

## The Islamic Republic of Iran's Security Approach in the Persian Gulf with an Emphasis on the Endogenous Security Model

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### Abstract

Ensuring sustainable security in the Persian Gulf, which guarantees the interests of regional countries and the Islamic Republic, can only be achieved through the establishment of an indigenous regional security model that transcends traditional military and hard power frameworks. The research will be conducted using both quantitative and qualitative research methods, employing descriptive analysis and correlation techniques. Data will be collected through questionnaires and interviews, alongside the examination of documents, records, events, and relevant considerations. The study will focus on the regional security system, taking into account the current conditions and relationships among the countries of the Persian Gulf region. In this study, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to develop the model. The findings indicate that endogenous security significantly influences the model of national security realization of security in the Persian Gulf. The path coefficient between the two variables is 0.26, with a significance level of 16.852, which is considered favorable as it exceeds 1.96, confirming a meaningful effect. Additionally, the study reveals that regional security theory impacts the security model of the Persian Gulf. The path coefficient between these variables is 0.11, with a significance level of 14.214, also exceeding 1.96, confirming a significant impact. In this study, parameters of endogenous security and regional security theory are identified as effective elements in achieving security in the Persian Gulf.

**Keywords:** Persian Gulf Security, Collective security, Regional Security, Endogenous Security.

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## Introduction

Given that the efforts made so far to achieve a sustainable security model and to create a common agenda for endogenous security in the Persian Gulf have been unsuccessful, and that these important issues have mostly focused on traditional or military security, with limited multilateral actions and cooperation among regional countries in the area of human security, it seems essential to develop a new mechanism that goes beyond military security (Hayat Moghadam et al., 2017). In other words, due to the interdependence of countries, unilateralism in the field of security has significantly decreased, and achieving security interests is only possible through cooperation with other states. The process of transforming the idea of securing individually and promoting the endogenous security project has been seriously emphasized. Additionally, the extensive limitations and repeated failures of previous and current regional security models in the Persian Gulf, which are mainly influenced by hard and military approaches to security and the role of foreign and transregional actors, have made it even more necessary to present a model for precise policymaking and achieving a sustainable security model in this region.

Amidst this context, it appears that human security, more than any other domain, possesses inherent potential for fostering cooperation and security convergence. This potential is grounded in human security indicators such as "economic security," "food security," "health security," "environmental security," "personal security," and "social security" (Ghorbani, 2012).

This matter primarily pertains to the connection between the concept of national security and that of human security across various dimensions. One notable link in this regard is related to the prevention of conflicts. Although traditional security is as much a source of tension as it is conflict-resistant, numerous factors in the contemporary international system have heightened states' sensitivity to the interests of other actors, encouraging them to achieve common security with other states in areas such as arms control and regional cooperation. On the other hand, both traditional security and human security seek to ensure the safety and well-being of their respective individuals or communities (Moradi, 2015).

Given that many international conflicts addressed by national security and human security approaches are identity-based disputes, it is possible to redefine identities through available means such as intercultural dialogues, thereby eliminating the roots of such conflicts. Another link

between human security and national security pertains to the crisis of collective security at regional and international levels. Regional institutions alone lack the necessary potential to resolve each other's national problems. Therefore, the formation of the concept of international security can bridge national security and human security. Since contemporary threats possess both national and human characteristics, international security requires a coherent and systematic study of these threats. (Matlabi et al., 2012)

By invoking a mechanism that underscores the primacy of human security, the national security of the Persian Gulf nations can be assured. According to the doctrine of the Islamic Republic of Iran, this endeavor should be realized firstly without the intervention and influence of foreign powers, and secondly through the collaborative engagement of all states within the Persian Gulf region. In essence, the attainment of enduring security in the Persian Gulf—which safeguards the interests of the regional nations and the Islamic Republic—can only be accomplished through the establishment of an indigenous paradigm of regional security that transcends conventional military frameworks (Eftekhari, 2014).

In the realm of research significance, it is imperative to endeavor towards a definitive and pragmatic model to address the security challenges in the Persian Gulf. Given the current study's focus within the sphere of security policy-making, the formulation of an endogenous security paradigm through the establishment of an innovative approach to the regional security system—which has been conspicuously absent, leading to political, security, and economic challenges for both the Islamic Republic of Iran and neighboring countries over the years—holds paramount importance. Absent such a framework, recent developments, such as the normalization of relations between certain Persian Gulf states and the Zionist regime, and the inauguration of its embassies in capitals like the UAE and Bahrain, may precipitate new security challenges that are detrimental to the interests of regional nations and the national security of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Therefore, the question arises: what is the relationship between the regional security theory on one hand and endogenous security on the other, with the security of the Persian Gulf?

This research endeavors to achieve a practical objective through the study of various security theories and regional security models in the Persian Gulf. Given that policy-making aims to organize affairs, and security policy-making is considered a vital and foundational necessity for

governments, this study, after examining the approaches, references, and drivers of security policy-making in the Persian Gulf region, seeks to present an endogenous security model to transition from national security to human security in this area. This research will be conducted quantitatively on experts, managers, specialists, and security practitioners in the year 1401 (2022-2023).

## **Theoretical Foundations and Research Background**

In the realm of scholarly inquiry concerning the security of the Persian Gulf and the concept of endogenous security, a multitude of studies have been conducted, both domestic and international.

In his 2021 study, Lotfi demonstrates that the geopolitical dimensions of the Makran region in determining its security role in relation to the security of the Persian Gulf include: human geography and the distribution of the population in this area, the economic geography of the region, the natural geography of the region, and the geographical features of the area that allow for the implementation of the principle of dispersion as one of the principles influencing the defense-offense equation. In a 2021 study, Pakdel and colleagues showed that Iran's views on security in the Persian Gulf and the policies arising from them have been influenced by internal factors such as opposition to the presence of foreign powers in the region. The overall result of these factors has been that Iran has been led to oppose any role for foreign powers, especially the United States, in the security arrangements of the Persian Gulf. This study, using a descriptive-analytical method and employing the theoretical framework of neoclassical realism and the theory of defensive realism, attempts to examine Iran's strategy in ensuring security in the Persian Gulf region. In a 2020 study, Alishahi and colleagues showed that: 1. The expansion of the military authority of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region, especially in the post-Daesh era. 2. The lack of exclusive dependence on the United States, especially in military and security areas. 3. The intense competition between Emirs of Dubai and Abu Dhabi over the future policymaking of the United Arab Emirates. 4. The economic benefits for the Zionists from their presence in the UAE (oil, use of UAE military bases, and arms sales). 5. Trump's success in the U.S. presidential election are reasons for the formation of a strategic alliance between the UAE and the Zionist regime.

In 2020, Barritt-Eyles demonstrated that: First, an immediate and decisive commitment was shown as an essential collective security measure related to the revitalization of the United Nations. Second, it was justified as a contribution to the development of a new global order after the Cold War, shaped within the framework of Australia's regional security interests and by the United States' alliance. This article argues that Australia's discourse, despite collective security, is based on United Nations leadership, sitting uncomfortably with a U.S.-led Cold War. In 2019, Han and colleagues argued that, from the perspective of a regional security complex, the Persian Gulf has been a typical security subset since the 1970s. After the Iran-Iraq War, Iran adopted a policy of détente towards the Gulf Cooperation Council countries by utilizing domestic consensus to improve relations with its neighbors. Internationally, the United States' hard stance under President Trump and the reimposition of economic sanctions against Iran have raised the regional temperature, making it more difficult for Iran and the Gulf Cooperation Council to improve their relations. We argue that, to understand the proxy wars between Iran and Saudi Arabia in particular, a more nuanced approach is needed that goes beyond religious strife and rivalry.

### **Types of Security**

In a broad classification, security patterns can be divided into two categories: exo-systemic and endo-systemic. Exo-systemic patterns, which manifest as the intervention and participation of extra-regional international actors in the political decision-making processes of the regional system, are of various types. The first of these is the model of “hegemony of a foreign power.” This model, based on the establishment of a hierarchical system accompanied by the dominance and control of an intervening non-regional power, considers a unipolar security model based on the dominant behavior of a foreign power as the only path to stability, distinguishing between two types of hegemony: direct and indirect. Direct hegemony is a type of hierarchical system based on the superiority of an extra-regional power over the regional subsystem and the determination of its security affairs by the intervening system. The direct hegemony model is based on the direct presence and unilateral intervention of a foreign power in specific regional security arrangements, which facilitates the establishment of a unipolar security system in that area. (Nilforoshan and NaghiZadeh, 2021).

### **Illegal Direct Hegemony**

This form of hegemony is based on the colonial presence of a foreign power in a specific region, a practice that has long been prevalent in the Persian Gulf. Notable examples include the Portuguese dominance over the region from 1507 to 1622, the British naval supremacy from 1622 to 1971, and the American influence after the establishment of the Rapid Deployment Force (R.D.F.) in the early 1980s, following the announcement of the Carter Doctrine. Advocates of this security model argue that the unipolar security system it creates prevents foreign powers from intervening, averts large-scale regional wars, and deters coups and political instability in the countries of the area. However, this assumption is primarily driven by the interventionist powers' motivations for dominance, exclusivity, and control. In reality, the presence of foreign forces in a region, particularly in the Persian Gulf, disrupts, and will disrupt the historical and traditional balance, and the superiority of an external power through direct military means ultimately creates regional tensions and conflicts.

### **Legal Direct Hegemony**

This model is primarily realized when a defense-security pact is concluded between a dominant foreign power and a regional country. As exemplified by the 1990 U.S.-Kuwait bilateral agreement, where the two countries signed a ten-year defense-security pact, this form of bilateral security arrangement between the United States and most of the Gulf Cooperation Council states became prominent after the Second Gulf War. Through defense agreements with countries such as the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Qatar, the U.S. solidified its dominance, thus establishing a Gulf security model based on reliance on foreign forces. This, in turn, increased regional tensions and conflicts, and not only failed to bring sustainable security to the region but also contributed to the instability of the Gulf, leading to the decline of purely regional plans. Indeed, the military weakness of the regional governments on one hand, and their false need for security guarantees from major intervening powers on the other, have made the political dominance of a superior foreign power sustainable, putting the collective independence of the regional countries at risk. However, indirect hegemony is more likely to occur when a foreign power effectively places a specific region under its protectorate, although it does not legally place it under its trusteeship. In this model, the principle of full allegiance from the local states to the intervening power

is implemented, solidifying that power's control and indirectly imposing superior dominance patterns. In this context, two types of institutionalized and non-institutionalized models can be identified.

The second category of security models is endogenous system models. These are security models based on the interaction between regional actors and reliant on the significant role regions play in security equations. These models are of particular importance because they regard the Gulf as a regional system, rather than a subsystem of the Middle East. In a system based on the integration of regionalism and globalism, or as Hozono terms it, 'glocalism' (a fusion of globalization and localization), strategic regions, especially the Gulf, emerge as new poles of power, significantly influencing security equations and providing greater maneuverability within a system grounded in neoliberal regionalism. Therefore, analyzing the security models within this system becomes even more crucial. (Hayat-Moghadam et al., 2017).

### **Endogenous Security Models:**

- Regional Unipolar Hegemony
- Regional Balance of Power
- Veto System of Regional Units
- Regional Collective Security Model

The aforementioned security model is based on understanding and agreement among regional and international actors concerning the prevention of an arms race and coordinated efforts to achieve a weapons-free region, both nuclear and conventional. It is more aligned with a security model that is primarily based on a security model with a non-zero-sum outcome, as disarmament, arms control, and demilitarization will ultimately ensure the security of all countries in the region. In this regard, two security models are conceivable. The first model is based on sustainable cooperation, convergence, and alignment of positions, which enjoys greater strength, durability, and formality. The second model is based on coexistence, understanding, coordination, and limited cooperation, emphasizing relative, rather than sustainable, development and partial, rather than comprehensive, agreements among the member states of the regional system (ibid., 15-13).

Considering the aforementioned points, it can be concluded that the model of coexistence within the framework of collective security holds greater desirability as a mid-term solution. In the long term, the model of convergence and extensive cooperation should be considered by

policymakers in the Gulf region. Now, within the framework of the coexistence model and the competition-understanding paradigm, multilateral behavioral strategies, duality, extraregionalism, mediation, and confidence-building are recommended.

### **The Islamic Republic of Iran's view concerning the security of the Persian Gulf**

With the advent of the Islamic Revolution, Iran shifted its regional policies, moving away from reliance on military force and dependence on the West. This transformation led to a change in Iran's perspective on the security of the Persian Gulf; henceforth, the primary threats identified by Iran in the region were the presence of foreign forces and the Ba'athist regime of Iraq. By accepting UN Security Council Resolution 598, Iran embarked on a path of détente and sought to improve relations with the Arab countries of the Gulf. Iran's firm stance against the occupation of Kuwait elevated discussions with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries regarding regional order to a political priority. The signing of the ten-year U.S.-Kuwait defense pact and the former's new strategy of regional expansion and interventionism posed a significant obstacle to Iran's cooperation with regional countries. Iran views the shared security of energy producers and consumers and the principle of mutual security as prerequisites for the security of the Persian Gulf. It considers this security as both a product of reciprocal relations among neighbors within the framework of collective security and a result of relations with other international actors, especially industrialized nations. Iran advocates for the sovereignty of regional countries over the Persian Gulf and its preservation and stability without the interference of foreign powers. It seeks to establish a principled and reassuring formula that serves as a common understanding among all countries of the Persian Gulf region. Iran views the presence of foreign armies as a catalyst for fundamentalism and a source of tension in the region (Nilforoshan and Naghizadeh, 2021).

#### **In light of the theoretical foundations, two hypotheses are posited:**

The first hypothesis asserts that there is a significant relationship between regional security theory and the security of the Persian Gulf.

The second hypothesis contends that there is a significant relationship between endogenous security and the security of the Persian Gulf. In the present study, in addition to considering previous research with an



endogenous security model approach, we proceed to examine and analyze the findings.

## **Research Methodology**

Considering that the objective is to present an endogenous security model with an emphasis on human security, the study is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-analytical in terms of approach. Its results are specific and tangible, addressing needs and solving problems, and can be applied to specific issues within organizations, communities, and beyond. Additionally, the research is quantitative in terms of data collection. The statistical population of the study, based on the nature of the research, includes experts, managers, specialists, and active individuals in the field of security in the year 1401 (2022). The estimated number of these individuals is approximately 500. According to the Morgan table, for a population of 500, the sample size is 217, which was utilized in this study. The present study is survey-based in terms of the method of data collection, indicating that it is a descriptive-survey research. It involves a comprehensive review of scientific sources and theories within the research domain, their comparative analysis, conducting interviews, and the design of a researcher-constructed questionnaire based on interview outcomes. Various methods and tools have been used to collect and analyze the necessary data and information for this research, which will be detailed according to the specific needs of the research model. For gathering information related to theoretical foundations, library research and studying various books, articles, and scientific websites were employed. The primary data collection tool in this research is the questionnaire, which was developed based on theoretical foundations to evaluate the components extracted from the interviews. The responses are designed on a five-point Likert scale.

Considering that the present study necessitates testing the conceptual model derived from the qualitative section, the use of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is essential in the quantitative phase. For quantitative data analysis and subsequent analyses, the SPSS software and PLS software will be utilized.

## **Findings**

### **Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Endogenous Security Variables**

In this study, to determine the validity of endogenous security variables, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was employed. The output from the

Amos software indicates that all factor loadings are above 0.3. Additionally, the calculated  $\chi^2/\text{df}$  ratio is 2.07; a ratio less than 5 signifies an adequate model fit. Furthermore, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) should be less than 0.08, and in the presented model, this value is 0.066. The Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Normed Fit Index (NFI) should all exceed 0.9, and in the examined model, they are all above the specified thresholds. Therefore, the data in this research exhibit a suitable fit with the factor structure of this scale, indicating the alignment of the questions with the variables in this section.

Table 1: Fit indices of endogenous security variables

Characteristic	Estimate	Criterion
Chi-square to Degrees of Freedom Ratio ( $\chi^2/\text{df}$ )	2.07	$<5\chi^2/\text{df}$
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.066	$<0/08$ RMSEA
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	0/93	$>0/9\text{GFI}$
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	0/91	$>0/9\text{AGFI}$
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.96	$>0/9\text{CFI}$
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.94	$>0/9\text{NFI}$

### Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Regional Security Theory

In order to determine the validity of the Regional Security Theory, Confirmatory Factor Analysis was employed. All factor loadings are greater than 0.3. According to the output from Amos in Table 2, the calculated  $\chi^2/\text{df}$  ratio is 1.80; the presence of a  $\chi^2/\text{df}$  ratio less than 5 indicates an adequate model fit. Furthermore, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) should be less than 0.08, and in the presented model, this value is 0.057. The values for the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Normed Fit Index (NFI) should all exceed 0.9, and in the model under consideration, they are all above the specified thresholds. Therefore, the data in this study exhibit a suitable fit with the factor structure of this scale, indicating the alignment of the questions with the variables of the Regional Security Theory.

Table 2: Fit indices of the Regional Security Theory

Characteristic	Estimate	Criterion
Chi-square to Degrees of Freedom Ratio ( $\chi^2/\text{df}$ )	1.80	$<5\chi^2/\text{df}$
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.057	$<0/08$ RMSEA
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	0.94	$>0/9$ GFI
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	0.92	$>0/9$ AGFI
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.98	$>0/9$ CFI
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.97	$>0/9$ NFI

### Model Analysis and Evaluation of the Goodness of Fit of the Proposed Research Model.

In this section, using the information gathered through a questionnaire designed based on the indicators identified in the qualitative section, which was distributed among the sample population of the studied community. The indices pertaining to the components were subjected to a rigorous quantitative statistical analysis, the results of which are presented hereafter. Fit indices represent one of the most critical stages in structural equation modeling analysis. These indices aim to answer the question of whether the model represented by the data confirms the measurement model of the research. To answer this question, numerous fit indices have been introduced in the methodology of structural equation modeling.

1. Chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio: In the chi-square test, the hypothesis of the model's congruence with the dispersion pattern between the observed variables is examined. Smaller values, specifically those under 3, indicate a better fit (Gelz, 2002). The chi-square statistic is highly dependent on the sample size, and in larger samples, it increases beyond what can be attributed to the model's incorrectness.
2. Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) and Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI): These indices represent a measure of the relative amount of variances and covariances explained by the model. Both indices range from zero to one, with values closer to one indicating a better fit between the model and the observed data.
3. Root Mean Square Residual (RMR): In this index, the residuals of the observed variances and covariances are compared with the estimates made in the model. Smaller values indicate a better fit

(Homan, 2001). Models with values less than 0.05 demonstrate very high goodness of fit, while values between 0.05 and 0.08 are also suitable for a good model.

4. Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA): This index is considered favorable for models with a value of 0.05 or less, while a model with an RMSEA of 0.10 or higher indicates poor fit. Table 3 illustrates the status of these indices.

Table 3: Results of the Model Fit Indices

<b>RMSEA</b>	<b>RMR</b>	<b>CFI</b>	<b>NFI</b>	<b>AGFI</b>	<b>GFI</b>	<b><math>\frac{\chi^2}{df}</math></b>
<b>0/090</b>	0/133	0/845	0/887	0/841	0/835	2/858

The results indicate an appropriate fit for the proposed model. After testing the measurement models, it is now necessary to present the structural model that demonstrates the relationships between the latent variables of the research. The structural model allows for the examination of the research hypotheses. In this study, the structural equation model has been assessed using Amos software, as shown in the following diagram:

Based on the above diagram and the significance coefficients, since the CR (Critical Ratio) value for rejecting or confirming relationships should be greater than 1.96 or less than -1.96, the parameter value between these two ranges is not considered significant in the model. Furthermore, values within this range indicate the absence of a significant difference between the computed values for the regression weights and zero at the 95% confidence level. The results of the model test are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Results of the Structural Model Implementation for the Realization of Gulf Security

<b>Relationships</b>	<b>Standard Estimate</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Critical Ratio</b>	<b>Significance Level</b>
Common Security → Gulf Security Realization Model	<b>0/420</b>	<b>0/056</b>	<b>4/018</b>	<b>0/000*</b>
Endogenous Security → Gulf Security Realization Model	<b>0/26</b>	<b>0/077</b>	<b>2/798</b>	<b>0/010*</b>

**0/05**

**$P \leq *$**

Accordingly, the research model underwent final evaluation using AMOS software. As observed, all relationships, considering the path coefficients, are confirmed at a 95% confidence level. The pattern of relationships among the variables in the Persian Gulf security model is presented in the above diagram and table.

The results presented in Table 5 indicate that all items exceed the desired threshold, thereby confirming the adequacy of the measurement model.

Table 5: Reliability and Validity

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Construct Reliability</b>	<b>Convergent Validity</b>	<b>Average Variance Extracted</b>
<b>Endogenous Security</b>	<b>0. 85</b>	<b>0. 961</b>	<b>0. 89</b>	<b>0. 64</b>
<b>Regional Security Theory</b>	<b>75 .0</b>	<b>81 .0</b>	<b>78 .0</b>	<b>66 .0</b>

Discriminant validity assesses a model's ability to distinguish the observable indicators of its latent variables from those of other variables within the model. It may be posited that it essentially serves as a complement to convergent validity, and this too can be measured using the Fornell-Larcker method.

In Table 6, the square roots of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for the latent variables in this study, located in the cells along the main diagonal of the matrix, are greater than the correlation coefficients between these variables and others, which are positioned in the cells below each variable and to the left of the main diagonal. This observation indicates that both convergent and discriminant validity are in an optimal state.

Table 6, the Fornell-Larcker criterion

	<b>Endogenous Security</b>	<b>Regional Security Theory</b>
<b>Endogenous Security</b>	<b>0. 824</b>	
<b>Regional Security Theory</b>	<b>845 .0</b>	<b>845 .0</b>

## Discussion and Conclusion

The first hypothesis of the study states that there is a significant relationship between the Regional Security Complex Theory and the security of the Persian Gulf.

The path coefficient for this relationship was found to be 0.691. To assess the significance of this effect, we refer to the t-value, which is 2.949—exceeding the threshold of 1.96—and the p-value, which is 0.000. Therefore, the hypothesis is confirmed at a 95% confidence level, indicating a significant relationship between the Regional Security Complex Theory and the security of the Persian Gulf.

These findings are in complete accord with those reported by Birqi et al. (1399), Aminian et al. (1400), Kloor et al. (1398), Cho et al. (2020), Viboo et al. (2020), Sha'bani and Abbasi Mehr (2019), and Rita et al. (2019).

The geopolitical region of the Persian Gulf is truly a homogeneous environment, encompassing nations that, despite certain cultural differences, share similar political, strategic, and economic challenges. This distinctive region, with its common environment, offers the optimal opportunity for the coastal nations to collaborate in establishing an economic and political framework. Such a framework is vital for the economic and political survival of the countries in the region. The shared economic concerns and related strategic issues, alongside the international significance of this region with its substantial capacity for oil and gas production and export, and its extensive trade relations with all economic blocs worldwide, have created a favorable opportunity for the establishment of an economic and political framework. Governments, influenced by the (semantic structure and identity system) of their motivations, objectives, and interests (stemming from this semantic structure), regulate their global interactions. It is natural that political entities, on their own, are unable to fulfill their desires and needs within their internal borders and must pursue their community's requirements beyond national boundaries. This necessitates the extensive cooperation between governments, propelling them into the realm of cross-border collaboration. The geographical proximity and the extent of political, economic, and other interactions among neighbors, as well as the mutual vulnerabilities of the countries in the region, are such that the security and insecurity in the Persian Gulf can be considered interconnected. According to regional theory and interdependence, the security arrangements in the Persian Gulf also arise from the natural pattern of interdependence among the countries in this region, in that the level of interactions at the regional level is so extensive that any crisis in one country can quickly impact the region. In other words, the security of one is equivalent to the security of another. Their primary security concerns are so interdependent that, in fact, it is impossible to conceive of their national security as distinct from one another. As

mentioned, the Persian Gulf region is among the rare areas in the world, with significant and strategically and geopolitically unique importance and position, that has consistently attracted the intense attention of neighboring and non-neighboring peoples and states since the earliest periods of human history.

The second hypothesis of the study posits that a significant relationship exists between endogenous security and the security of the Persian Gulf.

The path coefficient for this relationship was found to be 0.936. To assess the significance of this effect, we refer to the t-value, which is 2.489—exceeding the threshold of 1.96—and the p-value, which is 0.000. Therefore, the hypothesis is confirmed at a 95% confidence level, indicating a significant relationship between endogenous security and the security of the Persian Gulf.

These findings align with those of Clever et al. (2019), Chou et al. (2020), and Wibowo et al. (2020).

The security of the Persian Gulf, from the perspective of the five countries—Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Bahrain—entails the preservation of Iran's existence and the survival of its government by any means necessary. Due to their limited geographical and geopolitical size, these nations are more vulnerable and rely regionally on Saudi Arabia and internationally on the United States. Despite providing extensive assistance to Iraq during the Iran-Iraq War, these smaller states have endeavored to compensate for past actions and avoid further provocations. Following the U.S. occupation of Iraq, their security stance has become more aligned with global powers, reducing the need for regional cooperation. In recent years, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, and Bahrain have felt that the security of the Persian Gulf region has been ensured for them and are satisfied with the current situation. Consequently, the region has experienced three critical events since the end of the Cold War: Iraq's invasion of Iran, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, and the U.S. invasion of Iraq, all leading to regional instability. All these wars, or crises, have contributed to insecurity in the region. Undoubtedly, all these movements and wars should be viewed within the framework of the Persian Gulf's significance in various geopolitical, geostrategic, and geoeconomic dimensions. Despite these efforts, security arrangements in the Persian Gulf have never achieved significant success due to neglecting existing realities and structures.

The fundamental distinction between the internal conditions of societies and the conditions of the international system, which Kenneth Waltz attributes not to war and conflict but to the differing structures of these two realms, underscores the paramount importance of endogenous security as a “compulsory rule of action”. In the anarchic conditions of the international system, unlike domestic societies, there is no overarching authority to guarantee security; each nation is responsible for its own security and survival. In this context, ensuring security for one country may lead to insecurity or a sense of insecurity in other countries—a situation that realists refer to as the security dilemma. This dilemma arises when a nation's military actions create uncertainty in other nations about whether these actions are defensive measures to ensure security or offensive moves for aggressive purposes. Realists have two perspectives on the creation of security dilemmas. Structural realists view the security dilemma as an inherent feature of international politics, while historical realists believe it can be mitigated through a balance of power. Structural realists assert that in an endogenous security system, even in the absence of a deliberate policy to strengthen the balance of power, such a balance naturally emerges. Waltz contends that the balance of power forms regardless of the intentions of individual states. In the anarchic environment of the international system, countries form alliances to preserve their survival and security against threatening states. These alliances aim to control and balance power in response to perceived threats. Indeed, all realists believe that the balance of power is not a stable condition; this state, whether through war or peaceful means, eventually dissolves, leading to the formation of new balances. Consequently, the outcome suggests that states, at best, can reduce the worst consequences of the security dilemma but cannot escape it entirely. This inescapable situation arises from the lack of trust in the anarchic international system, with its primary consequence being endogenous security. All realists concur on these fundamental principles, which serve as the core of realism in their theoretical frameworks. Thus, statism, survival, and endogenous security are the main pillars of realism in their theoretical propositions.

### **Research Proposals**

It is recommended that, considering the inevitable impacts of cultural and social variables, the research variables be tested in other strategic regions of the country, and the results obtained be compared. In this way, the causes and factors influencing the increase and decrease of variables, based on the regions tested, will be largely identified, leading to the provision of appropriate solutions tailored to the existing conditions.



In future research concerning the components of this study, it is advisable to select a different statistical population compared to our study.

### Executive Proposals

- Providing an appropriate platform for the community to become more familiar with security issues is essential.
- Enhancing platforms that promote security in the Persian Gulf region  
Facilitating the education of individuals to enhance their awareness

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