



An Assessment of the Role of United Nations Security Council and United States Interventions in North Korea Nuclear Programme

Adam Musa, Johson Uchechukwu Agbo and Haruna Ayuba

Department of Political Science Social Sciences, University of Maiduguri Faculty, Borno State Nigeria

Abstract

This study explores the complex interactions between the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and U.S. interventions concerning North Korea's nuclear program, assessing the effectiveness and limitations of these approaches. The North Korean nuclear issue presents a significant challenge to global security, leading to coordinated international responses. The UNSC has implemented various sanctions to limit North Korea's access to nuclear materials and technology, establishing a framework for collective action. However, compliance remains problematic as North Korea continues to progress in its nuclear capabilities. Simultaneously, the U.S. has employed a multifaceted strategy, shifting from "strategic patience" under the Obama administration to direct negotiations during the Trump presidency. Although high-profile summits aimed to promote dialogue, they often resulted in limited outcomes, complicating denuclearization efforts. Geopolitical dynamics, particularly the roles of China and Russia, further influence the UNSC's effectiveness in maintaining a unified stance against North Korea. Additionally, the humanitarian implications of sanctions raise ethical concerns regarding their impact on the North Korean population. Ultimately, this analysis argues for a more integrated strategy that combines diplomatic engagement, regional cooperation, and a nuanced understanding of humanitarian considerations to achieve lasting peace and security in the region.

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Corresponding Author

Adam Musa
adammusa520@gmail.com
Tel: +2348133348683

1. Introduction

North Korea has pursued nuclear weapons since the early 1950s, establishing its nuclear program with the founding of the Atomic Energy Research Institute and the Academy of Sciences. Initial progress in its nuclear

capabilities was significantly aided by cooperative agreements with the Soviet Union, notably marked by the signing of the founding charter of the Soviet Union's Joint Institute for Nuclear Research in February 1956. This partnership facilitated the training

of North Korean scientists and technicians in the USSR, leading to the development of the Yongbyon Nuclear Research Center, where a Soviet IRT-2000 reactor was installed (Anifowose, 1999).

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, North Korea's nuclear ambitions expanded, bolstered by limited foreign assistance and a growing emphasis on indigenous development. Despite overtures for technology sharing from China after its first nuclear test in 1964, North Korea's relationship with Beijing soured, prompting a shift toward self-reliance in its nuclear program. By the early 1970s, North Korean engineers were reportedly utilizing indigenous technology to enhance the IRT-2000 reactor and were acquiring plutonium reprocessing capabilities (Queste, 1973).

The 1980s marked a period of significant domestic advancement, with North Korea constructing uranium milling facilities and a 5MW(e) reactor while also experimenting with high explosives necessary for nuclear weapons development. This period saw North Korea's commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in December 1985, which it signed as a non-nuclear weapon state in exchange for Soviet assistance in building light water reactors (LWRs) (Korda & Johns, 2024).

In the ensuing decades, North Korea continued to enhance its nuclear capabilities, culminating in a series of nuclear tests that drew international condemnation and led to increased sanctions. The first confirmed test occurred in 2006, and subsequent tests, including a claimed thermonuclear device test in January 2016, further escalated tensions in the region (Darwis, 2023). North Korea's nuclear advancements have raised significant security concerns, not only for the United States but also for neighboring countries, prompting ongoing discussions about the effectiveness of measures aimed at

constraining its nuclear program (Choi & Jun, 2022).

The issue of North Korea's nuclear programme has been a significant concern for international security since the country began its nuclear ambitions in the late 20th century. Following its first nuclear test in 2006, North Korea has continued to develop its nuclear capabilities, prompting a series of responses from the international community, particularly the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the United States. The UNSC has implemented a range of sanctions aimed at curbing North Korea's nuclear activities, while the U.S. has employed various strategies, including diplomatic negotiations and additional sanctions, to address the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear arsenal.

Despite these efforts, the effectiveness of UNSC sanctions and U.S. interventions has been widely debated. Some scholars argue that the sanctions have been largely ineffective due to North Korea's resilience and the complexities of its political landscape (lee,2022). Others assert that the U.S. approach has often been inconsistent, reflecting a lack of coherent policy towards North Korea, which complicates the international community's unified response (lim, 2023). Furthermore, the geopolitical dynamics in the region, particularly the influence of China and South Korea, further complicate the situation, as these nations have their own interests and strategies regarding North Korea's nuclear aspirations (kelly,2022).

Understanding the role of the UNSC and U.S. interventions in the context of North Korea's nuclear programme requires a comprehensive analysis of historical events, policy decisions, and the broader implications for global security. This study aims to assess the effectiveness of these interventions, exploring both the successes and limitations in

addressing one of the most pressing security challenges of the 21st century.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Conceptual Issues

The nuclear ambitions of North Korea have prompted extensive international responses, particularly from the UNSC and the United States. Heesu Lee and Sunil Kim's study highlights the evolution of UNSC sanctions, arguing that these measures have often been reactive rather than proactive, resulting in limited effectiveness in curbing North Korea's nuclear development. They suggest that the U.S. has strategically shaped the sanctions regime, which has led to a perception of the UNSC moving from a "willing good cop" to a "reluctant bad cop" (lee, 2022)

In examining the U.S. approach, Gospel Sopuruchi Obi and Kiale Nyiayaana discuss the historical context of sanctions applied by multiple U.S. administrations. They argue that despite the consistent use of sanctions as a tool for coercion, these efforts have not successfully led to denuclearization, highlighting the complexity of negotiating with North Korea and the need for a more nuanced approach (obi, 2023)

Additionally, Danial Darwis explores the implications of U.S. policy during Donald Trump's presidency, applying the Security framework to understand the dynamics between U.S. actions and North Korean responses. His analysis underscores how military posturing and threats from both sides have perpetuated a cycle of tension, complicating diplomatic efforts and contributing to the persistence of North Korea's nuclear program (Darwis, 2023) Together, these studies illuminate the multifaceted challenges faced by the UNSC and the U.S. in addressing North Korea's nuclear ambitions, suggesting that a reevaluation of strategies and increased diplomatic engagement may be necessary for progress.

One of the issues that affect global community especially the superpowers is the

issue of nuclear arms. Globally, there are few countries that have these arms and efforts have been instituted to stop countries from having the weapons and those that have them have been controlled through international instruments. The issues of international and collective security are involving matters that are considered as threats and solutions to global peace and security such as wars, alliances, traditional/military threats, non-traditional security threats, domestic and international policy towards war and peace and by extension, global peace and security. International and collective security is an appraisal of the concern on the causes and effects of nuclear war and the use of military and non-military threats to achieve global peace and security (Jones, 1991:1). In the pre-war years, global security or collective security is the predominant concern of the idealist who perceives cooperation, harmony and moral values as the ideals behind the prevention of war and sustenance of global peace and security. This has been proven inadequate with the outbreak of the two World Wars which called for a more radical and consolidated effort (Baldwin, 1996).

International security during the Cold War presented the globe with two balanced power blocs that nearly threatened the survival of the world with their armed race in nuclear possession. After the Cold War rivalry, the international security faced a new dimension of one dominant and strong overseer of the global collective security; the US and her allies. Thus, military power and military competition in the globe subsided in the post-Cold war era. The supremacy and ascendancy of the US as the world unofficial policeman ushered in a new global pattern of collective security that called for a rethink in strategic studies on nuclear weapon. Security threats transformed from military to non-traditional threats in the likes of poverty, economy, environment, climate change, cyber security, terrorism and other modern warfare. This does not mean that the military threats are obsolescence but the military competition has been suppressed by the unrivalled position of

US in terms of capability in this perspective (Baldwin, 1996).

2.1.1. Nuclear

Nuclear weapon is described as a weapon that derives its energy from the nuclear relations of fission and fusion. Even the smallest nuclear weapon is more powerful largest of conventional explosives a ten megaton can destroy an entire city. The nuclear politics is an attempt by other Nation States to acquire, maintain, exercise and increase their power at the expense of the other states. The method employed involves the use of pressure, influence propaganda, diplomacy or policies of other states within the international community (Ishiaq, 2007).

The nuclear weapons are the most destruction technology ever developed; those nuclear weapons are not merely quantitatively different from those that processed them, they equally possessed qualitative attribute that will continue to have an impact on the international community. Its member unite and nature of relations among them (Holsti, 1988).

Nuclear is the use of nuclear reactions that release energy to generate heat, which can in turn be used to create electricity. This form of energy has a number of advantages and disadvantages over more traditional forms of power generation, including being extremely efficient but having a relatively high cost and environmental impact compared to its alternatives. As such, it remains an important part of many countries' overall power mix as we continue our shift towards cleaner sources like renewable energy (Duncombe, 2016).

Nuclear is a form of energy derived from splitting atoms and releasing the nuclear potential that binds them together. It can be used to generate electricity, run submarines, or as an explosive force in weapons such as atomic bombs. Nuclear technology comes with both benefits and risks; some countries

are taking full advantage of its positive aspects while other countries remain wary of its danger. The Nuclear has been created to explain to a broad audience the basic concepts of nuclear structure, radioactivity, and nuclear reactions as well as to highlight current areas of research and excitement in the field (Duncombe, 2016).

2.1.2. Nuclear Proliferation

The proliferation of nuclear weapon was on the rationale of the armed race in the Cold War period. The end of the Cold War did not see the end of the nuclear threat to global peace and security. North Korea and Iran are already claiming to have developed nuclear chain reactors either for weaponry in the case of North Korea or for domestic civil purpose as in the case of Iran. The Non-Proliferation Treaty was introduced and made a subject of global security but it has not deterred other nation-states from their ambition especially that the nuclear powers did not display their willingness to reduce their volumes or even to disarm (Siracusa, 2008). It should be noted that the five members of the Security Council; United States, Russia, China, United Kingdom and France all possessed nuclear weapons in mass quantity. For example, the US alone has over 5000 nuclear weapons in its current deployed stockpile and an additional 4000 stored in an assembled state. Russia has over 4500 in its deployed stockpile and also over 7000 stored in an assembled state. The Soviet Union manufactured 50 megaton bombs in the 1960s alone, an equivalent to 5000 Hiroshima's (Mosley et al. 2011). One cannot expect any form of justice from the members that are saddled with the decision on non-proliferation who armed to the teeth with the same prohibited bomb.

Nuclear proliferation is the spread of nuclear weapons, fissionable material, and weapons-applicable nuclear technology and information to nations not recognized as

"Nuclear Weapon States" by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, commonly known as the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Proliferation has been opposed by many nations with and without nuclear weapons, as governments fear that more countries with nuclear weapons will increase the possibility of nuclear warfare (up to and including the so-called counter value targeting of civilians with nuclear weapons), destabilize international or regional relations, or infringe upon the national sovereignty of nation states (The first North Korea Nuclear Crisis 2004).

Four countries besides the five recognized Nuclear Weapons States have acquired, or are presumed to have acquired, nuclear weapons: India, Pakistan, North Korea, and Israel. None of these four is a party to the NPT, although North Korea acceded to the NPT in 1985, then withdrew in 2003 and conducted announced nuclear tests in 2006, 2009, 2013, 2016, and 2017 (Guardian (2017)). One critique of the NPT is that the treaty is discriminatory in the sense that only those countries that tested nuclear weapons before 1968 are recognized as nuclear weapon states while all other states are treated as non-nuclear-weapon states that can only join the treaty even if they forswear nuclear weapons (Nina, 2013).

2.1.3. Nuclear capabilities

Simultaneously, North Korea began experimenting with Paralleling the problems of analyzing the motivational aspect are those associated with determining whether a state or terrorist group actually possesses a radiological or nuclear capability. The case of South Africa indicates the difficulties in this area. On 24 March 1993 the then President F. W. de Klerk announced that South Africa had produced six nuclear devices prior to 1989 but had dismantled them before signing the NPT. While this announcement confirmed what many previously speculated—that South Africa possessed a nuclear capability during the 1980s it also suggested that a state did not need to test a nuclear device to be in possession of a nuclear stockpile.

Additionally, there are currently other industrialized states with large nuclear power programmes that could be used to produce quantities of fissile materials for military purposes if a decision were taken to do so. The main barrier to nuclear weapon acquisition in such cases may therefore be political, not technological.

The situations in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Iran, and Iraq have raised important issues concerning capabilities and intentions. These instances reveal the difficulties in obtaining consensus in international foray on how to respond to non-compliance and the problems associated with verifying treaty compliance in situations where special inspection or nuclear development arrangements are agreed. In the case of Iraq, a special inspection arrangement known as UNSCOM (United Nations Special Committee) was established following the 1991 Gulf War to oversee the dismantling of the WMD programme that had come to light as a result of the conflict. By the late 1990s problems were encountered over access to particular sites and UNSCOM inspectors were withdrawn. Disagreements also surfaced among the five Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council (P-5) concerning how to implement the UN resolutions that had been passed in connection with Iraq since 1991. These had not been resolved at the time of the intervention in Iraq that occurred in 2003 and subsequent inspections in Iraq were unable to find evidence of significant undeclared WMD (Syed, 2012).

The complexity associated with compliance has similarly featured in connection with Iran. The country became the Subject of attention from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) over delays in signing an Additional Protocol to Iran's safeguards agreement that requires increased transparency on the part of NNWS in respect of its nuclear programme. Although Iran later did sign the Protocol, speculation was fuelled because the IAEA discovered facilities capable of enriching uranium that had not

been declared to it. In an effort to find a solution, a dialogue between Iran and EU-3, (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) began in October 2003. While an agreement was reached between the parties in Paris in November 2004, the situation was not resolved. In 2006 the UN Security Council passed resolutions, under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, requiring Iran to comply with its international obligations. Further discussion between the P-5 Plus Germany on how to achieve compliance followed as a result of continued uncertainty over Iran's nuclear programme and concomitant concerns over its development of a ballistic missile and satellite launch capability. Throughout this period Iran-maintained that the nuclear programme was peaceful and in November 2009 stated that the country would expand its uranium enrichment capability (Guardian, 2013).

2.1.4. Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

Early efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation involved intense government secrecy, the wartime acquisition of known uranium stores (the Combined Development Trust), and at times even outright sabotage such as the bombing of a heavy-water facility in Norway thought to be used for a German nuclear program. These efforts began immediately after the discovery of nuclear fission and its military potential, none of these efforts were explicitly public, because the weapon developments themselves were kept secret until the bombing of Hiroshima (Coppen, 2017).

The concern for the effects of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the Second World War after their use by the US in 1945 led to the first resolution by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) which set up a commission. The commission was charged with the responsibility of reporting to the Security Council and to make specific proposals for the elimination of atomic

weapons from the national weaponry reserves of world countries. Soon after the US, other world countries joined the race in the possession of the weapon in the likes of Soviet Union (1949), United Kingdom (1952), France (1960) and China (1964). Since the proliferation by several states, the treaty for non-proliferation adopted by the UN became limited and non-functionable as anticipated. In 1961, the UN declared that the use of nuclear weapon is banned and is against civilisation and it's a crime against humanity that is against ethics of the organisation. In 1963, the Treaty that bans the test of nuclear weapon in the atmosphere, outer space and in under water was adopted by the UN (Kissling, 2008).

The earlier attempt at reducing the proliferation of nuclear weapons is the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) between the US and the USSR during the armed race and Cold War ideological battle. Invariably, the SALT was difficult to attain or actualize because the talks and other official engagements between the two nuclear powers failed to yield the desired results during the heat period of the race (Scheling, 2018).

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was adopted in 1996 which has not been able to deter the nuclear powers from their testing of nuclear weapons as in the case of France, China, India and Pakistan in 1998. Since 1980, the NPT has been supplemented by five different Conventions from the IAEA on nuclear safety. The nuclear power plants are vulnerable and can easily be targeted once their location is identified. This has been actualized when the Israeli attacked the nuclear power plant of Iraqi in 1986 and destroyed it. In addition, in 2005, the UN adopted a Treaty on the "Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism" (Kissling, 2008). Additionally, Smith (2006) stresses that the US has turned itself a rogue state that is busy deterring the non-nuclear states from

proliferation through the use counter proliferation strategies, preemptive and preventive war and establishing a global quarantine against Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). He further argued that Iraq and North Korea are such examples of the victims of the US efforts towards non-proliferation. The non-proliferation was taken beyond the proliferation but also the counterterrorism. In the UN Charter Chapter VII, resolution 1540 incorporated under the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) was adopted on 28 April, 2004 (Bosch & Van Ham, 2007:3).

A conference was held in Rome in Italy on October 9-10 on International Cooperation for Enhancing Nuclear Safety, Security, Safeguards and Non-Proliferation in consideration with 60 years of the IAEA. In the conference, the successes, challenges and suggestions were made to further consolidate the efforts of the UN and IAEA in preventing the proliferation and spread of nuclear weapons (Maiani et al. 2017).

2.1.5. International Atomic Energy Agency

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) which was established in 1957 with the prior goal of channeling the use of nuclear power and energy for safety instead of security threat. The major role of IAEA is to safeguard and to inspect the location and nature of their nuclear activities voluntarily if the country is the member of the IAEA. The target was initially intended to protect the diversion of nuclear component for potential proliferation of weapons. The team of inspectors in IAEA frequently visits the nuclear sites of the member-countries to ensure that the inventories of nuclear are accounted for accordingly and that nuclear and nuclear-related facilities are used purposely for their intended peaceful utilization. However, the rules and procedures of the inspection by the IAEA was contested and rigorously debated. The developing countries insisted on a loose supervision while the developed countries or the nuclear powers emphasized on strict and closer supervision (Frieman, 2004:8). The

European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) also made several efforts in controlling proliferation and spread among its members through treaties and agreements internally (Fry, Keatinge & Rotblat, 1990).

From 1968 onward, the IAEA became an important part of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) for the inspection and control of proliferation. The NPT came on board in 1968 despite the fact that the world has not yet witnessed any nuclear war. The NPT is lopsided against the non-nuclear states because it emphasizes on total non-proliferation while at the same time paying lesser attention to the already declared states. The NPT prohibits the nuclear states from exporting or helping the non-nuclear states with the technology for developing nuclear weapons as stated in Article I of the Treaty. NPT members who do not possess nuclear weapons must meet specific conditions. They must not develop any nuclear weapon; they must renounce any programme in existence for the proliferation and they must subject all their nuclear facilities under close inspection by the IAEA. In order to alleviate the fears of the non-nuclear states who perceived the NPT as discriminatory, the NPT introduced Article IV which demands the nuclear powers to commit themselves sincerely towards discarding their weapons. Another weakness in the NPT agreement is that it has not deter the states that are already in possession of nuclear weapons from 1967 downward or before the Treaty from proliferating more and expanding their weapons. The law only restricts the non-possessors from arming themselves in order to prevent the spread of the weapons of mass destruction (Frieman, 2004).

Russia's nuclear disarmament policy has been marked by the signing of a series of treaties with the US since the early 1990s resulting in significant reductions in the number of nuclear weapons. Russia and the US together possess nearly 96 per cent of the world's nuclear weapons. Therefore, any agreement to cut down nuclear weapons between the two sides would be considered as

a major breakthrough. The Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty, signed in 1991, between the US and Russia was a landmark step in that direction.

Mattiacci and Jones (2016) show how the existence of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty hinders state progression away from their current nuclear weapons status. They observed that after signing the treaty, most states do not completely reverse their status. Several non-nuclear weapons states began development of a nuclear weapons program, but then abandoned their efforts and decided to return to their previous status. The rationale for some decision reversals includes the loss of the security dilemma that supported acquiring nuclear weapons (Brazil and Argentina), the cost of creating and/or maintaining nuclear weapons (Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine), and pressure from superpower states and the rest of the international system (South Korea). Two noted exceptions to the trend of states returning to their previous status are India, which gave up its programme only to re-establish it later, and North Korea which completely pulled out of the treaty in 2003. Of note, North Korea had already begun developing a nuclear weapons programme long before signing the treaty. Solingen (2007) would agree that the economic impact of potential sanctions and maintenance of a weapons programme are important considerations for states. Way and Weeks (2014) add that "personal list dictators" are likely to respond to standard pressures of the international system. Hymans (2008) would point to North Korea as an example of how "oppositional nationalists" are immune to the standard pressures of the international system. Horowitz's study also implies that the standards of the international systems may also not be effective against authoritarian regimes with established nuclear programmes (latent or weaponized).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that anchored the analysis of this study is the theory of Collective Security theory and hegemonic stability theory these theories are in one way or the other related to the frame work of this research. However, hegemonic stability theory is adopted to guide this study.

2.2.1 Collective Security Theory

Collective security theory is a fundamental concept in international relations, proposing that peace can be best preserved when states collaborate to prevent aggression against any member of the global community. This theory underscores the significance of mutual security through joint efforts. When one state under a collective security arrangement faces an attack, it is perceived as an assault on all members, leading to a united response to deter further aggression. Despite its relevance in contemporary international relations, collective security theory encounters challenges that hinder its efficacy. Understanding its foundational assumptions, role in modern geopolitics, and limitations is crucial for comprehending its potential impact on global peace and security.

2.2.2 Assumptions of Collective Security Theory

The assumptions of Collective Security Theory serve as the foundation for understanding how states can work together to maintain peace and security in the international system.

1. State Rationality: It assumes that states act rationally and will prioritize collective interests over individual ambitions. This rational behavior is essential for states to cooperate in the face of threats (Mearsheimer, 1994). State Rationality is a fundamental assumption that underpins the theory, suggesting that states are rational actors who prioritize collective interests over individual

ambitions. This rational behavior is crucial for fostering cooperation among states when faced with common threats.

2. Common Interests: Collective security relies on the belief that states share a common interest in maintaining peace and security. It assumes that aggression against one state is viewed as aggression against all (Krasnoff, 2018). The concept of Common Interests is another key assumption, highlighting the belief that states have a shared interest in preserving peace and security. According to this assumption, an attack on one member of a collective security arrangement is perceived as an attack on all, thus emphasizing the interconnectedness of state security.

3. Deterrence through Unity: The theory posits that the collective response to aggression will deter potential aggressors, as the cost of aggression outweighs the benefits (Walt, 1991). Deterrence through Unity is a critical assumption of Collective Security Theory, asserting that a unified response to aggression by member states will act as a deterrent against potential aggressors. By demonstrating a collective will to respond to threats, states can signal to potential adversaries that the costs of aggression outweigh the benefits, thereby dissuading them from engaging in hostile actions.

4. Shared Norms and Values: Collective security assumes a level of shared norms and values among states, facilitating cooperation and a unified response to threats (Acharya, 2004). Furthermore, Shared Norms and Values are considered essential assumptions of collective security, as they play a significant role in fostering cooperation and a cohesive response to security challenges. The theory assumes that states share common norms and values that guide their behavior and interactions. This shared set of principles facilitates mutual understanding and trust among states, ultimately enabling them to coordinate efforts effectively in the face of external threats.

In contemporary international relations, the relevance of Collective Security Theory remains evident as states continue to pursue cooperative approaches to address common security concerns. The establishment of various regional and international security organizations, such as NATO and the United Nations, reflects the enduring appeal of collective security arrangements in maintaining global stability.

However, while Collective Security Theory offers a compelling framework for promoting international security, it is not without limitations. One significant challenge to its effectiveness lies in the uneven distribution of power among states, which can impact decision-making and the willingness of powerful nations to commit resources to collective security efforts. Moreover, diverging national interests and conflicting priorities among member states can hinder the cohesive implementation of collective security mechanisms, potentially undermining their effectiveness in deterring aggression. The assumptions of Collective Security Theory provide valuable insights into how states can collaborate to enhance global security. By recognizing the importance of state rationality, common interests, deterrence through unity, and shared norms and values, policymakers and scholars can better understand the dynamics of collective security arrangements and address the challenges that may impede their success in contemporary international relations.

2.2.3 Relevance of Collective Security Theory

Despite its limitations, Collective Security Theory continues to hold significant relevance in the analysis of contemporary conflicts and international relations. One key area where its relevance is evident is within the United Nations framework.

1. United Nations Framework: The UN operates on the principles of collective security, with the Security Council tasked with responding to threats to peace. This

framework has been pivotal in addressing conflicts, as seen in interventions in places like Libya and the Korean Peninsula (Thakur, 2017). The United Nations, founded in the aftermath of World War II, operates on the principles of collective security as outlined in its Charter. The Security Council, a principal organ of the UN, is tasked with maintaining international peace and security and has the authority to take action, including the use of force, to respond to threats to peace. The concept of collective security has been pivotal in addressing conflicts and security challenges worldwide. Interventions in places like Libya and the Korean Peninsula have showcased the application of collective security principles in the UN framework, demonstrating the willingness of states to work together to deter aggression and maintain peace.

2. Regional Security Arrangements: Collective security principles are applied in various regional organizations, such as NATO and the African Union, which demonstrate how states can collaborate to enhance security (Buzan, 2010). Furthermore, the relevance of Collective Security Theory is also evident in various regional security arrangements. Regional organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the African Union have adopted collective security principles as part of their frameworks. These organizations serve as platforms for states to collaborate on security issues, share intelligence, and coordinate responses to regional threats. The NATO alliance, for example, has collective defense mechanisms where an attack on one member is considered an attack on all, reflecting the core tenets of Collective Security Theory. Similarly, the African Union has employed collective security approaches to address conflicts and promote stability in the African continent.

3. Global Challenges: Issues like terrorism and climate change necessitate collective responses, highlighting the ongoing need for unified action based on collective security principles (Hoffman, 2020). Moreover, global challenges such as terrorism, cyber threats, and climate change underline the ongoing relevance of collective security principles. These transnational issues require coordinated and collective responses from the international community. The interconnected nature of modern security threats necessitates a unified approach based on mutual cooperation and shared responsibilities. The principles of collective security offer a framework through which states can work together to address common challenges and enhance global security. Scholars like Hoffman (2020) have emphasized the importance of collective action in confronting contemporary security threats, highlighting the enduring value of collective security theory in navigating the complexities of the modern world.

The continued relevance of Collective Security Theory in international relations is evident through its application in the United Nations framework, regional security arrangements, and addressing global challenges. While facing limitations and criticisms, the concept of collective security remains a fundamental pillar in promoting mutual security, deterring aggression, and maintaining peace in an increasingly interconnected world. By fostering cooperation and solidarity among states, collective security theory offers a pathway towards a more secure and stable international order.

2.2.4 Limitations of Collective Security Theory

The limitations of Collective Security Theory include the difficulty in achieving consensus among diverse states, the potential for free-riding by some members, and the challenge of enforcing collective action in practice. While

the theory provides a framework for understanding international cooperation, several limitations challenge its effectiveness:

1. Selective Participation: Collective security often suffers from selective engagement, where powerful states may choose to intervene based on strategic interests rather than a commitment to collective action (Pape, 2005). This was evident in the inconsistent responses to conflicts in Syria and Ukraine. Selective engagement in collective security refers to powerful states intervening in conflicts based on their strategic interests rather than a commitment to collective action. This phenomenon, as observed in responses to the Syria and Ukraine conflicts, undermines the core principle of collective security by introducing bias and inconsistency in the enforcement of mutual security agreements. Such selective interventions can weaken the effectiveness of collective security initiatives and erode trust among member states, ultimately diminishing the theory's ability to deter aggression and maintain peace in the international system.

2. Free-Riding Behavior: Member states may exhibit free-riding behavior, relying on others to shoulder the burden of collective defense, which can undermine the system's effectiveness (Nye, 2011). Free-riding behavior within collective security arrangements occurs when some member states fail to contribute proportionally to collective defense efforts, instead relying on others to bear the burden of ensuring mutual security. This behavior can erode trust, weaken cooperation, and ultimately compromise the effectiveness of the system in deterring aggression and maintaining peace. Addressing free-riding tendencies is

crucial for the sustainability and success of collective security initiatives in international relations.

3. Diverse Interests: The assumption of common interests is often flawed, as states have divergent national interests that can hinder unified responses. This divergence can lead to paralysis in decision-making within organizations like the UN (Hurd, 1999). The assumption that states share common interests within collective security frameworks can be problematic due to the reality of divergent national interests among member states. These conflicting priorities can impede cohesive and decisive responses, potentially resulting in indecision and ineffective action within international bodies like the United Nations. Overcoming these divergences and reconciling conflicting interests is essential for fostering unity and enhancing the efficacy of collective security mechanisms in addressing global security challenges.

4. Sovereignty Concerns: States may be reluctant to cede sovereignty to a collective authority, particularly when it comes to military interventions. This reluctance can limit the effectiveness of collective security mechanisms (R2P Commission, 2001). The hesitance of states to relinquish autonomy, especially in matters of military intervention, can hinder the operational efficiency of collective security structures such as the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) framework. This sovereignty dilemma often leads to delays in decision-making and implementation, weakening the ability of collective security mechanisms to swiftly and effectively respond to humanitarian crises and security threats. Collective Security Theory offers a valuable framework for understanding international

cooperation in the pursuit of peace and security. While its assumptions provide a basis for collective action, the theory's limitations highlight the complexities of international relations in a multipolar world. Future research should explore innovative approaches to enhance the effectiveness of collective security in addressing contemporary global challenges.

2.3 Hegemonic Stability Theory

Hegemonic Stability Theory (HST) posits that international stability and order are most effectively maintained when a single dominant power, or hegemon, exerts its influence over a system of states. This hegemon typically possesses significant economic, military, and political resources, which it uses to establish and enforce rules and norms that promote cooperation and stability among other states. According to HST, the hegemon's leadership is crucial for providing public goods, such as security and economic stability, which smaller states may be unable to provide for themselves.

The theory suggests that when a hegemon is strong and willing to lead, the international system tends to be more stable and predictable. Conversely, when the hegemon's power wanes or if it becomes less willing to fulfill its leadership role, the system may become unstable, leading to increased conflict and competition among states. HST has been used to analyze various historical periods, including the post-World War II era, where the United States emerged as a hegemonic power, shaping global institutions and norms that fostered economic growth and stability. Hegemonic Stability Theory (HST) posits that a stable international system is maintained by a dominant power or hegemon that establishes and enforces rules to promote order and stability. This literature review explores the foundational principles of HST, its relevance in contemporary international relations, and

the critiques and limitations that have emerged in its application.

2.3.1 Key Assumptions of Hegemonic Stability Theory

Hegemonic Stability Theory (HST) is a prominent concept in international relations that posits a central dominant power, known as a hegemon, plays a crucial role in maintaining global stability and order. The theory is underpinned by several key assumptions that shed light on how the distribution of power among states impacts the international system.

HST is built on several core assumptions:

1. *Power Concentration:* The theory asserts that a unipolar world, where one state holds significant power, is more likely to maintain global stability compared to a multipolar system, which can lead to conflict and competition (Kindleberger, 1973). One fundamental assumption of HST is the notion of power concentration. HST argues that a unipolar world, where one state possesses significant power capabilities surpassing that of other states, is more conducive to global stability compared to a multipolar system characterized by a balance of power among several strong actors. This concentration of power in a single hegemon reduces the likelihood of conflict and promotes a more predictable international environment. As noted by Kindleberger (1973), a unipolar system with a hegemon at its core tends to deter aggressive behavior and promote stability through the establishment of power asymmetries.

2. *Rule Setting:* The hegemon is responsible for creating and upholding

international norms and rules, facilitating cooperation among states. This involves providing public goods, such as security and economic stability (Gilpin, 1981). Another critical assumption of HST pertains to the role of the hegemon in setting and upholding international rules and norms. The hegemon assumes the responsibility of shaping the international order by establishing a framework of rules that govern state conduct and interactions. This involves creating institutions and mechanisms that facilitate cooperation among states, promoting collective security, and ensuring the provision of public goods such as security, economic stability, and free trade. According to Gilpin (1981), the hegemon acts as a rule-setter, influencing the behavior of other states and fostering a sense of orderliness in the international system.

3. Deterrence of Aggression: By establishing a strong presence, the hegemon deters potential aggressors from disrupting the status quo, thereby reducing the likelihood of conflict (Krasnoff, 2018). Additionally, deterrence of aggression is a core tenet of HST. By leveraging its superior power resources, the hegemon acts as a deterrent against potential aggressors seeking to disrupt the existing status quo. The threat of retaliation from the hegemon serves as a deterrent, discouraging states from engaging in behavior that may lead to conflict or instability. Krasnoff (2018) highlights the crucial role of the hegemon in maintaining peace and order through its capacity to discourage acts of aggression and coercion.

In examining the contemporary relevance of Hegemonic Stability Theory, several key factors come into play. One significant area of relevance lies in the context of post-Cold War

unipolarity. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States emerged as the sole superpower, exercising considerable influence in shaping global affairs. Scholars such as Ikenberry (2001) have pointed to U.S. hegemony as a stabilizing force during this period, helping to maintain order and promote cooperation among states.

Moreover, in the face of global challenges such as climate change and terrorism, the hegemonic framework offers insights into how a dominant power can mobilize collective action to address shared threats. By providing leadership and resources, a hegemon can coordinate international efforts to tackle complex issues that transcend national boundaries. Buzan (2010) argues that strong leadership under a hegemonic power can facilitate cooperation and foster joint solutions to pressing global challenges.

Furthermore, as the international system undergoes shifts with the rise of new powers like China challenging U.S. dominance, Hegemonic Stability Theory remains relevant in assessing the dynamics of power transitions. Pape (2005) suggests that the theory provides a lens through which to analyze the potential for either conflict or cooperation as emerging powers seek to assert their influence on the global stage. Understanding how established and rising powers navigate power shifts can offer insights into the future trajectory of the international order.

In conclusion, Hegemonic Stability Theory offers valuable insights into the dynamics of power distribution, rule-setting, and deterrence in international relations. By examining the core assumptions of the theory and its contemporary relevance in a changing global landscape, scholars and policymakers can better understand the role of hegemonic powers in shaping the international system and maintaining stability amidst complex challenges and power transitions.

2.3.2 Relevance of Hegemonic Stability Theory
Hegemonic Stability Theory (HST) maintains relevance in analyzing contemporary global

dynamics due to its applicability in diverse contexts and its ability to provide insights into the power dynamics shaping the international system.

1. Post-Cold War Unipolarity: Following the end of the Cold War, the world experienced a period of unipolarity with the United States emerging as the predominant global hegemon. During this time, the U.S. played a central role in shaping international policies and institutions, thereby influencing the global order. According to scholars such as G. John Ikenberry (2001), U.S. hegemony contributed to a relative stability as it acted as a provider of public goods and a promoter of international norms. The unipolar moment highlighted how a single dominant power can exert significant influence over global affairs.

2. Global Challenges: Hegemonic Stability Theory offers valuable insights into addressing global challenges that transcend national borders. Issues such as climate change, terrorism, and pandemics require collective action and cooperation among states. A hegemonic power can play a crucial role in facilitating such collective efforts by providing leadership, resources, and coordination. As argued by Barry Buzan (2010), a hegemonic framework can enable the establishment of norms, rules, and institutions that foster cooperation and address these pressing global issues. The presence of a hegemon can lead to more effective responses to shared challenges through coordinated action.

3. Emerging Powers: The rise of new powers, particularly China, has sparked discussions about the shifting global power dynamics and the potential challenges it poses to existing hegemonic structures. Hegemonic Stability Theory offers a framework to assess the implications of emerging powers challenging

the established hegemon. Robert Pape (2005) highlights how the transition of power from one dominant state to another can create tensions and uncertainties in the international system. By examining how rising powers interact with and potentially challenge the existing hegemon, HST provides a lens through which to analyze the prospects for cooperation, conflict, and power realignment in the evolving global order.

Hegemonic Stability Theory remains a relevant and valuable framework for understanding the dynamics of power, stability, and cooperation in the contemporary international system. Whether in analyzing the impact of post-Cold War unipolarity, addressing global challenges, or assessing the dynamics between established and emerging powers, HST offers a nuanced perspective on the complexities of international relations and the role of hegemonic power in shaping the global landscape.

2.3.3. Critiques and Limitations

Hegemonic Stability Theory (HST) has been a pivotal framework in elucidating the intricacies of international relations by shedding light on the role of dominant powers in maintaining global stability. However, as with any theoretical perspective, HST has faced notable critiques and limitations that merit attention and scrutiny to refine our understanding of the dynamics of the international system.

1. Historical Exceptions: Critics argue that historical instances, such as the interwar period, demonstrate that hegemonic stability does not always prevent conflict, highlighting the theory's limitations in explaining complex geopolitical realities (Strange, 1996). One key critique leveled against HST is its historical exceptions, notably exemplified by the interwar

period. Critics argue that the theory does not always guarantee the prevention of conflict, as evidenced by historical instances where hegemonic stability failed to avert tensions. This critique underscores the theory's limitations in comprehensively explaining the multifaceted geopolitical realities characterized by periods of upheaval and discord.

2. Neglect of Non-State Actors: HST often overlooks the role of non-state actors and transnational issues that can influence international stability, such as terrorism and global economic crises (Nye, 2011). Another significant critique pertains to HST's tendency to neglect the influence of non-state actors and transnational issues on international stability. Non-state actors, ranging from terrorist organizations to global economic forces, wield considerable power and can significantly impact the dynamics of the international system. By overlooking these actors and issues, HST may provide an incomplete picture of the forces at play in shaping global stability.

3. Dynamic Nature of Power: The theory may be too rigid, as it does not adequately account for the fluidity of power dynamics in the international system, particularly in a multipolar world where multiple states exert influence (Acharya, 2004). Additionally, critics have highlighted the static nature of power dynamics within HST, suggesting that the theory may be overly rigid in its interpretation of how power operates in the international arena. In a world characterized by multipolar power structures and shifting alliances, the traditional HST framework might struggle to capture the fluid and evolving nature of power dynamics among nations. This

critique emphasizes the need for a more flexible and adaptive approach to analyzing power relations in contemporary global politics.

While HST offers valuable insights into understanding the significance of hegemonic powers in promoting global stability, its limitations necessitate a more nuanced and comprehensive perspective. Future research in international relations should strive to explore the intricate interplay between dominant hegemonic powers and emerging states, as well as the increasingly influential role of non-state actors in shaping the trajectory of global stability.

While HST has been instrumental in framing our understanding of international relations, critical scrutiny and recognition of its limitations are essential for advancing a more comprehensive and nuanced analysis of the complexities inherent in the global political landscape. By acknowledging and addressing these critiques, researchers and policymakers can develop a more robust framework that accounts for historical nuances, evolving power dynamics, and the diverse array of actors shaping the dynamics of international stability.

Hegemonic Stability Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding the dynamics of international relations, particularly in the context of power concentration and global stability. However, its limitations necessitate a nuanced approach that considers historical complexities and the evolving nature of global politics. Future research should explore the interplay between hegemonic powers and emerging states, as well as the role of non-state actors in shaping international stability.

3. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research design, focusing on the evaluation of secondary data and existing literature to establish facts, analyze trends, and draw conclusions regarding the roles of the United Nations Security Council and United States intervention in North Korea's nuclear

program. Secondary data were sourced from diverse materials, including newspapers, journals, articles, magazines, TV and radio broadcasts, expert interviews, internet sources, publications, textbooks, and commentaries. These data were analyzed and interpreted using a systematic and analytical approach.

The use of secondary data was justified by its ability to provide valuable insights in areas where direct access to respondents is not feasible, enabling the exploration of relevant issues that might be otherwise inaccessible. Thematic analysis was adopted to draw meaningful inferences from the data. This method involves interpreting and coding textual material to derive replicable and valid conclusions. The thematic analysis approach allowed the researcher to systematically reduce the data into logical and meaningful interpretations, making the findings comprehensible and communicable.

4. Discussion of findings

Discussion of the major findings regarding the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and United States interventions in North Korea's nuclear program, based on recent literature:

- i. *Effectiveness of UNSC Sanctions:* Heesu Lee and Sunil Kim argue that the UNSC's sanctions have transitioned from proactive measures to more reactive responses, significantly influenced by U.S. strategic interests. Their findings suggest that these sanctions have been largely ineffective in achieving denuclearization, as North Korea has continued its nuclear development despite the imposition of sanctions (Lee and Kim 2022).
- ii. *U.S. Sanction Strategy:* Hyung Sub Lim's research indicates that U.S. sanctions are deeply rooted in national security concerns, particularly regarding terrorism and weapons proliferation. Lim emphasizes that while these sanctions were intended to pressure North Korea, they have complicated diplomatic relations and may have inadvertently solidified North Korea's resolve to pursue its nuclear ambitions. This highlights a paradox where sanctions may contribute to the very outcomes they aim to prevent (Lim, 2023).
- iii. *Security Dilemma Dynamics:* Danial Darwis explores the concept of the Security Dilemma in the context of U.S.-North Korea relations during the Trump administration. His findings reveal that military posturing and aggressive rhetoric from both the U.S. and North Korea have perpetuated a cycle of mutual suspicion and hostility, complicating efforts for diplomatic engagement. This dynamic illustrates how strategic miscalculations can exacerbate tensions rather than resolve them (Darwis, 2023).
- iv. *Challenges of Diplomatic Engagement:* O. Davydov discusses the complexities surrounding the nuclear impasse on the Korean Peninsula, noting that effective diplomatic solutions are hindered by a lack of trust and the historical context of U.S.-North Korea relations. He suggests that breaking through this impasse requires a multifaceted approach that addresses security concerns and incentives for North Korea to engage in denuclearization talks (davydov,2024)
- v. *U.S. Economic Sanctions:* Hyung Sub Lim explores the U.S. sanctions against North Korea, initiated post-2006 nuclear tests. He discusses how these sanctions are tied to broader U.S. foreign policy goals, including concerns about terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. Lim's analysis suggests that while sanctions aimed to pressure North Korea, they also complicated diplomatic engagements and may have inadvertently reinforced North Korea's resolve to develop its nuclear capabilities (lim2023)

vi. *The Role of International Dynamics:* Danial Darwis examines the North Korean nuclear threat during Donald Trump's presidency, utilizing the Security Dilemma concept. This research sheds light on how the perceived threats and responses between the U.S. and North Korea have shaped the security environment, indicating a cycle of provocations and retaliations that complicate diplomatic efforts (Darwis, 2023).

The literature indicates that both UNSC sanctions and U.S. interventions have faced significant challenges, often leading to unintended consequences that undermine their goals. A reevaluation of strategies that emphasize diplomatic engagement and address underlying security dilemmas may be necessary for progress in mitigating North Korea's nuclear threat.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the interventions of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the United States in North Korea's nuclear program reveal a complex interplay of strategic interests, diplomatic failures, and regional security challenges. While the UNSC has attempted to impose sanctions to curb North Korea's nuclear ambitions, these measures have often proven to be reactive and ineffective, largely due to the influence of U.S. foreign policy and the resilience of the North Korean regime. The U.S. sanctions, while rooted in legitimate security concerns, have sometimes exacerbated tensions rather than facilitating constructive dialogue.

The concept of the Security Dilemma highlights how actions taken by the U.S. and North Korea can lead to a cycle of escalation, where both sides interpret each other's moves as threats, further entrenching their positions. This dynamic complicates diplomatic efforts and underscores the need for a more nuanced approach that prioritizes engagement over isolation.

Moving forward, a reassessment of strategies is essential. Instead of relying solely on sanctions, there is a pressing need for

diplomatic initiatives that address the underlying security concerns of all parties involved. Multilateral dialogues that include regional stakeholders, such as South Korea and China, may provide a more effective framework for achieving denuclearization and fostering stability on the Korean Peninsula. Ultimately, a comprehensive strategy that balances pressure with diplomacy could pave the way for resolving one of the most enduring security challenges in contemporary international relations.

To enhance the understanding and effectiveness of interventions by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the United States in addressing North Korea's nuclear program, I recommend the following approaches:

- i. *Comprehensive Review of Sanctions Effectiveness:* Future research should focus on a detailed analysis of the effectiveness of UNSC sanctions on North Korea. Studies like Lee and Kim's work, which argues that the UNSC's efforts have often been misaligned and reactive, should be expanded to include quantitative assessments of how sanctions impact North Korea's nuclear capabilities over time (Lee, 2022).
- ii. *Multilateral Diplomatic Frameworks:* There is a need for a reevaluation of the diplomatic Overall, the literature indicates that both UNSC sanctions and U.S. interventions have faced significant challenges, often leading to unintended consequences that undermine their goals. A reevaluation of strategies that emphasize diplomatic engagement and address underlying security dilemmas may be necessary for progress in mitigating North Korea's nuclear threat.
- iii. *Employed in negotiations with North Korea.* Incorporating perspectives from regional stakeholders, including South Korea, China, and Japan, could lead to a more comprehensive approach. This aligns with the findings of Kelly, who emphasizes the importance of maintaining unified positions among allies regarding sanctions (Kelly, 2022).

iv. *Engagement with Security Dilemma Dynamics:* Further investigation into the Security Dilemma as it pertains to U.S.-North Korea relations should be prioritized. Research by Darwis that applies this framework can help elucidate how perceived threats contribute to escalating tensions, thereby informing more effective diplomatic strategies that aim to reduce misunderstandings and foster trust (Darwis, 2023).

v. *Public and Academic Discourse:* Facilitating a broader public and academic discourse on the implications of North Korea's nuclear program and the effectiveness of international interventions can help garner support for innovative policy solutions. Engaging scholars from various fields, including international relations, security studies, and Asian studies, can provide a more holistic understanding of the issue.

vi. *Case Studies of Alternative Approaches:* Conducting case studies on successful diplomatic interventions in other contexts may offer valuable lessons for the North Korean situation. Analyzing instances where negotiation led to disarmament or conflict resolution could help identify best practices and strategies that could be adapted to the North Korean context.

Pursuing these recommendations, scholars and policymakers can contribute to a more effective and nuanced approach to addressing the challenges posed by North Korea's nuclear ambitions, ultimately leading to a more peaceful and secure international environment.

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