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Bachelor Thesis

RUSSIA - UKRAINE WAR

*THE IMPACT OF THE CONTINUING RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR ON
INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS*



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ABSTRACT

The ongoing conflict between Russia-Ukraine has significantly impacted the role of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) in international affairs. IGOs have been mandated with the primary responsibility of spearheading the creation and sustenance of peace within the global context. The current crisis in Ukraine due to the war witnessed between Russia and Ukraine is doubtlessly a threat to peaceful international relations. As a result, the expected and enshrined functions of IGOs with reference to the provisions of international laws come into light for scrutiny in regards to addressing such conflicts.

Guided by this understanding, this thesis primarily aims to examine the role of IGOs in the context of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict by taking into considerations the associated diplomatic, economic, and military relations. Specifically, the thesis will analyze the actions of the United Nations (UN), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the European Union (EU) as the selected IGOs in response to the conflict. By examining the actions of these IGOs in relation to the Russia-Ukraine war, this thesis seeks to understand the crucial contributions by IGOs in settling prevailing international conflicts in the current 21st century.



KEY WORDS

Russia-Ukraine War, Intergovernmental Organizations, International Relations

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Today, in the global political debate, the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war is irrefutably one of the most controversial events with a deep-rooted genesis and multifaceted precedence. The present conflict between these two European nations has not only had severe effect and influence on Europe but also the security and foreign policies of the rest of the world. From a historical perspective, as postulated by Holdar (1995), Ukraine has largely remained torn between the West and East since it gained its independence in 1991 from the Soviet Union. In this vein, Ukraine's national identity has thenceforth remained questionable due to the fragmented attitude by the citizens towards the future cohesion of the country.

As a result, Ukraine has been indifferent about the direction upon which to base its governance. With the successive Ukrainian governments being either pro-Western or pro-Russian, Ukraine has undergone successive periods of violence for over seen decades. There has thus been a political crisis in Ukraine whether to be in affiliation with the West, particularly the United States, or to promote the maintenance of its association with Russia. Hence, the recurrent protests amongst thousands of right-wing extremists as well as pro-Russians and nationalists in Ukraine has been the epitome of political power struggle (Avetisova, 2015). The opposition has been receiving political and financial support from the United States while the pro-Russian citizens have remained supported by Russia.



In 2014, Putin's request to use force in protecting the pro-Russian citizens in Ukraine was approved by the Russian parliament. As at this time, the then President of United States, Barack Obama, urged Vladimir Putin, Russian President, to reconsider moving back his troops to help lower the tensions between the two nations. Nonetheless, Putin provided no response and thereafter annexed the Crimea Peninsula, which is now belongs to Russia. Consequently, Russia-Ukraine war constantly worsened by shifting from being domestic power struggle between these two nations to becoming a struggle for power at the global level between Russia and the United States and other European nations allied to the West (Karagiannis, 2014). The involvement of external actors and influence such as the European Union and the United States might have, to a larger extent, served to instigate the emergence and sustained predominance of a relationship crisis between Russia and Ukraine.

Worse still, though Ukraine has, in history, majorly had pro-Russian leaders in the previous government regimes, the current President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, is hugely pro-Western (Rywkin, 2014). It is thus blatantly illogical to analyze the current war crisis in Ukraine in isolation without taking into account the influence of Russian and American government. A mix of these preceding and prevailing events have greatly contributed to the crisis as currently witnessed in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

1.2. Research Problem

The currently prevailing tensions between Russia and Ukraine have been undeniably visible since the gaining of independence by Ukraine. Ever



since then, Ukraine gained an influential position in the international relationship sphere with Russia as it was one of its satellite states, influenced by Russian politicians, oligarchs, and businesses. As a result, Ukraine has remained to be a country of immense political interest in the diplomatic, economic, and military matters pertaining to Russia's international affairs (Toal, 2017). However, the Ukrainian government has been portrayed as hugely corrupt in the Russian Politics mirror. At the same time, Ukraine is of an equally significant interest to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which the United States is largely affiliated.

It is no denying that Russia and China are currently the main political threats and rivals to the United States in its status as the global political superpower as they are convinced to be adversely disenfranchised being outside of the G7 international leadership (Zambakari, 2022). According to Yousaf et al. (2022), in a likely alliance with other fast-developing nations, like China, which has recently shown its allegiance towards Russia, the threat has increased. Guided by this understanding, the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war is an evidence of the rivalry. Russia is convinced that being omitted from the G7 status to have a direct influence on the international decision-making table is impeding the ability to advance its interests. Thus, there is a feeling that Russia's time of staying in the G-20 ranking is long overdue and it ought to advance to a much superior status. One of the European allies that Russia is maximally persuaded that it must hold control of to safeguard its international interest is Ukraine (Alam et al., 2022).



With the United States being the dominant force exercising influence of NATO, NATO's expansion in Europe is equally a threat to Russia. Therefore, owing to NATO's intention to expand its dominance in Europe, with one of its most targeted alliance partners in the European Union (EU) being Ukraine, the issue remains of great interest to the Russian government. On one hand, the Russian military presence in Ukrainian territories and the annexation of the Crimea has been considered as an action that violates the Western democracy. On the other hand, the NATO enlargement led by the United States is considered a threat by Russia (Okoro et al., 2020). Based on these precedents, Russia-Ukraine war is a crisis that has developed into a geopolitical power struggle between Russia and the United States. The United States is committed to expanding its NATO membership in Europe, while Russia is not willing to let go off its former Soviet states such as Ukraine.

As a result, these inherent dynamics have pivoted the Russia-Ukraine war as one of the possible components of supremacy battle between Russia and United States for the super power status. However, Ukraine is in a political dilemma. Ukraine has progressively seeming aligned to the NATO, as the country's leadership believes it has the liberty to charter its independent national and international path (Simons, 2022). At the same time, Ukraine remains under great territorial control of Russia. Russia believes that if Ukraine enters into a NATO membership, then this would be a big loss. It would mean a dramatic altering of the power balance in the Black Sea region, which Russia cannot allow to happen since its black sea fleet is stationed in Crimea. Notably, the Orange Revolution (2004 - 2005) that happened in Kyiv



(Capital of Ukraine) was anchored on opposing the influence of Russian politics on the constitutionally independent Ukraine.

Additionally, the revolution was based on the incentives of this upheaval being vested on protests against the invigorating corruption and the demand to spearhead the institutionalization of its democracy (Khodunov, 2022). Nevertheless, owing to the reality of Ukrainian society being linguistically, religiously, and ethnically divided, the endeavor has been from actuated. In fact, some regions in Ukraine such as Luhansk and Donetsk Provinces and the Crimean Peninsula, strongly identify themselves to be belonging to Russia. Admittedly, the invasion by the Russian military in Crimea in 2014 did serve to initiate the international conflict between Russia and Ukraine, that has remained prevalent to date (Cosgrove, 2020). Hence, the Russian-Ukraine war is a political crisis that is extremely complicated as it has been founded on an issue presenting the likelihood of conflicting interests. The contradictory nature of the war has pitched a conspiracy making it difficult on who between, Russian President, Vladimir Putin, and Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, should be held guilty as responsible for the instigation and sustained prevalence of the war.

The crisis has subsequently been argued as presenting the risk of escalating into a Cold War, which could put the normal world order to a severe imminent threat (Guchua et al., 2022). The threat can potentially be associated with a probable emergence of the Third World War, if not settled by the Intergovernmental Governmental Organizations (IGOs). Therefore, the Russia-Ukraine crisis justifies the need to investigate the contributing factors



to the ongoing war and determine the role that IGOs can play in settling the problem.

1.3. Research Relevance and Significance

Presently, there is a question as to whether the ongoing Russia-Ukraine is threatening the world order or not. With this emerging concern, there is a strong relevance of this thesis in the field of political science at large as it examines a topic that is recent and up-to-date in the global political debate. As posited by Legvold (2014), in the global political sphere, the current crisis in Ukraine has permeated a fear that Russia can once again advance a path seeking to help in once again become a great power as it used to be in the Soviet years. As the war is ongoing, it has created a likelihood in the future of resulting into a severe conflict between the United States and Russia. The conflict embodies the risk of consequently having adverse effects of all the state positions of affiliated allies in the international system.

The war thus makes itself of particular relevance for the NATO states and EU states, especially in regards to states such as Ukraine that were formerly aligned to the Soviet Union. Considering that the Russia-Ukraine war has already advanced from a national crisis into a global geopolitical conflict, it risks resulting into serious adversaries towards the main actors and other nations in general. With the Russia-Ukraine war being a crisis that pits two great powers, Russia and the United States, against each other, with each already recording their interests to dominate the targeted Ukrainian regions, it seems the war is far from being resolved. Hence, this study is of significance as it helps understand the existence of underlying reasons triggering the war.



Creating this understanding would be vital in establishing the role that IGOs can play to hinder the escalation of the crisis early enough as well avoid the possibility of reoccurrence in the future.

1.4. Research Purpose and Objectives

This study seeks to provide a two-sided view of the Russia-Ukraine war by evaluating its underlying triggers and examining the efforts to address the conflict from an international perspective. Therefore, the primary purpose of the study is to examine the diverse, but coordinated roles that IGOs are mandated to play in helping settle the Russia-Ukraine war. These roles are reported in line with understanding the underlying causes contributing to the crisis with the consideration of both the domestic and global lenses of influence on the war. With reference to this purpose, the objectives are as stated below.

- ❖ To determine the contributing factors responsible for fueling the Russian-Ukraine War.
- ❖ To examine how the intergovernmental organizations can be and have been involved in the efforts to foster the settlement of ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

1.5. Research Questions

- ✓ What are the contributing factors responsible for fueling the Russian-Ukraine War?
- ✓ How have the intergovernmental organizations been involved in the efforts to foster the settlement of ongoing Russia-Ukraine war?



1.6. Limitations and Delimitations

In terms of this study's limitations, the thesis includes a lack of impartial publications concerning the Russia-Ukraine war. The topic is greatly sensitive, and is thus imbued with biased political opinions, which has consequently had an impact on the research findings. Conversely, the delimitations arise in line with the study's scope of focus. The focus is on the causes of the war from a conflict of geopolitical interests between Russia and the United States due to the associated respective desires of EU and NATO enlargement.

The thesis also focusses on examining how to settle the war through the contribution of IGOs within the international diplomatic, economic, and military spheres. These spheres of focus have not made any simplification about the Russia-Ukraine crisis itself. Therefore, it is critical to understand that the war is too complex to obtain comprehensive solutions only based on the point of departure of this thesis. However, this thesis enables the understanding that the war between Russia and Ukraine has increasingly evolved into a geopolitical conflict between two great powers, Russia and the United States, leading to an adverse effect on their relationship.

1.7. Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 2, *Theoretical Framework*, provides an explanation of the choice of theory and a description pertaining to the chosen theory, offensive realism, as well as its critique.

Chapter 3, *Methodological Framework*, contains an elaborate methodological considerations and the structure of the selected method, text



analysis, and describing its disadvantages as well as explaining the chosen material and its reliability in addition to the operational variables.

Chapter 4, *Findings and Analysis*, presents background details that offer deeper knowledge on the Russia-Ukraine crisis through the operational variables of causes of and response to the war. Moreover, it answers the stated research questions in the context of the causes of the crisis and the responses to settle the problem in line with the role of the selected intergovernmental organizations.

Chapter 5, *Conclusion and Recommendation*, provides an overall summary of the study in line with the findings and analysis of the answers to the research questions as well as the suggestions to be focused on by future research.



CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this study, the emphasis is on examining Russia-Ukraine war by focusing on the view of the crisis from a diplomatic, economic, and military perspective to understand its causes and efforts being made by international bodies to address the problem. Based on this perspective, this research being an abductive study, as will be discussed in detail in the methodological framework section, tailors its approach towards a two-sided view of the current crisis witnessed in Ukraine due to the ongoing war. This two-sided view is in relation to determining the underlying causes of the war and provision of probable solutions pertaining to the role of IGOs in responding to the crisis. The deliberation is guided by the idea of gathering evidence obtained from published literature and statements based on previous research to explain the emergence of the Ukrainian crisis and analyze it in the context of Russian and American influence. In this regard, the theory of great importance used in examining the Russia-Ukraine war is Mearsheimer's offensive realism theory.

2.1. Previous Research

Owing to the war between Russia and Ukraine being an ongoing crisis, there is limited literature in as far as previous research by various scholars are concerned on this topic, specifically in regards to the role of IGOs in addressing the prevailing problem. Notably, it is when a new body of scholarly literature is emerging to unearth and provide a comprehensive understanding on the causes of the war and how to solve it. This thesis is thus of immense importance as it contributes to the new body of research on the Russia-Ukraine



crisis. However, considering that Russia and Ukraine have historically had a turbulent series of affairs, several scholars have conducted studies that have helped to provide an increased awareness concerning the causes of the skewed relationships between these two countries, which can be affiliated to having gradually spiraled to the war being presently witnessed.

For instance, just to highlight a few previous studies, Alam et al. (2022) carried out a research that employed a systematic review design based on existing literature to primarily examine the economic ties between Russia and Ukraine, and deliberated that there exist logistic and policy barriers, mainly due to political and diplomatic influence, that continue to impede the trade as well as economic relation and social relation between these two nations and their respective citizens. Besides, Delanoe (2020) reported that the contributing factor of the crisis between Russia and Ukraine that has continued to date is attributed to the increased fight to exercise power over the maritime control in the Crimean region, as both nations consider this region a vital asset in strategically placing them at an advantaged position for global trade and international influence.

Additionally, Holdar (1995) posited that the diplomatic challenge between Russia and Ukraine is aligned to the dilemma of the west or east allegiance, pitting Ukraine as a battle ground between US and Russia in the opposition towards EU and NATO expansion as Russia seeks to protect its historically allied states and retain its superpower status.



2.2. The Choice of Theory

Considering that this research has its distinctive origin anchored in the present crisis in Ukraine, the interest is to explain Russia's actions and behaviors in fueling the crisis while taking into account the involvement of the United States in the issue. After this deliberation, the explanation is further expanded to analyzing the role of IGOs on the war situation between Russia and Ukraine. Guided by this focus, the use of a theory presents an immense opportunity in contributing to the explanatory factors that can greatly result in clarifying the involvement of these two superpowers in the Ukrainian crisis. To this extent, therefore, the determination of the influence of Russia and the United States warrants the participation of IGOs to help solve the prevailing conflict in Ukraine.

As informed by Glaveanu et al. (2020), a research study can embrace either a theory consuming, a developmental theory, or a tentative theory analysis. In this thesis, the study adopts a theory consuming analysis. There is the liberty for a researcher to use either one or several theories as a means to one's study, in the way deemed to be best fit in answering the formulated research objectives and questions (Glaveanu et al., 2020). However, in this study, the thesis is based on one theory, offensive realism, to help in finding detailed explanation of current factors contributing to the Russia-Ukraine war and the associated efforts by IGOs to address it. Therefore, the chief focus of this thesis is to analyze the actions and behaviors of the two actors, Russia and the United States, involved in Ukraine war crisis. In this context, the chosen



Offensive Realism theory is used to ascertain the results of the analysis as a justification of the role of IGOs in addressing the Russia-Ukraine war. The situation thereby confirms the suitability of a theory consuming study for this thesis.

With the recognition that the main aim of the Offensive Realism theory used in this thesis is to find explanations needed for clarifying the actions and behaviors of great power in spurring the Ukraine crisis, a sense of an interrelated connection is developed. The connection makes it possible to situate the Russia-Ukraine war into a comprehensively understandable context of its causes, which consequently enhances the necessity for the participation of IGOs in settling the conflict. Therefore, as argued by Glaveanu et al. (2020), attaching a theory with one's research is responsible for fostering the connection between the research objectives and questions with the analysis of findings, thus legitimizing the conclusion's validity. The theory chosen for this research, offensive realism, is embodied on its explanation and description of a political phenomenon (Mearsheimer, 2001).

As elucidated by Mearsheimer (2001), nations often seek opportunities to either change or maintain the balance of power through the strengthening and expansion of their relative power influence at the expense of others. Notably, different nations employ diverse approaches in using their various diplomatic, economic, and military means to shift the power balance in their desired interests and favor. In general, offensive realism is preferable in this research because it focusses on the influence of external actors in their



relations with each other. Importantly, as clarified by Mearsheimer, offensive realism, despite being alive to the domestic political issues within a given country, channels its extensive emphasis on the amount of power a nation has within the international system. Hence, the theory best denotes to the crisis in Ukraine as it is largely aligned to the intergovernmental relations with the great powers of Russia and the United States. As a result, the basic principles and features of the offensive realism theory are as detailed below.

2.3. Offensive Realism

Mearsheimer, in his book *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* published in 2001, considers offensive realism as a theory that challenges the international relationship between the great global powers. Mearsheimer holds the belief that the fundamental purpose of offensive realism to propagate the envisaging of the politics of great powers in the modern era of intergovernmental alliances. In fact, Mearsheimer contends political and social science theories such as offensive realism should be used in understanding past and present issues as well predicting the future issues. Markedly, Mearsheimer reports that offensive realism is both a normative and descriptive theory (Mearsheimer, 2001). The theory is descriptive in the sense that it contributes to the explanation pertaining how great powers behaved beforehand, the actions they are currently taking, and the manner in which they are likely to relate in the future.

Simultaneously, the theory embodies a normative nature as it outlines how nations ought to survive in the best potential way within the international



arena (Mearsheimer, 2001). In this regard, Mearsheimer provides a description of the basic features of offensive realism theory within the tenets of five assumptions. The first assumption holds that the great powers serve as the most important and influential actors within the international system of intergovernmental relations, which makes it an anarchical system. The second assumption implies that all nations have an offensive military capacity. The third assumption denotes that nations can never fully trust the intentions of other nations. The fourth assumption provides that the primary goal of all nations is survival in the life and operations within the international system. The final assumption suggests that nations are rational actors influenced by the commitment and interest to seek opportunities for maximizing their power (Mearsheimer, 2001). Guided by the provisions of these assumptions, a related major challenger of offensive realism is defensive realism.

A common similarity between offensive and defensive realism theories is that they both describe the international relation system among nations as anarchic, with the great powers doubting the intentions of other nations. Nevertheless, defensive realism principally advocates that nations are far less aggressive in their respective foreign policy agendas due to their inherently security maximizations. Thus, nations are believed to be unilaterally interested only in securing their acquisitions without much emphasis on what might be obtained by other states. In other words, defensive realism is bestowed on the reasoning that great powers can accept the status quo, which is contradictory to the reality (Taliaferro, 2000). In reality, nations are both interested in what they acquire as well as what other countries might obtain. Hence, the main



element distinguishing the two theories is aligned to security dilemma, which is largely geopolitical. Defensive realism considers the international system to be constructed as an anarchic structure, making nations to tailor their commitment towards maximizing their own security with the focus on maintaining power balance (Taliaferro, 1999). However, this perspective is greatly futile. If defensive realism could have been effective in examining the Russia-Ukraine war, then Ukraine could have succeeded in securing and defending itself against invasion by Russia on its territory.

Nonetheless, this is contrary to the truth. The truth is that Russia has perpetuated and sustained its offensive attack against Ukraine, leading to the ongoing war between these two nations currently being witnessed. Based on this acknowledgment, offensive realism is alive to the both the domestic and foreign issues facing a nation. Offensive realism views nations as antagonistic, with their relations being characterized by the constant strive towards maximizing their power rather than security, which creates an imminence of war (Snyder, 2002). The Russia-Ukraine war is undeniably largely influenced by national and international issues.

Despite the historical tensions on the spheres of diplomacy, economy, and military between Russia and Ukraine, the current crisis in Ukraine is seen to be hugely instigated by a power struggle between Russia and the United States. The struggle is orchestrated by the uneven distribution of power within the international system due to some nations having more control, dominance, and influence than others. When a nation radiates higher degrees of power,



other states become threatened, which escalates the security dilemma. The dilemma is exarated by the intention of a given state to heighten its security and power by rearmament and invasion, forcing other states to respond with a similar extent of offensive measures even if not of the desire (Hunter, 2022). Therefore, the power imbalance clawed on both the United States and Russia feeling threatened by the European Union and NATO enlargement, respectively, are thus contributing to the predominance of the Russia-Ukraine war. As Russia continues to enjoy the support of other states such as China, the United States has remained of great political, financial, and military support for Ukraine.

In order to deal with security dilemma that continue to fuel the Russia-Ukraine war, a power balance is necessary to be created in the international system, which remains a severe challenge (Bossman et al., 2023). Therefore, Offensive realism is considered to be the most relevantly suitable and applicable theory in this thesis to analyze the Ukraine crisis. The crisis is seen to be augmented by the power struggle between the United States and Russia, with the current situation demonstrating who has had the greatest impact since the emergence of the war. With these great powers falling into the balance of power, it has created a polarity in the international system. In the case of Russia-Ukraine war, the polarity is a bipolar system, witnessed through the operationalization of matters relating to diplomacy, economy, and military, which are linked with the causes of the war and influences the response mechanisms to settle the crisis.



CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

With reference to the research topic and the above-stipulated theoretical framework, this thesis is carried out as an abductive qualitative desk-study. As informed by Danermark et al. (2001), an abductive study approach provides an in-depth understanding pertaining to particular cases through their re-contextualization in relation to specific theories. The prime logic of using an abductive research is to foster the discovery as to why specified actors behave as they do and determination of a given case through the uncovering of implicit information. Therefore, considering that the Russia-Ukraine crisis is a case linked with actors, such as its associated causes and response measures, that are not directly observable due to the altering formulations and complexities through the years, it thus requires a relatable theory for creating deeper knowledge on the associated actors pertaining to the actions and behaviors revolving around the crisis.

Thus, as detailed in the theoretical framework above, offensive realism theory has been chosen to unearth the actors relating to the crisis. In line with the abductive study approach and offensive realism theory, this thesis adopts a text analysis method. The method provides a detailed analysis on the crisis between the two great powers of Russia and Ukraine in relation to the actions and behaviors that provide a two-sided view on the causes and response to the crisis. The text analysis method is based on the cautious reading of the selected sample of materials from different perspectives highlighting the distinctive characteristics of the crisis. The method provides an internal validity that can



be justified by the information gathered being detailed and not taken out of the clarified context.

3.1. Research Design and Method

The study has adopted a qualitative text analysis method based on already published literature (texts) to answer the stated research questions. As illuminated by Esaiasson et al. (2012), the text analysis method infers that researchers conduct qualitative analysis of the given text materials with the aim of developing main contents of the selected texts by carefully reading the applicable parts or in totality, and thereafter categorizing the context in which it is included. The different parts of the chosen texts serve to enable researchers to perceive and highlight the respective parts central for their given studies. By performing intense reading of the selected materials, this makes it possible for finding underlying information not presented explicitly in the texts.

Thus, the key approach of the method is to thoughtfully read the text several times. In carrying out a text analysis, the central principle is to ask specific questions to the text. After asking these questions, they are then contextualized in answering the stated research questions as per the clarified theoretical categories that relate to the diplomatic, economic, and military operations in determining the causes of the Russia-Ukraine war and the response measures by IGOs to the crisis. In other words, asking these questions are important because they serve as fundamental analytical tools for gathering materials fitting into the study and their answers are constituting the solutions to the research problem. Hence, to answer the stated research questions in



addressing the described research problem, the research design in this study consists the following questions asked to the selected materials upon which the thesis is based on:

- ❖ What is the text about?
- ❖ What is the purpose of the text?
- ❖ How does the researcher arrive at its opinion?
- ❖ What is the conclusion?

The above stated questions that guide the text analysis method used in this thesis is further embedded in having an open approach with answers being dependent on the findings of the researchers on chosen materials. In other words, it is the contents of the selected texts through their analysis that control the research in regards to stated objectives and questions. Thus, the answers to these questions used in the text analysis are directly linked to providing answers to this thesis' research questions, as detailed in the findings and analysis section below. In providing these answers and consequently addressing the research problem, this study, based on the selected materials, analyzes both the manifest messages of the texts, that is, the direct messages written in the texts, and latent messages, that is, the messages underneath the surface of the texts that cannot be directly read. Therefore, the analysis of the texts is provided through interpretations presented through summarized abstracts, citations, and argued opinions and conclusions.



3.2. Materials

In the findings and analysis section, there consists materials from various academic studies and articles on the Russia-Ukraine war in relation to the causes of the crisis, as well as the role of different IGOs in responding to the problem. Regarding the causes of Russia-Ukraine war, the texts of prolific scholars, such as Brian D. Taylor, Igor Delanoë, Gary D. Espinas, and Sergei Konoplyov, have been analyzed to answer the stated research question on the factors responsible for instigating and fuelling the crisis. Pertaining to the response to Russia-Ukraine war, the texts by scholars such as Alena F. Douhan, Sara Mahilaj, Oleksandr Tytarchuk, Maksym Khylykhave, Stivani Ismawira Sinambela, and Rafika Arsyad, been analyzed to answer the research question concerning the role of IGOs, specifically UN, OSCE, EU, and NATO, in the efforts to foster the settlement of the crisis. A total sample of eight texts by various researchers have thus been used as the selected materials for this study with their respective analysis as per the questions stated in the research design and method section above applied in answering the research questions that guide this thesis is based.

3.3. Operationalization

Since this thesis adopts the offensive realism theory, it is of critical significance to provide a theoretical definition and discussion of the chosen theory, as detailed in the theoretical section above. When creating this theoretical definition and discussion, a researcher must choose the already developed and modified categories in a manner that suits the methodological



framework of the research. Therefore, the researcher must develop operational indicators of the chosen categories. These operational indicators make a clear and coherent structure on how to proceed with the research. As a result, this thesis has limited its scope to the categories of diplomacy, economy, and military to examine the "causes of the crisis" and "response to the crisis." Svensson and Teorell (2007) hypothesized that operationalization helps in embodying what the research exactly wants to investigate to help in avoiding abstract concepts that might trigger inaccurate measurements.

Validity and reliability of the study's method and materials are amongst the most demanding problems to solve within the empirical social and political sciences. To attain a good reliability and validity of the study, a researcher must complete a thorough operationalization of the specifically selected variables (Svensson & Teorell, 2007). This thesis focusses on extensive operationalization of the two variables as explanatory factors to the determination of causes of war between Russia and Ukraine and the justification of the role of IGOs in addressing the conflict, as elaborated in details in the findings and analysis section below. Thus, the operationalization of the selected categories of variable helps in validly and reliably answering the stated research questions within the stipulated research framework.



CHAPTER 4: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Specifically pertaining to the formulated research questions, this chapter provides an analysis of the Russia-Ukraine War from the Causes to the Responses Perspectives in relation to the selected texts. To have a holistic understanding on these perspectives, it is critical to consider the historical complexity in the relationship between Ukraine and Russia. From a historical point of view, these two countries' geopolitical positions have been deemed as the explanatory factors leading to the arisen disputes. Though Ukraine did receive its independence in 1991, since 1922, it had belonged to the former Soviet Union, which has made it to be predominantly have strong ties of alliance to Russia. Coupled with these ties is the prevailing confusion about Ukraine's national identity as it is a multicultural society with some of its minority such as Bulgarians, Belarusians, Moldavians, and Crimean Tartars largely identify themselves as Russians. As a result, Ukraine has remained in a dilemmatic stance on whether to maintains its relationship with Russia or keep its alliance with the European Union and further become a westernized democracy. In this regard, the Russia-Ukraine war has shifted from a national to global issue, which has necessitated the response by IGOs.



4.1. What are the contributing factors responsible for fueling the Russian-Ukraine War?

4.1.1. Vladimir Putin's Political Goal

In his article, *Crisis in Ukraine-Putin's Own Goal: The Invasion of Crimea and Putin's Political Future. Foreign Affairs*, to help understand the cause of Russia-Ukraine war, Brian D. Taylor tailors chief focus on Putin's political perspective. The article is primarily about how the long-term competition between the United States and Russia is attributed to the crisis. The war is viewed in terms of Putin's opposition to NATO expansion that risks Ukraine becoming westernized. Russia as historically considered Ukraine to be a soviet allied state. Owing to the event in the recent past that saw Georgia, a formerly soviet-state becoming westernized, Russia, through his current leader, Vladimir Putin, is opposed to a repetition of a similar incident with Ukraine.

Therefore, the war is widely fueled by the prevailing confrontational moves between Russia and the West with historical underpinnings (Taylor, 2021). In this regard, the text is thus guided by the purpose of highlighting what Russia risks losing in the event that it cut ties with Ukraine should it leave the country to become westernized. Hence, the war is triggered on the front embedded on Putin's political goal to reunite the Soviet Union, specifically by protecting its influence and control on the historical allies. To do so, as postulated by Taylor, Putin intends to spearhead the maintenance of the current political system with him being in the supreme lead (Taylor, 2021). Hence, the



text's underlying meaning is based on explaining the approach by Russia through the leadership of Putin in maintaining its power. The power is sought by getting as many groups of Russian-speakers on Russia's side, which makes Ukraine a country of Putin's interest in his political frame, an effort largely viewed as intended to change the global world order.

Taylor informs that Putin's political pursuit of not letting Ukraine to become westernized is massively linked to economic matters. According to Konoplyov (2022), the economy of Russia has undergone severe degradation in the recent years, particularly after the 2008/09 financial crisis coupled by the recent adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, an issue that has persisted to date. Prior to these incidents, Putin had over 80 percent popular rating with the Russia's economy recording an increased growth by 7 percent. However, in the recent years, specifically from 2019 to presently, Putin's popular rating has reduced to about 60 percent with the economy of Russia being negatively affected characterized by a reduced growth of less than 1.5 percent annually (Konoplyov, 2022). Putin is thus concerned that the stagnation of Russia's economic growth is thus not a temporary issue rather a systemic problem.

With this concern, Taylor arrives at the opinion that the tactics by Putin leading to the attack on Ukraine are instigating by the intention to maintain his power and political relevance amidst Russia's economic stagnation. Putin is pursuing this goal by attempting to uphold his popular political ratings through mirroring the facade that the focus is on the Russian natives. In practice,



through the observation of behaviors and actions by Putin, the situation is rather a demonstration of the attempt by Putin to maintain his power. It is considered that the economic stagnation of Russia risks creating dissatisfactions amongst the Russian citizens, which is likely to hamper the position of power by Putin (Taylor, 2021). Therefore, Taylor concludes that the Russia-Ukraine war has arisen due to Russia feeling that its influence and position in the global world order is severely threatened by the West. Russia perceives the West, especially the United States through its NATO expansion efforts, as seeking to weaken Russian economic, military, and diplomatic powers. Taylor thus views the war as a zero-sum game.

The zero-sum game is triggered in the sense that though Russia has shown an increase and dominance in its military power by attacking Ukraine, this has come at a cost (Taylor, 2021). As a result, the crisis adversely impacts political and economic stability as well as peaceful coexistence and international relations, which does not only affect the involved counties, Russia and Ukraine, but also the rest of the world.

4.1.2. Crimean Crisis

The article, *After the Crimean crisis: towards a greater Russian maritime power in the Black Sea*, by Igor Delanoe aims at explaining the actions by Russia in regards to the annexation of Crimea as a contributing factor to the Russia-Ukraine war. Delanoe examines the affiliation that Russia has with Crimea. He proceeds to state that it has been noticed Russia's greatest interest is aligned towards obtaining its power and control over the Russian



Black Sea Fleet, located in the capital Sevastopol rather than protecting the Russian-speaking citizens in Ukraine (Delanoe, 2020). Hence, the text is chiefly about expounding on the prominent reason Russia annexed Crimea, which has been established to be driven by the purpose of increasing the maritime power of in the Black Sea region. Delanoe informs that the Black Sea region has, in the recent years, attracted external factors such as NATO, EU, Turkey, Russia, and US. The interest in this region is mainly due to its richness in natural resources in addition to being considered as the optimal strategic position where the south-north and east-west encounter.

In this line, the purpose of Delanoe's text is to explain the desire by different actors, specifically with reference to Russia and US, towards dominating the Black Sea region as the cause of the war crisis between Russia and Ukraine since this region is seen as being of immense benefit for transit routes. Delanoe argues that a competition field has thus been created between Russia and US as they have a conflicting interest in obtaining power over this region (Delanoe, 2020). In other words, the Black Sea region has become a zero-sum game between the US and Russia, leading to the crisis currently being witnessed in Ukraine. The crisis is thus as a result of geopolitical interests that have triggered engagements within the Crimean region after its annexation, which has consequently fueled the birth of the war. In arriving at the opinion that the geopolitical conflict of interest between Russia and the US to control the Black Sea region being the cause of the Ukrainian crisis, Delanoe postulates that Russia has historically had a major economic influence within this region. The influence is attributed to the Black Sea region being a



significant transit route for Russia's energy exports to Europe. For instance, more than 30 percent of the total oil consumption in Europe is provided by Russia (Delanoe, 2020). Notably, Delanoe reports that about half of this sum volume has been determined to be usually transported by the several oil tankers from the Black Sea region.

The Black Sea region, as further reported by Gary D. Espinas, also serves an opening for the Middle East from where Russia has entered into trade partnerships with numerous countries. Therefore, Russia highly regards the Black Sea region as its extremely important economic asset. In this regard, the NATO and EU enlargement, specifically targeting Ukraine, is considered a severe threat by Russia to its maritime power over the Black Sea area. Hence, Russia has moved to secure its maritime power through the annexation of Crimea (Espinas, 2019). Similarly, the United States is interested in the Black Sea area. The US considers this area as a pivot to Europe and Asia in the endeavor for NATO expansion to protect and maintain its position as the global superpower. Therefore, the move by Russia to invade the region is greatly resisted by the United States. Ukraine is allied to the west while Russia is against the west geopolitical agenda of expanding its influence in Europe (Espinas, 2019).

Since Russia considers Ukraine to be historically having an allegiance to the Soviet Union, the interest by the US in Ukraine has pitted these two great powers (Russia and the US) against each other. The situation has thus resulted in creating a war between Russia and Ukraine, overtly due to Ukraine



being allied to the West (the US), which Russia considers an imminent peril to its military, economic, and diplomatic influence within the global sphere (Delanoe, 2020). Delanoe (2020) thus arrives at the conclusion that with Russia conquering the new Crimean territory, the country has begun upgrading its bases at the Black Sea region. The situation serves to put Russia at an advantaged position that would enhance its future developments through improved military power, economic prosperity, and diplomatic relations without the Ukrainian or Western influences. However, Delanoe (2020). holds the belief that though the Crimean annexation has resulted in immense advantage to Russia, it has relatedly created environments in the Black Sea region that have risked confrontations. These confrontations have triggered conflicts both from external and regional actors who are opposed to the engagement by Russia in the region, which as witnessed, has birthed the ongoing war in Ukraine.

4.2. How have the intergovernmental organizations been involved in the efforts to foster the settlement of ongoing Russia-Ukraine war?

4.2.1. United Nations (UN)

Pertaining to the article, *International organizations and settlement of the conflict in Ukraine*, by Alena F. Douhan explains how the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has been involved in helping address the ongoing Russia-Ukraine crisis. In compliance with the responsibility conferred on the council to maintain international security and peace in adherence to Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, the text is about how the UNSC has been



monitoring and examining different aspects pertaining to the Russia-Ukraine war. Upon the respective requests submitted by both Ukraine and Russian federation, the UNSC is presently actively involved in analyzing and considering a variety of matters of concerns pertaining to the causes of the war and its associated effects. These issues include Crimea invasion by Russia, the observance of human rights violations witnessed through the killings currently taking place in Ukraine, and insurgent activities in south-east Ukraine, and the aircraft crash in Ukraine Capital, Kyiv (Douhan, 2022). As per the concerns that apply in any practical actions, however, the UNSC has been cautious in the steps it takes to resolve the conflict. Owing to the partial involvement of Russia in the conflict, its veto application in the resolution voting course, and possibility of veto by Russia should further voting take place.

Hence, the principal purpose of the text is to inform on the measure that has been proposed by the UNSC as suitable to be adopted to address the crisis. The UNSC has suggested for involving all the parties linked with the war to systematically reduce its prevalence as a way of bring the crisis to a halt (Douhan, 2022). Douhan arrived at this opinion of promoting the active participation of the involved parties in the conflict to inform a thorough, full, and inclusive investigation into the problem to come up with effective proposal on how to address the ongoing crisis. In effect, the UNSC has strived to provide a discussion forum by considering the positions of states in regards to the concerns and suggestions they raise without blaming any of the involved parties, rather promoting objectivity, neutrality, and impartiality in addressing the conflict.



The UNSC has thus accorded countries with the chance to vote on the measures they deem appropriate to resolve the ongoing war. Nations such as China, India, France, and South Africa have voted in favor of UNSC using diplomatic means through a representative approach that would not make the two parties at war, Russia and Ukraine feel victimized, instead embrace a mutual consensus to bring the war at end. The UNSC concluded in its efforts by acknowledging that the interference by external actors and international bodies might serve to worsen the crisis instead of solving it (Douhan, 2022). As a result, the interest of Russia and Ukraine have been considered a priority by UNSC in embracing an all-inclusive dispute settlement mechanism so that the two countries can embrace a sustainable peaceful relation for the long-term.

4.2.2. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

Stivani Ismawira Sinambela and Rafika Arsyad, in the article, *The OSCE and the Ukraine Crisis: Cooperation over Conflict*, elaborate on the efforts that have been pursued by the organization for security and cooperation in Europe to help resolve the Russia-Ukraine war. The text is about the numerous efforts being promoted by the OSCE for the observation and settlement of multiple aspects of the Russia-Ukraine crisis. Sinambela and Arsyad (2023) reported that the OSCE has appointed a special envoy tasked with visiting and monitoring the situation in Ukraine to provide on-time recommendations on regular basis as per the problems that unfold and how to timely and aptly respond to them depending on their uniqueness and the



involved actors. Therefore, the text by Sinambela and Arsyad is chiefly embedded on the purpose of highlighting the progress that has been made by the OSCE appointed envoy towards addressing the Russia-Ukraine war. In helping reduce the severity of the war, the envoy has embraced several measures including conducting bilateral talks with the parties involved in the war and establishing national dialogue programs.

The envoy has also formed a mission of military observers to address the challenge of recurrent attacks being witnessed in Ukraine. Moreover, the envoy provides weekly updates concerning the transfer of arms, vehicles, and people from the regions hit by the war. In addition, the envoy has fostered human rights assessment and special monitoring missions to unearth and solve the underlying challenges being encountered by the national minorities in Ukraine in the face of the conflict (Sinambela & Arsyad, 2023). Overall, the OSCE, through its special envoy to address the crisis presently taking place in Ukraine, has called the conflicting parties for consultation and cooperation as regards to the prevailing unusual military activities threatening not only the regional but also the international peace.

Sinambela and Arsyad have arrived at the opinion to embrace consultation and cooperation in addressing the Russia-Ukraine war as they are strongly convinced that the best way to solve the problem is through unconditional, but mutually beneficial dialogue between these two nations. As a result, Sinambela and Arsyad arrived at the conclusion that dialogue would provide the optimal platform for understanding the causes of the war so that



the involved parties can reach a bilaterally agreed compromise to cease-fire in helping settle the conflict.

4.2.3. European Union (EU)

With reference to the article, *EU Cooperation in the Russia-Ukraine Conflict: Impacts and Limitations*, by Sara Mahilaj, the role of EU in helping solve the Russia-Ukraine war is discussed. The text is about the commitment by the EU in addressing the ongoing crisis due to the conflict currently taking place between Russia and Ukraine. With the European Union convinced of Russia being the instigator of the war, the purpose of the text is to highlight some of the measures that have been adopted by EU on ceased negotiations with Russia on visa, trade, and partnership related issues. Mahilaj informs that the EU has announced its readiness in suspending the participation of Russia in the proposed G8 plan, an endeavor that was committed to expanding the current G7 status to eight members for the purpose of accommodating Russia in the league of global superpowers (Mahilaj, 2023). The suspension has been upheld until Russia agrees to the settlement of the conflict presently prevailing in Ukraine with finality.

Moreover, the EU has affirmed its position on not recognizing the results of the referendum in Crimea. It strongly condemns the accession of Crimea to Russia and the associated deterioration of human rights situation in the Crimean region after the accession. In reference to its adherence to and protection of the Ukrainian territorial integrity, the EU has imposed prohibition on imports of goods to its respective allied nations from Sevastopol



and Crimea without the Ukrainian certificates (Mahilaj, 2023). The opinions presented by Mahilaj is in support of the various measures that have been promoted by EU to help address the Russia-Ukraine war. These opinions have been arrived by the commitment on the need to see the violence and associated violation of human rights being witnessed in Ukraine to come to an end. Therefore, Mahilaj (2023) made the conclusion that applying sanctions, especially on Russia, would be vital in compelling it to stop its heavy involvement as the perpetrator of the conflict.

4.2.4. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

Oleksandr Tytarchuk and Maksym Khyenko, in their crisis management article titled, *NATO involvement in the Handling of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict: Competitive Synergy or 'Freezing' Crisis management*, elaborates the measures that have been spearheaded by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to address the Russia-Ukraine war. The measures proposed and pursued by NATO have been very similar to those adopted by the EU. NATO largely considers Russia as the villain and Ukraine as the victim in the ongoing conflict. With Russia being viewed as the main responsible actor for the emergence and prevalence of the war, the text by Tytarchuk and Khyenko is about the measures that can be adopted to encourage Russia stop its involvement in the war. In this regard, the purpose of the text is to create awareness on the efforts that have been embraced by NATO towards addressing the conflict in Ukraine, with a specific lens of focus on Russia.



As a result, Tytarchuk and Khyenko deliberated that NATO has vehemently condemned breaches of international law committed by Russia. It has thus expressed its support for Ukraine by calling upon Russia to honor its international commitment by coming into negotiation with Ukraine and discussing issues within the NATO-Russia council tailored towards ending the ongoing conflict (Tytarchuk & Khyenko, 2022). Tytarchuk and Khyenko arrived at this opinion through condemning the Crimean annexation by Russia and entry of Russian convoy into the Ukrainian territory as it considers these moves serving to escalate the conflict. NATO has thus been in solidarity with Ukraine to condemn the escalating aggression by Russian military against Ukraine. The researchers reported that though NATO had previously contemplated the option to apply military measures in Ukraine against the Russian federation, it rather concluded that the organization limited itself only to disapproving the Russian-affiliated activities as a measure to solving the conflict.



CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Conclusion

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine is largely attributed to the supremacy battle between Russia and the US in pursuit of their distinctive military, economic, and diplomatic interest. The war is thus politically instigated as a fight for global superpower. The US and Russia have been experiencing tumultuous relationships as great powers, which has resulted in the witnessing of various events that have subsequently influenced their actions in the ongoing war in Ukraine. The primary goal for such great powers is survival considering that these nations are maximally committed to maintaining their domestic political order autonomy and territorial integrity. It is a clear demonstration through Russia's integration with the EU and US' involvement with EU and NATO enlargement that states operate like rational actors with utmost awareness of their respective environments. With this awareness, states are constantly thinking strategically pertaining to how they can enhance their survival within the international sphere.

Considering that the crisis in Ukraine did arise due to Ukrainians starting to question the pro-Russian regime and the Ukraine's unitary national identity, the actions by Russia and the US have not demonstrated any commitment towards securing the disturbances between pro-Russian and pro-Western citizens, serving to perpetuate the factors linked to the cause of the war. From a Russian perspective, the underlying reasons for its actions resulting in the ongoing crisis in Ukraine have been aligned with the goal of



continuing to exercise control in its sovereignty of the Black Sea fleet. The goal is tailored towards helping expand Russian maritime power eastward so that it can have increased military, economic, and diplomatic influence globally to challenge the US superpower status. Conversely, from the US perspective, its actions in Ukraine are majorly aligned to seeking to maintain its influence and dominance in Europe in order to hinder any potential external threats, especially those posed by Russia. Therefore, the ongoing war in Ukraine has clearly been developed into a geopolitical struggle for power between the US and Russia, as their divergent incentives and interests continue to fuel the conflict, necessitating the involvement of IGOs to help address the crisis.

5.2. Recommendation

As already clarified, the ongoing war in Ukraine arisen as a result of the citizens demanding several changes within Ukraine, including improved democratic system, enhanced protection of human rights, reduced corruption, and a unified country where all the people with diverse backgrounds feel included and respected. Guided by this understanding, it is justifiable to float the argument that the raised problems could have better addressed without the involvement of external factors such as Russia and the US in Ukraine's internal affairs. As a result, it is highly preferable for the US and Russia to could have considered using diplomatic means to help in solving the conflict from within rather than pursuing confrontational moves against each other as a supremacy battle aimed at securing their superpower status at the



international levels. In this regard, the focus by Russia and the US on gaining or lessening each other's power has perpetuated the creation of severe imbalance in the world order, and the effects of the war are currently being experienced globally. If the skewed relationship between the US and Russia is ignored, there is the increased risk of similar events reoccurring in the future, which would create the likelihood of another cold war that can possibly spiral into the third world war.

However, it is important to understand that this thesis has only contributed to two perspectives of the war in Ukraine, that is, the causes of the crisis and the response by IGOs to the conflict. Hence, it is recommendable to develop the research further by examining the impacts of the Russia-Ukraine war not only on the former soviet states but also the rest of Europe and extend this scope on the entire world at large to help understand the severity of its effects in potentially risking the emergence of a world war.



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