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Research Article

How the Military Shapes Policies: US Defence Diplomacy in Afghanistan

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Abstract

Global power shift and the long-lasting war on terror have left deep impact for US foreign policy. It has put a blow on the overall political, economic and diplomatic affairs that has caused securitization and increased military influence in American foreign policies. The post-9/11 deviations in military related policies to report these changing security scenarios have caused drift in civil-military tensions. It is subsequently becoming important to understand that states can fuse a military that is obliged to do the acts, the civilians ask them to, consequently guarantees that a military will remain under the control of civilian enough to the civilians and the state authorizes it to perform any task. Therefore, shifting the strategic policy, the defence diplomacy of the United States in the core of the current war against terror in Afghanistan helped US military to operate without granting of total authority to the Taliban. There is a notion that when war ends, diplomacy begins. But reality lies in a fact that diplomacy is a constant before, during and after wars. When diplomacy fails, war becomes an option at times.

Keywords: Power Shift, Foreign Policy, Defence Diplomacy, Hard Power, Soft Power.

1. Introduction

Defence diplomacy is the policy that involves peaceful application of changed and extensive military resources in establishing positive and cooperative relations with other foreign nations. Whose objectives lie at pursuing the foreign policy interests of the state to have a better insight of its security and defence policy, and whose activities are purposively lie on the exercise of negotiations and other diplomatic instruments. Overall, military diplomacy is the non-violent and peaceful utilization of varied and wide-ranging military resources in establishing positive and cooperative relations with other foreign nations, both bilateral and multi-lateral. The terms 'military' and 'defence' also diverges a little but can be castoff as identical words and terminologies. 'Military' refers to all actions and activities that come purely under the domain of uniformed personnel. While the term 'defence' deals with activities performed by whole defence establishment, that also includes the non-uniformed professionals, defence ministry, defence and national trainings (Muthanna, 2011).

In international affairs, diplomacy has been the key means by which countries have progressed their national interests. When a situation arises where diplomacy become futile, those interests

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were often pursued through the military power. In terms of national security, diplomacy is connoted to as soft power while military power is stated to as hard power. Today the discrepancy is not that crystal clear. Military diplomacy is demonstrating to be an awfully convenient means of pursuing national interests bereft of conflict. The international principal power, the US, corresponding many other Western nations, since spans, has effectively employed military diplomacy to supplement its interests around the world. Its theatre commands are staffed to pursue US foreign policy objectives across the world. US has determinedly implemented what one of its prominent presidents, John Kennedy, once articulated, "diplomacy and defence are not substitutes for one another, either alone would fail." In 2003, US Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld was inquired for his evaluations on soft power. His response was a casual one, stating that he did not know anything about soft power. However, few years later, Robert Gates, recognized what the soft power is. He also accepted the defence diplomacy as an important tannate of the American security in 21st century. Analysing the sensitivities of foreign policy matters, the US Department of Defence aimed at organizing the nation's military forces to prevent any future war.

Guaranteeing national security is not only linked with protecting borders, but also contains reform and stabilization efforts. Moreover, the tools of hard power are not only sufficient to address the foreign policy demands of the twenty-first century, and soft power is rematerializing as a vital component of foreign policy. The challenge is to have fusion of hard and soft power "smart power" to achieve foreign policy goals. Here the main focus of research aimed at the notion that gradual escalation of the militarization of US foreign policy and emergence of defence diplomacy legitimizes the role of soldier diplomats, that cause a net advancement in global diplomatic engagement and helps US to increase its sphere of influence on a broader level. This would include the queries about US policies that how hard power policies of US failed to achieve foreign policy interests? Additionally, how defence diplomacy helped US to expand its influence on a broader international system? And it further explains the strategic policy covers, US adopted to win war in Afghanistan. Furthermore, the research is significant to examine the concept from both the civil/military personnel involved, as well as the process of defence diplomacy. The paper presents defence diplomacy as an efficient and effective resilient structure from which states track their foreign policy objectives in an intricate international system. It also connotes that the act of defence diplomacy adapted engagement, along with the actors (agency-civilian or military), makes defence diplomacy an essential factor of US foreign policy throughout the long war in Afghanistan.

1.1. Theoretical Approach

The theory functional to understand the concept of defence diplomacy is Velvet Gauntlet Theory articulated by Gregory Winger. The Velvet Gauntlet refers to the iron hand in a soft velvet glove that appears to be antagonist in nature, what makes defence diplomacy defines in a way of combining soft and hard power side by side. Here the soft power refers to the non-violent use power, specifically to persuade others to do something according to one's own will through dialogues, legitimacy and attraction, rather than coercion. This can include public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy and educational diplomacy. Whereas, hard power purely focuses on the use of power, threat and force. It mainly includes military force and coercion (Brown 2009). Defence diplomacy as an extension of soft power performed by the defence establishment of a state towards another government. The most significant tenant of defence diplomacy has been practiced by one country in bringing change in the strategic thinking and establishments of another in a manner that was acquiescent to the practitioner.

1.2. Approaches towards Military Diplomacy

In the present scientific literature Pajtinka (2016) is of the view that military diplomacy has some different interpretations, it is considered to be most suitable to understand military diplomacy in the narrower sense, and to show the set of activities carried out mainly by the representatives of the ministry of defence and other state defence authorities, along with other state institutions, which aims at pursuing the foreign policy interests of the state in security and defence policy, and whose activities and affairs are based on the use of negotiations and other diplomatic instruments. The scenario of 21st Century defence policy is categorized by highs levels global interconnections. Consequently, diplomats and defence Experts must exercise multidimensional responsiveness and interdisciplinary knowledge. In order to develop effective future security strategies, the Defence and Diplomacy Band counterpart national trainings (Defense and Diplomacy, 2016). Here the need is to understand the role of military outside the criteria of use of force and hard power. The focus is now more on the engagement policy and collective role of defence and diplomatic department to avoid any ground conflict and to settle things by diplomatic means.

According to General (Rtd.) Kamal Davar, nation's strength to prevent diverse threats to its interests and adequately address the diverse transformational geo-political challenges in today's highly disturbed world rests primarily on its Comprehensive National Power (CNP) (Davar, 2018). The various strictures which contribute to CNP to be strong and improving. Some of the elements of CNP are a nation's economic power, military competences, industrial and technological ability, infrastructural planning, its population and the resultant demographic payments, educational and medical reach and more significantly, the respect its diplomacy adores in the comity of states. The CNP gets improved from a thoughtful blend of hard and soft power leading to expansion in its smart power. Diplomacy to further a nation's goals is, unquestionably, a critical dynamic and, if accompanied with defence diplomacy, will prove helpful for a nation. The world's leading power, the United States, like many other Western nations has efficiently employed military diplomacy to added its interests all around the globe (Davar, 2018).

Highlighting the role of US in establishing military diplomacy by Jayson and Derow, it is observed that since the Second World War (WWII), the security affairs and in turn, the increased militarization of American diplomacy has rapidly evolved the one way or the other. Any action declared as failure to address the growing security concerns of US foreign policy in the areas mostly covering humanitarian interventions along with stability and peace operations, and diplomacy will only continue to contest the current civil-military divide and threaten the stability of the state. It is therefore becoming significant to understand how states can reunite a military that is strong enough to do anything that the civilians ask of it, while at the same time guarantees that a military remains subordinate enough to do only what the civilians and the state permits it to do (Derow, 2018). Likewise, in case of US policies in Afghanistan, where the foreign policy decision for the use of hard power or soft power is finalized by the government through collaboration of defence department. The war on terror was initiated by the government and now the policy of table talk is also adopted by government and military is collaborating side by side.

2. Methodology

The research methodology used to examine this topic is based on qualitative analysis covering

secondary data source. Qualitative analyses of past events and current references include research articles, journals and white papers. In Theoretical terms, the paper examines texts of initial, modern, and current theorists to establish a channel of development as to the requirement of assimilating diplomatic and military activities. These information sources validate the legitimacy and critical view point of this topic. The methodology applied in this research is secondary in nature as it involves newspaper sources, journal articles, research work, opinion articles and white papers. The research is descriptive in nature. Furthermore, it involves the case-study method that focuses on the case of United States defense policies and the time period involves post 9/11 era.

The research is divided into different sections which initially explains the cores and understanding of defence diplomacy, how this concept originated. Then it further explains objectives and functions of defence diplomacy. Further specifying the concept, next section explains the defence diplomacy primarily in terms of US defence policies, and increase of militarism in US policies. This will further elaborate the concept of hard-soft power nexus. Following section will explain the role of defence diplomacy in US in war on terror and its implications on Afghanistan.

3. Towards Understanding of Defence Diplomacy

Military diplomacy is seen as a collection of acts performed by the officials of the defence department, along with other state institutions, which aims to fulfil the foreign policy objectives of the state in the field of security and defence policy, and whose activities are based on discussions and other diplomatic tools. It is regarded as a set of all non-violent foreign policy activities. On the aspect, the term “Military Diplomacy” seems to be an oxymoron. Military ordinarily attains the nation’s objectives with hard power by engagement of force on the other hand, diplomacy endeavours to achieve the nation’s ends by soft power, be it dialogue, persuasion, cooperation, treaties and alliances, aid which may embrace both economic and military and other humanitarian support.

Generally, military diplomacy is the non-violent and peaceful application of varied and comprehensive military resources in establishing constructive and cooperative relations with other foreign nations, both bilateral and multi-lateral (Davar, 2018). This form of diplomacy covers activities like defence cooperation across a wide spectrum, mutual security pacts, training and exercises to enhance inter-operability, visit by ships and aircraft to each other’s bases, including bilateral meetings, staff negotiation, intelligence sharing, high level engagements between senior military hierarchies, anti-piracy jobs, communications assistance, humanitarian and disaster-relief operations, sharing of logistical support and various other mutual confidence-building measures. The positioning of defence and Military Attachés (DAs/MAs) in each other’s country is also a significant aspect of military diplomacy. In this form of interaction among nations, conflict waging produces place to conflict prevention attributable to the effective exercise of diplomacy, including military diplomacy, even among refractory nations (The Strategic Defence Review White Paper, 1998).

3.2. Objectives of Defence Diplomacy

Military diplomacy endeavours to fill the gaps, as essential, to make its parent nation receptive to the challenges and convolutions of disorderly, rapidly-changing, strife-torn geo-political scenarios, notwithstanding in concert with other instruments of the state. It must be appreciated

by all stakeholders that military diplomacy is not an exclusive tool, but supplements a nation's foreign and security policies objectives. Additionally, it endeavours to acquire, with technologically advanced nations, the wherewithal for state-of-the art weaponry, equipment and systems. In addition, knowledge of modern concepts and techniques of combating novel traditional and non-traditional threats, each other's Standard Operating Procedures to ensure inter-operability can be shared for mutual benefits. Collaboration in meeting disasters, both natural and synthetic, contradicting terrorist challenges, pandemic threats, anti-piracy operations and synergy in various humanitarian activities between nations is also an important objective of military diplomacy.

3.3. Functions of Military Diplomacy

Military diplomacy functions to carry out activities that includes affairs mainly by the representatives of the state defence department, as well as of other state institutions. As a minimum the following five basic functions of military diplomacy can be distinguished in the contemporary practice:

a) Assembling the information that is based on the armed forces activities and the security scenario in the receiving state.
b) Progress in cooperation, along with communication and mutual affairs between the armed forces of both states.
c) Arrangement of the officials visits of the boards of the defence authorities and of peaceful settlement of the military units of states.
d) Business agreements with arms and military apparatus between the desired states.
e) Official representation of the conveyance state and its armed forces at official formalities and other official events in the receipt state (Swistek, 2012).

3.4. Military Influence: Outside the Violence of Warfare

Tracing back historical events, many of the scholars of warfare have described the necessities to comprehend the expectable impact of military activities in the affairs outside the domain of war and defence. The core link that connects military activities and those of diplomacy accounts, economics and information, intelligence, and other elements of national power is not an old concept. From the initial days of warfare and security, military practitioners, the likes of Sun Tzu, along with Frederick, the Clausewitz, and the great war theorist Mahan explain the link of the basics and a need to synchronize them to achieve maximum level of effectiveness.

The study of the great theorists of military articulates that capability by the military to work beyond the circle of warfare, but also should act to apply these capabilities beyond the range of national power. This is how military can work in collaboration with the government and can use its strength and functions in a more diplomatic way, diverging from the traditional role of military. The transformed international system demands a more inclusive foreign policy response from the world actors which now includes role of the military in diplomatic, economic and political affairs of state, in close collaboration with government.

3.4.1. The Escalation of Militarism in American Diplomacy after 9/11

The global shifts in power struggle status, and the long-standing Global War on Terrorism has affected many Western states, specifically US, which has a great impact on their diplomatic,

military, and social affairs around the world. Since World War (WWII), the security situations, along with the militarization of American diplomacy has rapidly evolved on international front. With the increase in interventionist foreign policy of US after WWII, and since 9/11, the military has with clear progress taken on its role independent of its original claims, which was actually in the domain of civilian agencies. In the case as above, it can be said that post-9/11 variations in military doctrine and activities to pursue these growing security threats have led to civil-military tensions. This can be mainly because of the economic gains and authorities flowing excessively to the Pentagon, while budgets and official affairs for civilian foreign policy agencies remained largely stationary.

The civil-military relations in US continue to remain antagonistic as the Department of Defence tries to expand military operations into the domain of the activities that were once held under the control of civilian authorities. As a result of this clash that took place between civilian institutions and Department of Defence's abilities and influence for implementation of foreign policy initiatives, the defence department and the military services have been given task with developing the competence and professionalism to increase its possibility of missions and jobs that are not core to military war or deterrence. A failure in addressing the increasing issues related to the securitization of US foreign policy, specifically in the zones of humanitarian interventions, along with other stability operations, and diplomacy will only continue to challenge the current civil-military divide and portend the stability of the state. It is therefore now becoming important to know the cause and the procedures to comprehend how states can help reconcile a defence department that is strong enough to do tasks that the civilians ask them to (Derow, 2018). Same is the case with Afghanistan after 9/11, the situation and foreign policy statecraft has tilted more towards the military zone of USA and by foot presence of USA soldiers further deteriorated the situation and behaviour of Afghan Taliban.

3.4.2. Hard-Soft Power Nexus

In the War on Terror and the major conflicts to come further, the definition of victory will not be the only matter to cause one's will to take place but more of it matters a function of shaping behaviour, of either party. Gates, when having break with initiation of his services of his office, surprisingly recognized that core objectives that matters to state's security could not be achieved mere through military coercion (Lt Gen Kamal Davar (Retd), 2018). In a contrast, he gave the policy option to adopt America's capacity to use soft power, but also the necessity of mixing and integrating the use of soft power with the hard power and this action that had come to dominate American foreign policy. For Secretary Gates, the real capability and capacity of America's military force to amend and meet the very trials of the modern age rest not in its capacity of bombing and fighting, but rather in its ability to look across the more and more to the use of violence and to adopt alternative areas and sources of promoting its interests (Brown, 2009). Role of USA military in conflicted areas and to states suffering from human rights violation and also their role in United Nations peace keeping missions. The function of US military in missions with policy named R2P (Responsibility to Protect) depicts their role by applying fusion of hard and soft power.

3.4.3. Military-Military Diplomacy

The system that United States own for coalitions and corporations is often addressed as military advantage. Thus so far, this advantage is shaped in the ways that adopt, advanced, and specifically maintained through military to military relations, and these relations are those

which are built on the sources through military training. Training of foreign military staffs in American military institutions is a smart policy that works on an operative form by which they gain advantage by enhancing defence familiarity with allies and partners. The vital document 2010 Quadrennial Defence Review (QDR) issued by US Defence Department previews that the influence of the United States is intensely interlinked with the fortune of the world international system, a system that involves alliances and multi-level institutions that our country has helped to shape and sustain for more than 60 years (Quadrennial Defense Review Report, 2010).

One of the most active and effective tools that a military can have is the power of "mil to mil" affairs of relationship. The most vigorous internationally focused programs and trainings that exist inside the United States is the International Military Education & Training (IMET) program and that is narrowly operated by the Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA). The foremost objective of the IMET is to edify and train foreign military officers in the US in order to create a close affinity between the US and foreign military personnel. The US Department of Defence has a clear and comparative advantage against its adversaries when it comes to the training of foreign military personnel; all this dominance is because they have so far learned to increase and join the benefits from the diversity of the military power. This can be cleared through the incident when US proposed world to accompany it in war against terror and there were only two options; with or not with us. The power was imposed on the world to be the part of US militarily. This is how US gained advantage from the diversity of military cooperation.

4. Defence Diplomacy and 'War on Terror'

Questionably, the War on Terror is less generally and more specifically analysed by higher research institutions as some type of standoff. The extensive study of the War is the subject that is regarded by International Relations (IR) pillars like all other subfields. Summit, defence and secret diplomacy, have been regarded crucial to all state efforts, strategies and policies. Diplomacy, is more often called as "engine room of international affairs", has always played a dynamic role in every effort described above. Traditional diplomacy is the form which consisting of the most important targeted objectives by which states achieve their foreign policy goals in complex international relations system. The axiomatic means of the desired end, traditional diplomacy has considered to be the core enabler for summit, defence, secret and public diplomacy in the War on Terror (Stuart Murray and Patrick Blannin, 2018). It explains how US civil and military department applied soft power and hard power to satisfy the interest associated with state's security and political objectives.

4.1. Summit Diplomacy

Summit diplomacy is defined to be called as meetings between the top officials of government or state, involving political officials and personals, is a matter of common practice in international relations. Summits play key role in enhancing negotiations between parties parallel with bargaining and transaction costs are considerably reduced. Such benefits have been evident in the War on Terror across three broad summit formats: US-led, regional and global summits matter in the War on Terror. They bring together important politicians, with number of important security related experts and representatives from all concerned departments to create both formal and informal arrangements for dialogues, on collective courses of action.

4.2. Defence Diplomacy

A type of state-centric diplomacy in the War on Terror is defence diplomacy, that primarily involves the cooperation and collective initiatives of stances by national defence establishments and military personals for confidence building measures, to remove trust deficit, to prevent conflicts of all types and to resolve them further. In the US framework of analysis, there is a strong historical connection between its most important policies of diplomatic and military establishments, curtailing all the way from the Munroe Doctrine that lasted from the early nineteenth century through to the present.

4.3. Secret Diplomacy

Another important type of diplomacy that prevailed in the War on Terror is secret diplomacy, which specifically involves the practice, actions and applications that involves intentionally filtering of information from other governments, the media and/or the public.

4.4. War on Terror: Understanding of Asymmetric Warfare

Asymmetric war became a novel phenomenon in warfare already during the Cold War. It is associated with the rise of the new international actors, such as international organizations or terrorist groups in international affairs. Asymmetric war can be regarded and taken as the disproportionality of power status between the adversaries from the initial point, and from the variance in core between their resources and accountabilities. The core tactics of asymmetric warfare involves the act to hit an opponent, which could have a larger range of army along with the little number of group of fighters which can be regarded as a cause of huge damage with an aim to decrease the morale of the army. Aggressors do not take risk of causing massive casualties, but analysing on the other hand, they are able to hit the improvised enemy hard.

Asymmetric warfare clearly predisposed the long-standing presence of US military in Afghanistan. The US strategy in 2002 was to avert attacks by terrorist networks; refute the propagation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to rouge states and terrorist allies; contradict the terrorist's sanctuary of rouge state (Turse, 2018). This strategy was mainly territorially aimed, but it failed, due to the huge surface area of Afghanistan and the fact that 80 % of Afghans are living in countryside areas, which were incredible to control by the low number of coalition forces at that time. US as a hegemonic power was impotent to prove its supremacy in Afghanistan. Many of the US goal lines in Afghanistan were successful only partially. Military defeat of Al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders was only partial, taking control over the Afghan territory was unsuccessful, and transition of Afghanistan into stable and functioning country is still a query.

Analysing the recent event of Afghan peace process, with the long span war on terror, the US somehow failed to rout Taliban. US has now transformed its historic policy of hard power towards the transformed approach of settling conflict through dialogues. Any peace process includes three broad stages: primary, initiation of talks. Secondly, talks leading to negotiating; and, finally, implementation of the negotiations. In case of Afghanistan, peace offer to Taliban is accompanied by hopes of peace in the region that was hub of war for so long. It included, ceasefire, the exclusion of sanctions, release of prisoners, the recognition of Taliban as a political party and most importantly withdrawal of US troops. Taliban are so much stuck to their demand of US troops from Afghanistan, and the process is in progress with many other

factors in consideration and with the involvement of external players. Therefore, after many years of war, finally they set up a point where Taliban agreed to eliminate all safe heavens of terrorists in Afghanistan and USA agrees to remove its troops. And the peace process is really a turning point for US military's longstanding role. All these scenarios explicate how the asymmetric warfare influenced the military presence of the United States in Afghanistan (Čižik, 2014).

5. Conclusion

Analysing history, number of the great minds that we link with warfare, clearly understood the significant notion of a cross-the-board, the affects military cause beyond pure violence and destruction. A deep-rooted study of the military theory and practice of these scholars evidently shows that not only a capability by the military to operate beyond the realm of pure warfare, but there is also a need to aptly and correctly spread on these capabilities and capacities across the spectrum and range of national power and taking diplomacy side by side to military power. Practically trying to put the ideas and actions of these great minds and scholars that gave their very thoughts regarding ground realities, the United States has now become eminent onto the global stage, the one practicing of the military as a powerful and diplomatic tool in the pursuit of US foreign policy goals. The core policy, the defence diplomacy of the United States in the heart of the current war against terror in Afghanistan is collectively projected towards bringing an end to the US military operations with the policy involving not conceding total authority to the Taliban. Additionally, the US-led global coalition of forces, including NATO forces, have botched to crush the Taliban.

There is a common and accepted notion in international affairs that when war ends with all its essence, from that point, diplomacy commences. But reality is quite contrary to it. Diplomacy is a factor that remains constant before, during and after wars. Whenever diplomacy loss its soul and fails, war is left as an ultimate option at times. Defence diplomacy, among other things of policies, aims specifically to prevent war at all possible efforts. By continuing, diplomacy lasts in various forms in the centre of war, as was demonstrated during both the World Wars. Most significantly, diplomacy is regarded as the vital device that enables the belligerent parties to negotiate and try to settle their differences for peace. The main soul and efficacy of diplomacy and directions of negotiations in all affair depends very much on who is going to win and who is losing on the battlefield.

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