

Theory and Practice: Discussing the Nexus between the Concept of Comprehensive Security and Japan-Gulf Relations

0 Summary

There has been a paucity of literature on Japan's relations with the Arab Gulf states (i.e., Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain), particularly from conceptual and theoretical perspectives. In this light, this study aims to shed light on the concept of comprehensive security and discuss to what extent the concept reflects the Japanese authorities' foreign policy approach vis-a-vis the Arab Gulf states over the past decade.

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1 Introduction

Little has been scholarly discussed on Japan-Gulf relations (e.g., Matsuda, 2022; Tsujigami and Horinuki, 2015; Heng, 2022). In particular, conceptual and theoretical discussions on their ties are scarce. In fact, the existing literature on this particular subject of inquiry often emphasizes their economic and hydrocarbon trade facets (e.g., Abdullah and Al-Tamimi, 2015; AlShamsi and Kandil, 2001; Al-Tamimi, 2013; Calabrese, 2009; Nakajima, 2015; Niblock and Malik, 2013; Sharif, 1986).

2 Objective & Method

To discuss the congruence between the concept of comprehensive security and the development of Japan's foreign policy approach towards the Arab Gulf states over the past decade, based on qualitative analysis of the primary and secondary sources.

What is "comprehensive security"?

It argues that "security has multiple dimensions., not only the defence of its territory and sovereignty from external military attack, but also against threats such as those to the secure flow of energy resources to Japan and, hence, to the prosperity of Japan's economy" (Miyagi, 2011, p. 2)

3 Discussion

- Over the past decade, the nature of Japan-Gulf relations has been developing into comprehensive relations, encompassing both hydrocarbon and non-hydrocarbon sectors (Matsuda, 2022; Saito and Janardhan, 2020; Watanabe, 2022)
- However, Japan's energy security remains the primary driving force behind the diversification of relations beyond hydrocarbon trade.

4 Conclusion

Although Japan-Gulf ties have been morphing into comprehensive relations, which include non-hydrocarbon sector cooperation, the concept of comprehensive security still retains its explanatory power vis-a-vis Japan's relations with the Arab Gulf states.

5 References

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