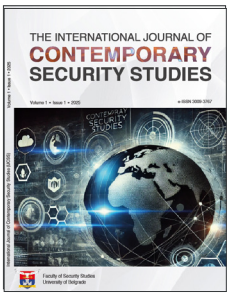
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Article

The Impact of Political Regimes on Foreign Policy Strategies: A Comparative Study of Democracies and Authoritarian States

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how political regimes influence foreign policy strategies by comparing democracies and authoritarian states. Democracies tend to emphasize transparency, public participation, and the promotion of human rights, producing policies that reflect domestic values and international norms. In contrast, authoritarian regimes prioritize regime survival, strategic stability, and centralized decision-making, often resulting in more assertive or opportunistic foreign policies. By employing a comparative qualitative approach, this research analyzes case studies from selected democratic and authoritarian countries. The study collected data from policy documents, diplomatic records, and semi-structured interviews with foreign policy experts. The study identifies distinct patterns in foreign policy formulation and implementation: democracies typically follow consistent policies aligned with international norms, while authoritarian regimes tend to adopt pragmatic or confrontational strategies shaped by internal power structures and external geopolitical dynamics. The findings underscore that regime type significantly influences foreign policy, with democracies showing greater adaptability and norm compliance, while authoritarian states exhibit more strategic, stability-driven decision-making. This research advances understanding of how domestic political structures shape foreign policy outcomes and offers insights for predicting state behavior in the international arena.

KEYWORDS

Political regimes; foreign policy; democracies; authoritarian states.

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1. Introduction

In today's global landscape, the relationship between political regimes and foreign policy strategies has become a central focus for scholars and policymakers. The contrast between democracies and authoritarian states is particularly significant, as these regimes tend to pursue markedly different approaches to international relations. Democracies often anchor their external engagement in transparency, institutional oversight, and responsiveness to public opinion, whereas authoritarian regimes emphasize regime survival, centralized decision-making, and strategic opportunism. These structural differences produce divergent patterns in diplomacy, alliance formation, conflict management, and adherence to international norms, ultimately shaping how states position themselves within the global order.

Although the study of foreign policy has long been an established field within international relations, a notable gap remains in systematic comparative research linking regime type to concrete for-

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eign policy outcomes. Much of the existing literature treats foreign policy as the product of external pressures, geopolitical realities, or leaders' personal choices, while paying limited attention to the institutional and ideological frameworks that underpin decision-making within different systems of governance. As a result, there is an incomplete understanding of how domestic political structures shape the strategies states adopt on the international stage.

This research seeks to fill this gap by comparing democracies and authoritarian regimes, focusing on how leadership style, institutional constraints, legitimacy concerns, and societal engagement shape foreign policy formulation and implementation. Specifically, this study examines how these regimes interact with key international dynamics—such as diplomatic negotiations, military alliances, and responses to global crises—providing new empirical insights into the role of regime type in shaping foreign policy. The study advances the argument that regime characteristics are not peripheral but central to understanding foreign policy behavior. Democracies are expected to display greater adaptability and consistency aligned with international norms, while authoritarian regimes tend to pursue more pragmatic, interest-driven, and sometimes confrontational strategies.

By systematically analyzing how regime type shapes foreign policy strategies, this research contributes to both theoretical and practical debates. It enriches scholarly discussions on regime theory and foreign policy analysis, while offering policymakers valuable insights into the behavior of diverse political systems. This approach strengthens the capacity to anticipate state actions, interpret strategic choices, and design more effective frameworks for cooperation and conflict management in a rapidly transforming international order.

1.1. Literature Review

The literature on the impact of political regimes on foreign policy strategies highlights how regime type influences international behavior in various ways. For instance, Hamilton (2017) explores how democratic institutions shape foreign policy, emphasizing that democratic regimes are strongly influenced by legislative bodies, electoral cycles, and public opinion. Similarly, Norris, Cameron, and Wynter (2018) examine how electoral accountability and institutional checks within democracies shape foreign policy decisions, showing that democratic leaders often prioritize policies that reflect their electorate's preferences and are constrained by institutional mechanisms.

In contrast, research on authoritarian regimes, such as Magued (2025), shows that centralized power significantly shapes foreign policy. Lee's study uses qualitative methods, including case studies and interviews, to show that authoritarian leaders, because they control decision-making processes, can implement more consistent and strategic foreign policies. Chen and Hsu (2021) further examine how personal leadership styles in authoritarian regimes influence foreign policy, highlighting the crucial role of leaders' personal ideologies and regime stability. Key variables of interest in these studies include regime type (democratic or authoritarian) and foreign policy strategies. Findings consistently show that democracies tend to pursue foreign policies aligned with democratic values and international norms, shaped by public opinion and institutional constraints. Conversely, authoritarian regimes often pursue more consistent and strategic policies, driven by centralized control and personal leadership.

Despite the valuable insights provided by existing studies, there are significant gaps in the literature on how political regimes shape foreign policy. While much of the research has focused predominantly on well-established democracies and authoritarian regimes, it has largely overlooked emerging democracies and hybrid regimes, which represent important and increasingly relevant political systems in today's global landscape (Lankina et al., 2016). For example, countries that are transitional democracies or hybrid regimes (e.g., Turkey, Russia) have unique foreign policy challenges and strategies that do not fit neatly into the categories of established democracies or purely authoritarian regimes. Farag and Tayie (2024) discuss how asymmetric security threats in the Mediterranean effect foreign policy, particularly in regimes where migration and security concerns are highly politicized, which is relevant to hybrid regimes navigating democratic values and authoritarian practices in their foreign policy.

Moreover, existing literature often relies heavily on quantitative approaches that fail to capture the complexity and contextual nuances of regime-specific foreign policy behavior. Quantitative methods typically focus on broad patterns and generalizations, but these methods often fail to account for unique national circumstances, leadership styles, and institutional dynamics that influence foreign policy in both democracies and authoritarian regimes. This methodological limitation leaves gaps in our understanding of the specific mechanisms through which different regime types shape international policy decisions. In this regard, Farag (2025b) in his study on navigating security challenges in the Mediterranean provides empirical evidence showing how authoritarian regimes react differently to external pressures compared to democracies, due to the concentration of power within the hands of the leaders.

Additionally, there is a noticeable absence of integrated research that combines both qualitative methodologies and comparative analysis to provide a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of how political regimes—across a spectrum of systems—affect foreign policy. Existing research tends to treat regime type as a static variable, rather than exploring the dynamic interactions between political structures, leadership styles, institutional constraints, and external influences that drive foreign policy choices. These factors may evolve over time, particularly in countries undergoing transitions or facing external pressures, such as economic crises, security threats, or geopolitical shifts. In this context, Edmond, Forku, and Farag (2025) explore how resources and security in Africa shape the foreign policy decisions of states, illustrating how authoritarian regimes use resources to bolster regime stability and global positioning.

This research seeks to address these gaps by including a broader range of political regimes. Not only will it focus on established democracies and authoritarian states, but it will also incorporate emerging democracies and hybrid regimes into the analysis. By adopting a comparative, qualitative analysis, this study aims to explore the contextual factors that shape foreign policy decisions and provide insights into the variability of foreign policy strategies across different political regimes. The research will also emphasize the dynamic nature of global governance, considering how different political systems interact with global challenges and international pressures (Farag, 2026a, 2026c). For example, the influence of external actors such as multilateral organizations (e.g., the UN or WTO), great powers, and regional organizations plays a crucial role in shaping how democracies and authoritarian regimes react to challenges such as security crises or trade negotiations. Farag (2025a) in his study on Turkey's foreign policy repositioning further supports the idea that middle powers or hybrid regimes (e.g., Turkey) are more likely to shift foreign policy strategies to maintain relevance in an increasingly multipolar world. Recent IJCSS research on middle-power agency under constrained multipolarity further reinforces the importance of institutional embeddedness and structural constraints in shaping state strategies (Mulyanyuma, 2026).

By employing a qualitative, evidence-based approach, this study will provide a deeper understanding of the nuanced ways in which regime type impacts foreign policy. It will use case studies, interviews, and document analysis to examine the internal mechanisms that drive foreign policy strategies and how these strategies differ across regimes. In doing so, it will fill the gaps left by current research, which often treats regime type as a singular or fixed influence. Instead, this research will show how regime type interacts dynamically with leadership style, institutional constraints, and external pressures to shape foreign policy decisions.

1.2. Research Problem with Research Questions and Hypotheses

In the evolving global order, states pursue foreign policies that reflect their internal political dynamics. However, the extent to which the type of political regime—democratic or authoritarian—influences foreign policy strategies remains underexplored. While democracies are often characterized by institutional checks, public accountability, and normative commitments, authoritarian regimes prioritize regime survival, centralized decision-making, and strategic interests. These structural differences suggest varying approaches to international engagement, crisis response, alliance-building,

and norm compliance, which can have significant implications for global diplomatic interactions (Sørensen et al., 2022).

Despite the significance of this issue, there is a notable lack of systematic comparative studies that connect regime type to specific foreign policy outcomes. Much of the existing literature treats foreign policy as an outcome of external pressures, geopolitical realities, or leader preferences, often neglecting the institutional and ideological frameworks that shape decision-making within different systems of governance. This gap leaves an incomplete understanding of how domestic political structures, such as regime type, influence the strategies states adopt on the international stage.

The central research problem is:

How do political regimes (democratic vs. authoritarian) influence foreign policy strategies?

Sub-Research Questions:

1. What are the key factors that shape foreign policy in democratic regimes?
2. What are the main influences on foreign policy in authoritarian regimes?
3. How do regime types influence foreign policy consistency and adaptability?
4. How do regime types influence responses to international crises and external pressures?

Hypotheses:

1. Hypothesis 1: Democracies, due to their institutional checks and public accountability, will display more consistent foreign policies that align with international norms, compared to authoritarian regimes, which will exhibit more opportunistic and strategic foreign policies driven by regime survival and centralized decision-making.
2. Hypothesis 2: The level of public participation and legitimacy concerns in democratic regimes will result in foreign policy strategies that are more adaptable and subject to electoral shifts, while authoritarian regimes will maintain policy consistency due to centralized leadership and a focus on strategic stability.
3. Hypothesis 3: Authoritarian regimes will be more likely to pursue confrontational foreign policy strategies in response to external pressures, while democracies will be more inclined to adopt cooperative or multilateral strategies that adhere to international norms.

This study seeks to fill the gap in the literature by systematically analyzing how leadership style, institutional constraints, public participation, and legitimacy concerns shape the formulation and implementation of foreign policy in democratic and authoritarian regimes. Addressing these hypotheses provides both theoretical insight into regime theory and practical guidance for understanding and anticipating the behavior of diverse global actors.

1.3. Research Objectives

1. To examine how political regimes (democratic vs. authoritarian) influence the formulation and implementation of foreign policy strategies, considering factors such as institutional frameworks, leadership style, and public participation.
2. To compare the consistency and adaptability of foreign policy decisions in democratic and authoritarian states, with a focus on how electoral cycles, institutional checks, and centralized decision-making impact policy stability and flexibility.
3. To analyze the role of regime legitimacy in shaping foreign relations, assessing how public opinion, institutional constraints, and the need for regime survival affect diplomatic behavior and foreign policy goals.
4. To assess the relationship between regime type and adherence to international norms, examining how democratic regimes prioritize multilateralism and human rights while authoritarian regimes pursue more pragmatic or strategic interests.

5. To provide strategic insights for policymakers and international analysts on how to engage with and anticipate the foreign policy behavior of states based on their political regime type, particularly in terms of alliance-building, crisis response, and norm compliance.

1.4. Research Importance & Significance

This study contributes to international relations scholarship by bridging a gap in regime theory through a comparative analysis of democracies and authoritarian states, supported by empirical evidence, including documentary evidence and expert perspectives. It offers practical value for policymakers in an era of shifting alliances by clarifying how regime logics shape diplomatic choices, policy consistency, and strategic behavior. The findings also enhance debates on global governance by explaining why democracies tend to support rule-based systems while authoritarian states prefer flexible, interest-driven coalitions. Finally, the research highlights the societal dimension, showing how transparency and accountability, or their absence, directly affect decisions on war, peace, and international cooperation.

2. Research Methodology

This study adopts a comparative qualitative design to analyze how democracies and authoritarian regimes shape foreign policy strategies. The comparative framework is structured to identify both the differences and similarities in how regime types influence foreign policy decision-making. By contrasting these two types of regimes, the study provides a systematic assessment of their respective impacts on international behavior, including how political structures, leadership styles, and institutional mechanisms guide foreign policy choices.

2.1. Data Collection

Data collection was conducted through three primary sources:

1. Analysis of Official Documents, Policy Papers, and Historical Records:
    - These documents provide primary data on how foreign policies are formulated and implemented in different political systems.
    - Document Selection: Documents were selected based on their relevance to the research question and their ability to provide concrete evidence of regime-specific foreign policy behaviors.
    - Primary Sources: The analysis involved reviewing official government reports, foreign policy statements, international treaties, security agreements, and trade deals from both democratic and authoritarian regimes.
2. Comprehensive Literature Review of Scholarly Works:
    - The literature review was instrumental in identifying key themes, theories, and gaps in the existing research on the relationship between regime type and foreign policy.
    - The review focused on regime theory, foreign policy analysis, and comparative political science, highlighting the ways in which regime characteristics influence foreign policy outcomes.
    - Relevant studies reviewed include works on multilateralism, international relations, global governance, and the role of regime survival in foreign policy strategy.
3. Semi-Structured Expert Interviews:
    - Sample Size: The study included 18 semi-structured interviews with foreign policy experts to provide qualitative insights into foreign policy decision-making across different political regimes.

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- Interview Procedure: The semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain expert perspectives on decision-making, policy consistency, institutional influence, leadership, and external pressures in different political systems.

2.2. Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out through thematic coding of the interviews and documents. This process involved identifying recurring patterns, key themes, and significant differences across regimes in relation to their foreign policy strategies.

- Thematic Coding: Using qualitative analysis tools (e.g., NVivo), interviews and documents were coded to identify patterns in decision-making, policy consistency, and institutional influence.
- Data Triangulation: Triangulation was applied by cross-referencing data from interviews, document analysis, and the literature review to ensure the validity of findings.
- Key Themes: Thematic coding revealed significant insights into the relationship between regime characteristics and foreign policy decisions, including the role of leadership (in both democracies and authoritarian regimes), institutional constraints, and external pressures.

2.3. Limitations

Several limitations should be noted:

- Restricted Access: Some classified or confidential documents were inaccessible, which may have impacted the comprehensiveness of the document analysis, particularly for authoritarian regimes where transparency is limited.
- Challenges in Securing Expert Responses: Due to political sensitivities in some regions, there were challenges in securing responses from experts, which may have led to sampling bias in the selection of interviewees.
- Limited Scope of Case Studies: The research focused on a limited number of countries as case studies, which may not fully capture the entire spectrum of foreign policy strategies across all types of regimes or reflect the full complexity inherent in regime types. While countries like Germany and China were included, further research is needed to examine hybrid regimes and emerging democracies in more detail.

2.4. Research Structure

The research is organized into three main sections to deliver a comprehensive examination of the topic:

- Section 1: The Impact of Democratic Regimes on Foreign Policy Strategies — Analyzing the key characteristics of democratic regimes and their influence on foreign policy decision-making. This section explores how democratic systems operate within institutional checks and public accountability to shape foreign policy.
- Section 2: The Impact of Authoritarian Regimes on Foreign Policy Strategies — Investigating how authoritarian regimes shape their foreign policy through centralized decision-making, regime survival, and strategic goals. This section will focus on case studies like China and Russia.
- Section 3: A Comparative Analysis of Foreign Policies in Democratic and Authoritarian Systems — Offering a direct comparison of the foreign policy strategies of both regime types, highlighting key similarities and differences in terms of decision-making, policy consistency, and international engagement.

3. The Impact of Democratic Regimes on Foreign Policy Strategies

Democratic regimes' foreign policy is influenced by institutional frameworks, political stability, and ideological influences, with stability being influenced by electoral cycles, party politics, and coalition dynamics (Saraiva, 2020).

3.1. Institutional Frameworks in Democratic Systems

In democratic systems, foreign policy is shaped by institutional frameworks that define decision-making mechanisms. These frameworks guide the interactions of various branches of government, influencing how foreign policies are formed and implemented. Key components of these frameworks include:

3.1.1. Separation of Powers

Democratic systems are characterized by a separation of powers among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. This separation ensures that no single branch has unchecked control over foreign policy (Goziev, 2021). The executive branch, led by the President or Prime Minister, plays a central role in directing foreign policy. It is responsible for negotiating treaties, forming alliances, and overseeing diplomatic efforts. The extent of executive authority varies across democratic systems. For instance, Germany has a relatively independent executive branch in foreign policy-making, though it still requires parliamentary approval for major foreign policy actions.

The legislative branch also exerts significant influence over foreign policy. In Germany, the Bundestag (parliament) has the power to approve or reject international treaties, authorize military interventions, and allocate funding for foreign policy initiatives. Legislatures serve as arenas of debate, ensuring that a wide range of perspectives and national interests are represented in shaping foreign policy decisions. India also has similar legislative oversight, with public opinion and electoral cycles affecting the foreign policy agenda.

The judicial branch in democratic systems interprets laws and treaties, adjudicates disputes, and reviews the executive's actions to ensure compliance with constitutional and legal principles. For instance, in India, the Supreme Court has occasionally weighed in on foreign policy decisions, particularly related to human rights and international trade.

3.1.2. Checks and Balances

The system of checks and balances ensures that no single branch of government dominates foreign policy decision-making (Mazepus & Toshkov, 2022). A critical mechanism is Treaty Ratification, which ensures that foreign policy decisions are not concentrated solely in the hands of the executive. For example, in Germany, the Bundestag must ratify international treaties negotiated by the Chancellor's office. This additional step not only provides a layer of scrutiny but also ensures that treaties reflect broader political consensus and serve the national interest rather than narrow executive priorities.

Oversight and Accountability mechanisms, such as parliamentary or congressional committees, enhance checks on foreign policy. These bodies can summon officials for hearings, demand access to relevant information, and investigate potential misconduct. Such practices help prevent abuse of power, promote transparency, and ensure that executive actions align with legal frameworks and public expectations. For instance, in Germany, the Foreign Affairs Committee plays a pivotal role in scrutinizing foreign policy actions.

Public and Media Influence plays a vital role in shaping and constraining foreign policy. Elected representatives are sensitive to their constituents' opinions, and sustained media coverage can amplify public concerns about specific foreign engagements. These dynamic forces push policymakers

to consider societal sentiment, enhancing transparency and responsiveness in foreign policy formulation. India, for example, experiences significant public scrutiny of foreign policy decisions, especially related to trade agreements and human rights issues.

3.1.3. Role of Political Parties

Political parties in democratic systems significantly influence foreign policy. Party platforms and ideological orientations shape policy priorities and strategies (Kittilson & Scarrow, 2003). In Germany, political parties play a central role in shaping foreign policy, with party platforms often reflecting ideological perspectives on international relations, defense, trade, and diplomacy.

Electoral dynamics also significantly influence foreign policy direction. New administrations may modify or reverse previous policies based on their political platforms, campaign promises, and ideological orientations. This can lead to major shifts, such as reorienting alliances, altering trade policies, or redefining a nation's role in global governance. In India, for instance, a change in government can lead to significant policy adjustments, such as the shift from pro-Western policies under one government to non-alignment or greater regional engagement under another.

In parliamentary democracies, coalition governments complicate the foreign policy process. When multiple parties share power, consensus-building becomes essential. India's coalition governments have often needed to negotiate and compromise on key international issues, which can moderate extreme positions but also create challenges for policy coherence. In such cases, the foreign policy direction often reflects a balance between competing party interests.

3.1.4. Institutional Mechanisms for Policy Formulation

Several institutional mechanisms support the formulation and implementation of foreign policy (Suh, 2006). In many democracies, the formulation and implementation of foreign policy are supported by mechanisms that enhance expertise, representation, and coherence. Foreign Policy Advisory Councils or National Security Councils provide expert guidance to the executive branch, ensuring that policy strategies are informed by specialized knowledge. The diplomatic corps, including ambassadors and consuls, represents the frontline in executing national policy abroad, while also being subject to legislative oversight.

Additionally, effective policy-making requires strong interagency coordination among critical bodies such as defense, foreign affairs, and intelligence agencies. In Germany, for example, the Foreign Ministry, Chancellery, and Defense Ministry frequently collaborate to ensure coherence in foreign policy, especially on issues of security and defense. Comparable evidence from disaster-governance research shows that institutional capacity and coordination are likewise decisive for policy implementation (Cvetković et al., 2021; Goyal, 2019).

3.2. Stability of Foreign Policies in Democratic Systems

The stability of foreign policies in democratic systems is influenced by governance, institutional frameworks, and political dynamics. Unlike authoritarian regimes, democracies involve multiple actors and processes, contributing to both consistency and variability (Lebow, 2020).

3.2.1. Impact of Electoral Cycles

Regular elections in democracies often lead to leadership changes, which can shift foreign policy priorities. New administrations may modify or reverse previous policies based on campaign promises, political platforms, and ideological orientations. For example, a government favoring free trade may be replaced by one supporting protectionism. Politicians frequently implement foreign policy

commitments made during campaigns, responding to voter expectations, which influences the stability of democratic foreign policy.

In Germany, leadership changes have led to foreign policy shifts, such as changes in EU relations and trade policies. The change in leadership from Angela Merkel's government to Olaf Scholz introduced shifts in policy related to European integration and climate change commitments.

3.2.2. Role of Institutional Checks and Balances

Legislative oversight in democracies helps stabilize foreign policy by requiring treaty approvals, military action authorizations, and monitoring executive decisions. This oversight ensures alignment with broader political consensus. Judicial review reinforces stability by evaluating the compliance of foreign policy actions with legal standards. Interagency coordination also contributes to consistency, as departments like defense, foreign affairs, and intelligence regularly collaborate to ensure a coherent foreign policy approach (Mazepus & Toshkov, 2022).

3.2.3. Influence of Political Parties and Coalitions

Political parties and their ideological orientations significantly shape foreign policy stability. While governing parties adjust policies to reflect their platforms, opposition parties and interest groups also influence decisions through advocacy and lobbying. In parliamentary systems, coalition governments often negotiate and compromise on foreign policy issues, stabilizing policymaking but also creating challenges for coherence. Bipartisan support in some democracies helps maintain policy stability by ensuring continuity in alliances, trade agreements, and international commitments (Mair, 2007).

3.2.4. External Factors and International Commitments

International agreements and treaties stabilize democratic foreign policy by imposing obligations that guide decision-making. Similarly, global trends and established alliances, such as NATO, encourage democracies to maintain consistent relationships with key international partners. Core economic and security interests ensure continuity and reduce the likelihood of destabilizing changes. Comparable processes of institutional alignment are evident in the harmonization of Serbian civil-protection policy with EU security policy (Cvetković, 2025).

3.2.5. Influence of Public Opinion and Media

Public opinion is critical in shaping and stabilizing foreign policy, as elected officials consider the electorate's views when making decisions. Media coverage also influences foreign policy by framing debates and shaping public perceptions. Together, public opinion and media ensure that foreign policies align with societal expectations, enhancing policy stability. In Germany, for example, public opinion plays a significant role in shaping policy responses, particularly on issues like immigration, EU policies, and climate change.

3.3. Political Ideologies and Their Impact on Foreign Policy

Political ideologies significantly influence foreign policy by shaping principles, priorities, and strategies, affecting a nation's interactions with the international community. Ideological diversity within democratic systems leads to variations in foreign policy, requiring an examination of different perspectives (Nincic & Ramos, 2010).

3.3.1. Ideological Foundations and Policy Priorities

Liberalism: Liberal foreign policies emphasize multilateralism and international cooperation, prioritizing global institutions like the UN and agreements such as the Paris Climate Accord. Liberal governments focus on promoting human rights and democracy, often supporting democratic movements and humanitarian interventions.

Conservatism: Conservative foreign policy typically centers on national interests and security, emphasizing military strength, border protection, and a robust defense. Conservatives often display skepticism toward multilateralism, viewing international institutions with caution when they undermine national sovereignty.

Socialism: Socialist foreign policy emphasizes economic equality and social justice, guiding policies that aim to reduce global inequality and support development in underdeveloped countries. Socialist governments are often critical of capitalism, especially international institutions and economic practices that perpetuate exploitation.

Nationalism: Nationalist foreign policies focus on national sovereignty and preserving cultural identity, often prioritizing secure borders, restrictive immigration, and national interests over international cooperation. Nationalism can lead to revanchist attitudes, territorial ambitions, and anti-globalization stances (Tagore, 2017).

3.3.2. Impact of Political Ideologies on Foreign Policy Formulation

Ideologies shape foreign policy by influencing policy formulation and decision-making. Liberal governments prioritize global issues like climate change and health, while conservatives focus on defense and national security. Ideology also impacts diplomatic relationships, with ideologically aligned countries forming strategic partnerships, while opposing views can lead to conflict. Ideology also affects approaches to conflict and cooperation: liberals favor diplomacy and international mediation, while conservatives or nationalists may rely on unilateral actions or military solutions (Weldeslassie, 2021).

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3.3.3. Ideological Influence on International Engagement

Political ideologies shape how states engage with the international system. Liberal governments prioritize and actively participate in international organizations and treaties, while conservative or nationalist administrations may resist or approach them selectively. Ideology influences humanitarian interventions and foreign aid, with liberals emphasizing human rights and global welfare, while conservatives or nationalists focus on national interests.

4. The Impact of Authoritarian Regimes on Foreign Policy Strategies

This section explores the influence of power concentration on foreign policy strategies in authoritarian regimes, focusing on individual leadership, policy stability, and personal ideologies. These aspects contrast with democracies, where multiple institutions and public opinion play crucial roles.

4.1. Focus on Individual Power and Its Impact on Foreign Policy

Authoritarian regimes rely heavily on individual power, with decision-making often concentrated around a single leader or elite group, unlike democratic systems, where decision-making is dispersed among multiple institutions. This concentration of power significantly influences foreign policy (Ahmed, 2020).

4.1.1. Centralized Decision-Making

In authoritarian regimes, authority over foreign policy is highly centralized in the hands of the leader or ruling elite. This concentration of power enables swift decision-making and policy implementation without the delays of legislative debate or broad consultation, giving such systems a distinct advantage in responding quickly to international challenges or opportunities. The personal influence of the leader plays a decisive role, as their beliefs, preferences, and ambitions often shape the direction of foreign policy.

For example, China (an authoritarian regime) under Xi Jinping demonstrates this phenomenon. China's foreign policy is heavily influenced by Xi Jinping's leadership and his strategic vision for regional dominance and global influence. Personal ambitions are deeply intertwined with policy goals, as Xi's vision of "the Chinese Dream" informs China's foreign engagements, such as the Belt and Road Initiative and its stance on regional security in the South China Sea.

Similarly, in Russia, Vladimir Putin's centralized control enables quick responses to international developments, such as the annexation of Crimea and military interventions in Syria, reflecting the regime's focus on maintaining regime stability and asserting Russian power globally.

4.1.2. Strategic Objectives and Personal Ambitions

In authoritarian regimes, foreign policy is largely shaped by the personal vision and ambitions of the leader, who may pursue strategies such as regional dominance or rivalry with other powers (Lai & Slater, 2006). Beyond external objectives, foreign policy is also a tool to bolster domestic legitimacy, as successes abroad—whether through favorable economic deals or military achievements—can enhance the leader's authority and suppress dissent.

In Turkey, for instance, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has used foreign policy to solidify his position, shifting Turkey's alignment in NATO while emphasizing national sovereignty. His leadership style—both pragmatic and assertive—has been reflected in Turkey's policies in Syria and its geopolitical positioning in the Middle East.

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4.1.3. Policy Implementation and Continuity

Authoritarian regimes typically adopt a top-down approach to foreign policy, where directives from the leader are strictly implemented by a controlled bureaucracy to maintain alignment and limit dissent. This centralized structure allows for swift and flexible responses to international developments, though it may also result in rigidity if the leader's vision fails to adapt to changing conditions.

China's foreign policy is marked by policy continuity due to its centralized decision-making, even during leadership transitions. However, changes such as Xi's focus on global trade and security priorities reflect strategic adjustments influenced by his personal ideology.

At the same time, the heavy concentration of power makes foreign policy vulnerable to instability, as sudden leadership changes or challenges to authority can cause abrupt and unpredictable shifts in international relations. For instance, Russia's foreign policy under Putin has been consistent in pursuing military interventions to enhance its influence, but a potential change in leadership could lead to a shift in these policies.

4.1.4. Influence of Personal Ideology and Preferences

A leader's personal ideology often provides the foundation for foreign policy. Nationalist leaders may favor territorial assertiveness or confrontational stances, while pragmatic or revolutionary leaders may focus on targeted geopolitical objectives. Historical experiences and cultural backgrounds

also shape policy directions, as leaders may act in ways that reflect personal grievances or broader national narratives.

For example, China's Xi Jinping has adopted a more nationalist approach to foreign policy, with assertive policies in the South China Sea, Hong Kong, and towards Taiwan. This is in stark contrast to the approach of Russia, where Putin's foreign policy has a strong anti-Western undertone, focusing on regime survival and regional dominance.

4.2. Fluctuations in Foreign Policy in Authoritarian Systems

In authoritarian regimes, foreign policy can exhibit significant fluctuations due to the centralized nature of decision-making and the personal control exerted by the leader or ruling elite. These fluctuations can arise from various internal and external factors and manifest in several ways (Tansey, 2016; Hall & Ambrosio, 2017).

4.2.1. Influence of Leadership Changes

Leadership transitions frequently bring about notable shifts in foreign policy. When a new leader comes to power—whether through succession, elections, or abrupt changes such as coups—they often seek to distinguish themselves from their predecessors by pursuing different strategic directions.

For instance, in Russia, when Putin rose to power, he shifted Russia's foreign policy from Yeltsin's Western-oriented strategy to a more assertive stance against the West, particularly through actions in Ukraine and Syria. Similarly, Turkey's foreign policy under Erdoğan shifted from a more Western-oriented foreign policy to one that includes assertive regionalism and a repositioning of alliances with countries such as Russia.

4.2.2. Internal Power Struggles

Factional disputes within authoritarian regimes often shape the trajectory of foreign policy. Competing groups within the ruling elite may push for divergent strategies, resulting in inconsistencies or sudden shifts as different factions rise or fall in influence.

For example, in China, Xi Jinping's consolidation of power has led to a coherent foreign policy focusing on economic development and military expansion, but potential factional disputes may affect foreign policy decision-making as his influence grows.

4.2.3. Response to Domestic Pressures

In authoritarian regimes, public sentiment generally exerts limited influence on foreign policy. However, significant domestic unrest or widespread dissatisfaction can prompt leaders to adjust their international strategies, using foreign policy as a tool to address economic pressures, social tensions, or public demands.

For example, Russia's interventions in Ukraine and Syria can be seen as diversionary strategies to distract from internal economic struggles and domestic discontent, reinforcing the leader's legitimacy.

4.2.4. External Pressures and International Relations

Authoritarian regimes often adjust their foreign policies in response to international sanctions or diplomatic pressures. Economic or political sanctions can push a regime to seek new alliances, revise its positions on contentious issues, or adopt strategies aimed at reducing external constraints (Farag, 2026d).

Russia's foreign policy, for example, has shifted significantly in response to sanctions imposed by the West following the annexation of Crimea. China's approach has similarly evolved, as it seeks to manage global criticism of its policies in Hong Kong and Xinjiang while expanding its economic ties with other regions.

4.2.5. Strategic Adjustments

Authoritarian regimes often balance short-term tactical needs with long-term strategic objectives, which can lead to fluctuations in foreign policy. For example, a regime might pursue a conciliatory approach to secure immediate economic gains while maintaining a firm stance on long-term security or geopolitical goals.

This combination of strategic planning and flexible maneuvering is evident in China's foreign policy, where economic cooperation and military security are simultaneously prioritized to assert regional dominance.

4.3. Personal Ideology and Its Influence on Foreign Policy

Personal ideology significantly influences foreign policy in authoritarian regimes, shaping decisions and strategies based on the leader's beliefs, values, and strategic goals, unlike democratic systems where policy is influenced by institutional and public inputs (Hunt, 2009).

4.3.1. Ideological Foundations of the Leader

A leader's personal beliefs and values, often rooted in ideologies such as nationalism or socialism, play a decisive role in shaping foreign policy choices. Leaders motivated by strong nationalist sentiments may adopt aggressive strategies aimed at asserting national dominance or reclaiming historically contested territories.

For example, Xi Jinping's nationalist stance has led to an increasingly assertive foreign policy, particularly with respect to Taiwan and Hong Kong, reflecting China's growing regional ambitions.

4.3.2. Impact on International Relations

Leaders' personal ideologies play a critical role in shaping foreign policy and international relations. They influence the formation and sustainability of alliances, where leaders with similar ideological orientations are more likely to establish and maintain cooperative partnerships, while those with opposing views often gravitate toward competitive or confrontational dynamics (Farag, 2026b).

Putin's personal anti-Western ideology has shaped Russia's approach to the West, leading to military interventions and strategic alliances with China to counterbalance NATO and EU expansion. Recent IJCSS analysis of Putin's discourse on NATO enlargement in the Far North further illustrates how strategic narratives shape Russian responses to alliance expansion (Lamminparras, 2025).

4.3.3. Policy Implementation and Personal Leadership Style

In authoritarian regimes, decision-making processes in foreign policy are often heavily influenced by the leader's personal ideology. Institutional advice or dissenting opinions may be marginalized, with policies instead reflecting the leader's individual preferences rather than a consensus-driven strategy.

For example, Turkey's shift under Erdoğan toward authoritarian practices has reshaped its foreign policy to prioritize nationalist ambitions and regional influence, such as in Syria.

4.3.4. Influence on Policy Adaptations

Leaders' personal ideologies play a significant role in shaping the flexibility and consistency of foreign policy. Leaders driven by strong ideological commitments may prioritize long-term goals, even when they conflict with immediate practical considerations. Pragmatic leaders, however, demonstrate greater flexibility, adjusting policies in response to shifting circumstances.

For example, China's strategic flexibility is evident in its approach to trade deals and regional alliances, with the Belt and Road Initiative serving as a key foreign policy tool.

5. Comparison of Foreign Policies in Democratic and Authoritarian Systems

This section analyzes foreign policies in democratic and authoritarian systems, focusing on international relations, conflict resolution, and strategic alliances. It explores how political structures and governance models influence state responses to global challenges.

5.1. Identifying Similarities and Differences in Foreign Policy Strategies

When comparing foreign policy strategies in democratic and authoritarian systems, several key similarities and differences emerge. These reflect the inherent characteristics of each political regime and how they influence a country's approach to international relations (Cozzi, 2021).

5.1.1. Similarities

Both democracies and authoritarian regimes share a universal objective in their foreign policy: the pursuit of national interests. Regardless of the political system, states prioritize security, economic prosperity, and geopolitical influence as central goals. Foreign policy thus serves as a primary instrument for safeguarding sovereignty and advancing national development. In this process, both types of regimes actively seek strategic alliances and partnerships.

Germany (a democracy) and China (an authoritarian regime) both engage in international diplomacy and form regional alliances that promote their national interests. However, Germany emphasizes trade agreements, institutional cooperation, and multilateral military alliances (e.g., NATO, EU), while China prioritizes bilateral relations and strategic influence (e.g., Belt and Road Initiative).

Both India (an emerging democracy) and China share the goal of maintaining regional dominance, but India focuses on multilateral engagements (e.g., BRICS and ASEAN) while China exercises its influence through regional power projection (e.g., South China Sea).

Engagement in diplomacy represents another area of convergence between the two regime types. States across the political spectrum participate in diplomatic negotiations and multilateral forums to address pressing global issues, secure economic opportunities, and manage disputes. Diplomacy remains a shared tool for navigating the complexities of international relations, enabling states to pursue their objectives without resorting exclusively to coercion or confrontation.

Finally, both democracies and authoritarian regimes must adapt their foreign policies in response to global challenges and external pressures. Economic crises, international sanctions, transnational security threats, and environmental concerns compel governments of all systems to adjust their strategies (von Soest, 2024). Whether through policy reform, recalibration of alliances, or shifts in external rhetoric, adaptation to global dynamics is a necessary function of state behavior in an interconnected world. Related security-risk research also shows that emerging and hybrid threats can require anticipatory governance and adaptive institutional responses (Gnjatović et al., 2026).

5.1.2. Differences

Decision-making processes differ significantly between democracies and authoritarian regimes. In democratic systems, foreign policy is typically shaped through a complex process involving elected officials, legislatures, interest groups, and public opinion. This inclusive and deliberative approach often enhances legitimacy but can also produce inconsistency or slower responses. By contrast, authoritarian systems rely on a centralized structure in which a single leader or a small elite group exercises substantial control. This model allows for more streamlined and decisive policies, though it can also result in abrupt changes when leadership priorities shift.

Germany's foreign policy decision-making often involves multiple institutions, such as the Bundestag (parliament) and the Chancellery. This system ensures policy alignment with public opinion and democratic values, but can lead to slower responses, as seen in Germany's approach to the EU migration crisis (Reiners & Tekin, 2020).

China, on the other hand, benefits from swift decision-making under Xi Jinping's leadership, where foreign policy is heavily influenced by centralized control, such as in China's expansion in the South China Sea. Here, the centralized structure allows for rapid execution of foreign policies but limits the flexibility of the government to incorporate public input or opposition perspectives.

Policy consistency and stability also vary across regime types. Democracies frequently experience fluctuations in foreign policy as leadership changes, party platforms evolve, and public opinion exerts influence. Such shifts can lead to policy reversals or significant adjustments with each new administration. Authoritarian regimes, on the other hand, often project greater policy continuity due to centralized decision-making. Yet, internal power struggles, leadership changes, or evolving personal ideologies of rulers can undermine stability, producing sudden shifts despite the outward appearance of consistency.

India (as an emerging democracy) has experienced foreign policy shifts, especially after a change in government. For instance, the Modi government reoriented its foreign policy towards regional security and economic liberalization, a shift from previous administrations focused on multilateral engagement (Ranjan, 2022).

Political ideologies also exert contrasting forms of influence. In democracies, foreign policy reflects the ideological orientation of ruling parties, coalitions, and competing interest groups, which introduces variation depending on electoral outcomes. Authoritarian states, however, tend to mirror the personal beliefs and strategic goals of leaders or ruling elites. This centralized ideological imprint ensures a more unified direction in foreign affairs but often reduces flexibility in adapting to diverse perspectives.

Germany's foreign policy, driven by liberal ideologies, often prioritizes human rights and democratic governance (Gaskarth & Oppermann, 2021), whereas China's foreign policy, shaped by Xi Jinping's nationalism, focuses on territorial assertiveness and the Belt and Road Initiative as part of its long-term strategic vision.

Public and institutional influence represents another key distinction. In democracies, public opinion, media coverage, and institutional checks significantly shape foreign policy outcomes. Decision-makers must account for societal preferences and institutional constraints, producing more transparent and representative strategies. In authoritarian regimes, public and institutional input is minimal, with foreign policies primarily determined by the leader's directives. As a result, policies may reflect the regime's interests rather than broader societal concerns.

Germany's foreign policy decisions are heavily influenced by public opinion, as evidenced in the EU immigration policies.

China, by contrast, has limited public participation in foreign policy decision-making, as Xi Jinping's central leadership directs the state's actions, particularly regarding South China Sea expansion.

Finally, adaptability and flexibility distinguish the two systems in practice. Democracies often demonstrate greater adaptability because their pluralistic processes enable responsiveness to shifting domestic and international contexts. This flexibility allows them to adjust policies based on new

information or emerging challenges. Authoritarian regimes, though capable of rapid decision-making due to centralized authority, may be constrained by the leader's ideological commitments and regime stability. As a result, their policy shifts often occur abruptly and remain closely aligned with the leader's strategic vision.

India and Germany, both democratic regimes, have demonstrated policy flexibility, particularly in their foreign trade and security policies. For example, Germany shifted its foreign policy to emphasize EU integration and climate action under Chancellor Merkel (Merkel, 2017), while India's foreign policy shifted to become more assertive under Modi, especially regarding regional security (Ranjan, 2022).

5.2. Analyzing the Impact of Political Systems on State Responses to International Crises

The political system of a country significantly influences its response to international crises, with democracies and authoritarian regimes implementing distinct strategies for crisis management, adaptation, and international engagement, influenced by their governance structures and decision-making processes (Armenia, Tsaples, & Franco, 2022). Comparable crisis-governance scholarship similarly emphasizes institutional coordination, policy capacity, and decision-making under uncertainty (Tanasić & Cvetković, 2024; Vuletić, 2026).

5.2.1. Decision-Making Processes and Crisis Management

Democratic Systems:

In democratic systems, the response to international crises is shaped by several interrelated factors that reflect the nature of participatory governance. A consultative approach is often employed, whereby decisions are subjected to extensive deliberations involving elected officials, legislative institutions, and, indirectly, the broader public. This ensures that responses are inclusive and representative of diverse perspectives. However, this same consultative process can slow down decision-making, as building consensus and negotiating compromises take time.

Germany, as a democratic system, has demonstrated such a consultative approach during crises, particularly in dealing with EU economic issues or climate change agreements.

Authoritarian Systems:

In authoritarian regimes, crisis management is characterized by highly centralized decision-making. Power is concentrated in the hands of a single leader or a small ruling elite, which enables swift responses in times of uncertainty. However, these regimes tend to exclude broader participation from societal actors, which may reduce the inclusiveness of decisions.

China, under Xi Jinping, is known for its swift decision-making, particularly evident during crises like COVID-19, where Xi's central leadership ensured a rapid response to control the outbreak, although this came at the cost of transparency and international trust.

5.2.2. Adaptation and Policy Flexibility

Democratic Systems:

In democratic regimes, crisis management benefits from policy flexibility, as checks and balances, public debate, and institutional oversight allow policies to be reassessed and adapted to new information or emerging challenges. Democracies are better positioned to explore collaborative solutions, incorporating a wide range of political leaders, civil society, and academic experts. Research on conflict-risk monitoring further highlights the importance of multi-actor coordination, early warning, and institutional learning in crisis environments (Ayalew & Lema, 2025).

China and Russia, on the other hand, often operate in a rigid decision-making structure, with centralized leadership that limits policy flexibility, especially when the leader's ideological stance becomes an obstacle to pragmatic adaptation.

5.2.3. International Engagement and Diplomacy

Democratic Systems:

Democracies tend to emphasize multilateral cooperation during crises (Ryan, 2020). They actively seek support from international organizations, build alliances with allies, and participate in global forums. They also prioritize humanitarian assistance and international solidarity in their crisis response strategies. Contemporary IJCSS research on the Quad likewise demonstrates how multilateral security cooperation can extend beyond military instruments to humanitarian assistance, climate governance, and human-security priorities (Ali, 2025).

India, for example, has focused on humanitarian aid and peacekeeping missions during regional crises (e.g., Nepal earthquake), while Germany emphasizes EU-wide responses to issues like refugee crises or climate change.

Authoritarian Systems:

In authoritarian regimes, the response to international crises may be unilateral, with a focus on self-reliance and minimizing external influence. These regimes also use strategic diplomacy to strengthen their position on the global stage while asserting their domestic priorities.

China often employs strategic diplomacy to navigate global crises, seeking new trade agreements with developing countries while counterbalancing rivals in Africa and Latin America.

6. Results and Discussion

This section is divided into presenting the results and then discussing their implications.

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6.1. Results

6.1.1. Policy Objectives

The study finds that democracies tend to pursue normative objectives, including the promotion of human rights, democratic governance, and global environmental standards. Democracies are also more active in multilateral institutions such as the UN and WTO. By contrast, authoritarian regimes focus on strategic and pragmatic goals, such as securing favorable economic deals, forming bilateral or regional alliances that enhance regime security, and using foreign policy to project influence and counter external pressures. These findings align with the expected behavior from the literature, where democracies often operate within the framework of international norms and cooperation, while authoritarian regimes focus more on national security and regime survival.

Germany (a democracy) emphasized normative goals such as human rights in its foreign policy, particularly in its engagement with international treaties and peacekeeping missions.

India (an emerging democracy) demonstrated a shift toward balancing both normative goals and strategic pragmatism as it navigated its transition from authoritarian rule.

China (an authoritarian regime) focused on strategic alliances and securing military support to consolidate domestic control and expand regional influence.

6.1.2. Decision-Making Processes

In democracies, decision-making is marked by transparency, accountability, and participation from multiple institutions. Public opinion, elections, and civil society also play a significant role, making policies more representative, but sometimes slower to emerge due to the need for deliberation and institutional checks. This is in line with previous research that suggests democratic regimes engage in consultative processes, involving legislative bodies and public input.

Germany demonstrated a more consultative decision-making process, with public opinion and legislative bodies playing significant roles in shaping foreign policy.

India exhibited similar traits of consultative decision-making, but policy shifts were observed as the regime adapted to its emerging democratic status.

In contrast, authoritarian regimes rely on centralized control, where decisions are made by a single leader or a small elite. This structure allows for swift action and policy consistency, though it limits inclusivity and primarily reflects regime interests. Interviews with foreign policy experts indicated that democratic systems tend to go through more deliberative processes involving institutional checks, while authoritarian regimes benefit from decisiveness and quick implementation, even if they lack broader societal participation.

China exhibited centralized decision-making, where leadership directed foreign policy with little public input, reflecting the regime's need for policy consistency.

6.1.3. Policy Outcomes

Democratic foreign policies often reinforce international norms and cooperative frameworks, strengthen alliances, and contribute to global development, humanitarian aid, and peacekeeping. Democratic regimes align with international treaties and norms, such as UN resolutions, showing a commitment to global cooperation and the promotion of democratic values.

In contrast, authoritarian foreign policies typically yield strategic advantages, such as trade benefits, military support, and expanded regional influence, while consolidating regime stability. However, authoritarian regimes can also destabilize global norms by prioritizing power over shared rules, which can create tensions with democratic states and international institutions.

Germany consistently aligned its policies with UN resolutions, supporting international initiatives related to human rights and peacekeeping.

China, while maintaining a consistent foreign policy, often acted unilaterally or within regional agreements that served domestic political needs, sometimes creating tensions with international norms, especially in areas like human rights and environmental standards.

These outcomes were confirmed by document analysis, where democratic regimes were found to be more active in multilateral organizations such as the UN and WTO, while authoritarian regimes engaged more in bilateral negotiations to secure strategic advantages (Farag & Tayie, 2024; Farag, 2025a).

The following table compares the key indicators of foreign policy behaviors in democratic and authoritarian regimes. This table illustrates how regime type influences strategies like policy consistency, opportunism, assertiveness, and regime survival (Table 1).

Table 1. Comparative Matrix of Key Foreign Policy Indicators

Key Concepts	Democratic Regimes	Authoritarian Regimes
Policy Consistency	Alignment with international treaties, UN voting patterns	Centralized policy direction, fewer fluctuations
Opportunism	Policy shifts based on public opinion, electoral cycles	Strategic alliances for national security, economic benefit
Assertiveness	Multilateralism, diplomatic efforts (e.g., peacekeeping, global governance)	Military assertiveness, territorial expansion, strategic isolation
Regime Survival	Balancing domestic pressures with international norms	Focused on maintaining control, often through coercion and strategic partnerships
Strategic Stability	Stability in policy through institutional checks and balances	Long-term policies driven by leader or elite's personal interests

Explanation:

Policy Consistency: For democracies, consistency is often affected by electoral cycles and public opinion, whereas authoritarian regimes tend to show more consistent policies due to centralized decision-making.

Opportunism: Democracies may shift their policies based on voter preferences or global opinion, while authoritarian regimes capitalize on strategic interests, such as trade negotiations and military interventions, to maintain power.

Assertiveness: Democratic regimes often emphasize multilateralism and cooperative frameworks (e.g., through the UN, WTO), while authoritarian regimes tend to assert power through military force, as seen with Russia's actions in Ukraine or China in the South China Sea.

Regime Survival: In democracies, regime survival is balanced by public opinion and institutional constraints, while authoritarian regimes tend to focus on maintaining internal control and consolidating power.

Strategic Stability: Democracies achieve stability through checks and balances and public accountability, while authoritarian regimes rely on centralized control, which can be both a strength and a vulnerability.

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6.2. Discussion

6.2.1. Theoretical Alignment

The findings resonate with liberal theory, which views democracies as promoters of international cooperation, norms, and values such as human rights. Democracies are more likely to engage in multilateral frameworks that emphasize the promotion of democratic values, such as trade agreements, human rights treaties, and global environmental standards. These actions confirm that democratic regimes prioritize global norms and institutional collaboration.

They also align with realist perspectives, which argue that authoritarian regimes prioritize national interests, power, and stability through pragmatic alliances and security-driven strategies. Authoritarian states tend to focus more on regime survival and regional influence rather than adherence to international norms, making their foreign policy more strategic and pragmatic.

By examining empirical evidence from both case studies and expert interviews, it is clear that the theoretical frameworks hold true across a variety of regimes. The data from Germany (a democracy), India (an emerging democracy), and China (an authoritarian regime) confirm the predictable foreign policy behaviors identified in both liberal and realist theories. These findings validate the explanatory power of these frameworks in understanding regime-driven foreign policy decisions.

6.2.2. Implications for International Relations

Democracies like Germany and India strengthen the international order by promoting multilateralism and cooperative approaches to global challenges. Germany actively engages in multilateral institutions such as the UN, WTO, and Paris Climate Agreement, aligning its foreign policy with international norms and democratic values. India, while a newer democracy, similarly engages in multilateral frameworks, although it also navigates complex internal challenges that affect its international stance.

Democracies tend to prioritize policies that align with international standards in areas such as human rights, trade, and environmental protection. These regimes, driven by institutional constraints and public accountability, are more likely to work with international organizations and adhere to treaties like the Paris Agreement.

Conversely, authoritarian states like China and Russia often exert significant regional influence but may also disrupt international norms and generate tensions with democratic states and institutions. Experts interviewed for this study indicated that authoritarian regimes are more likely to act in ways that prioritize regime security, economic pragmatism, and military alliances, often at the expense of global cooperation. For instance, China's foreign policy, particularly in its engagement with trade agreements and security initiatives in the South China Sea, often highlights its regional dominance and the use of economic leverage to consolidate power.

6.2.3. Policy Recommendations

Engagement with Democracies: Engagement with democratic states should emphasize shared values and multilateral cooperation to enhance partnerships. Diplomats emphasized the importance of cooperative frameworks in areas like climate change and trade agreements. Strengthening ties with Germany and India, for instance, requires aligning foreign policy with their commitments to global norms and institutional collaboration.

Interaction with Authoritarian Regimes: Interaction with authoritarian regimes like China requires pragmatic negotiation strategies that account for their priorities, such as regime survival and geopolitical influence. In dealings with these regimes, balancing strategic conflicts with trade deals and military cooperation is essential. China, for instance, often seeks bilateral and regional agreements that cater to its domestic stability, requiring diplomatic strategies that focus on trade and economic cooperation while managing differences on issues like human rights and military conduct.

6.2.4. Future Research Directions

Further comparative studies are needed to assess how regime type shapes responses to specific crises, while also exploring the role of historical, cultural, and regional contexts in shaping foreign policy behavior. Specifically, research on emerging democracies and hybrid regimes (e.g., Turkey and Russia) would provide further insights into political system evolution and its impact on foreign policy. Russia, for example, is an authoritarian state but also demonstrates characteristics of a hybrid regime as it pursues a pragmatic foreign policy with strategic use of regional alliances and military power.

This study focuses on established democracies (e.g., Germany, India) and authoritarian regimes (e.g., China, Russia), but hybrid regimes such as Turkey offer a unique opportunity for future exploration. Research into hybrid regimes could explore how countries with mixed political characteristics navigate both domestic instability and international pressures in shaping foreign policy strategies.

7. Conclusion

This research reveals crucial insights into how regime types shape international behavior. The findings show that democratic regimes are characterized by their engagement in multilateral diplomacy and responsiveness to public opinion, leading to foreign policies that reflect democratic values and international norms.

In contrast, authoritarian regimes, with their centralized control and focus on regime stability, tend to implement more consistent and strategic foreign policies. These findings underscore the direct link between political systems and foreign policy strategies, highlighting the importance of understanding regime characteristics to predict and interpret states' international actions.

The research contributes to theoretical frameworks by validating existing theories on democratic and authoritarian behaviors and offers practical implications for policymakers and analysts in navigating international relations. By bridging gaps in current literature and suggesting avenues for future research, this study enriches our understanding of how political regimes influence foreign policy and provides a comprehensive basis for further exploration in the field.

Summary of Key Contributions:

1. **Influence of Political Regimes on Foreign Policy:** This research reveals that political regimes significantly influence foreign policy strategies, with democratic states adopting more diplomatic and cooperative policies, and authoritarian regimes focusing on consistency and stability.
2. **Theoretical Implications:** The study supports democratic peace and power-centralization theories, showing that democratic governance aligns with multilateral diplomacy and international norms, while authoritarian foreign policies emphasize stability and coherence.
3. **Practical Implications:** Political regimes significantly impact foreign policy, aiding in predicting states' actions, developing diplomatic strategies, managing conflicts, and engaging with diverse political systems in international relations.
4. **Contributions to the Field:** This research provides a comparative analysis of foreign policy strategies across different regime types, addressing existing literature gaps and enriching academic discussions on the impact of regime type.
5. **Future Research Directions:** The research recommends future studies on emerging democracies and hybrid regimes to understand political system evolution and foreign policy impact, incorporating diverse methodologies and case studies for shaping international strategy.

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