace. Realism, as explained by Hans Morgenthau, assumes that international politics is a struggle of power, rooted in

human nature that is self-interested and power seeking, making conflict a permanent feature of global relations.

3.2 Primary Actors in International Politics

Liberal internationalism emphasizes the role of international organizations and non-state actors, along side states, in shaping global politics. Realism, by contrast, considers sovereign states as only the central and decisive authority, holding ultimate power over matters of war, peace, and national interest.

3.3 Views of the International System

According to Keohane and Nye, globalization has increased interdependence among states, compelling them to focus on economic, environmental, and collective issues instead of security. This is the view of Liberal internationalist theories. ~~to~~ Waltz, representing Realism, argues that the structure of the international system is anarchic, compelling states to focus on security and self-defense strategies for survival.

3.4 Conflict vs Cooperation

Liberal internationalism is optimistic about international cooperation, as illustrated in the Prisoner's Dilemma, where institutions and agreements can help states overcome mistrust and achieve common gains. Realism, particularly Neo realism, argues that cooperation is

fragile, due to fear of cheating, lack of trust, and security dilemmas, making power struggles and arm races more frequent.

3.5 Relative Gains vs. Absolute Gains

Liberals believe that absolute gains; mutual benefits for all states, should guide international relations, promoting prosperity and stability. Realists emphasize relative gains, where states only cooperate if they do not risk another state gaining more power, making cooperation rare.

4. Why Realism is the Most Dominant Theory in International Relation?

4.1. Pragmatic Approach Explaining Power Politics and Conflict

According to Hans Morgenthau, international politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power. States act in their national interest, which is defined in terms of power and survival. For instance, the arms race continues without despite various treaties and UN limitations because states always fear other will cheat or gain advantage. This explains why cooperation remains fragile, making Realism a practical lens for understanding international politics.

4.2. Realism in 21st century

The realist theory remains dominant in 21st century, as it explains modern day conflicts more convincingly than other theories. States continue to prioritise sovereignty, national interest, and military power over international norms.

For instance, The Russian invasion of Ukraine shows how Russia, as offensive realist like Mearsheimer argue, acted to protect its national interest despite international laws. The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict demonstrate that state still resort to military force over disputes despite global pressure. In Syria, Russia and China vetoed UN resolutions, proving that powerful states and power politics dominates International Relations.

4.3 Limitations of International Institutions

Realism dominates because it exposes the limits of international institution, which depend on state interest and lack of power to enforce cooperation. The Syrian conflict, where Russia and China used veto powers to block UN action, illustrates how power politics overrides institutional efforts for peace.

5. Conclusion

International Relation theories explain state behaviour in global politics, with Realism and Liberalism being the most influential. Their core differences lie in human nature, main actors, system structure, cooperation

prospects, and gains distribution. While liberalism emphasizes cooperation and absolute gains, Realism focuses on power, conflict, and survival in an anarchic world. Ongoing conflicts like Ukraine, Syria, and Nagorno-Karabakh prove that power politics dominates global affairs, making realism the most dominant theory in International Relations.

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5. Conclusion

International Relations theories explain state behaviour in global politics. While Realism and Liberalism being the most influential, their core differences lie in human nature. Realism's anarchic structure, where states pursue self-interest, contrasts with Liberalism's cooperative structure, where states seek mutual gains.