CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
2 Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

The literature about the Chinese foreign policy topic is extensively available. The scholars all over the world with their own perspectives have studied the topic and published their works in the form of books or articles in renowned journals. Now many blog-post, podcast and videos are also widely available having expert views on Chinese foreign policy. Mainly, aspects of foreign policy during pre-Mao era were studied on the basis of the determinants of it. However, in contemporary times the Chinese foreign policy aspects such as security studies, economic interdependence, multilateral diplomacy, soft power strategy, grand strategy, foreign policy decision making etc. have been studied by experts of particular determinant such as Alastair Iain Johnston is an expert of Chinese security studies as well as its strategic thinking. David Lampton is an expert on Chinese foreign policy decision-making. John Fairbank has done extensive research on the historical collection of Chinese foreign policy. Mingjiang Li and Joshua Kurlantzick are experts of soft power strategies and China’s Charm over the world. Evan Medeiros and Taylor Fravel are experts of Chinese New Diplomacy. Ashley Tellis and Swaine Michael are experts of Chinese Grand Strategy. Yong Deng is an expert of theoretical notions on Chinese foreign policy, mainly Realist.

There is another perspective on which one can identify the work done for the government of states. There are some prominent scholars from different states such as Samuel S. Kim, Kenneth Libeerral, David Shambaugh, Cheng Li’s writings reflects American perception. Roy Medvedev is a scholar from Russia. Akio Takahara from the University of Tokyo is an expert on the ambiguities in Chinese foreign policy. Peter Nolan, Martin Jacques as well as
Yong Deng are the scholars from London School of Economics and Political Science, as well as University of Cambridge. There are scholars from Australia and France. Suisheng Zhao, Quansheng Zhao, Guoli Liu, Wang Jisi are prominent Chinese scholars on Chinese foreign policy.

2.2 Review of Literature

Reviewing the available literature gives an idea about the work done and helps one investigate the research gap that has not been addressed in the existing list of works that have been published. The review of several books and articles has been briefly discussed in this section.

2.2.1 Major Books on Chinese Foreign Policy in the Post-Mao Period


This book is an edited work of various experts on Chinese foreign policy. They have discussed challenges to the world economy and opportunities for China and United States to adopt in this new world order. China’s role has become important globally. The issues of the international system are the concern for the great powers and their foreign policies. The world is looking with hopes towards the United States and China as well as other great powers to address the issues and challenges existing in the contemporary world.

The unique thing about this book is that the team of authors is from different states—American, British, Japanese, Chinese and Korean scholars have contributed in this book edited by David Shambaugh. A conference was held in 2003 to discuss the power shift in the 21st century with the rising China. The chapters are on internal dynamics as well as foreign policies of China with a concern of rising China’s impact on the Asia-Pacific region. Authors have discussed about the questions regarding challenge to US influence in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan is also having its influence in the region. That is a point which is of concern as there is no clarity about the influence and impact of Chinese power in the region along with a competition from Japan and United States. So, Will the power shift from US to China or Japan?

This book gives an idea of Chinese influence in Asia-Pacific region as well as its global impact. The book by David Shambaugh confirms the influence of China globally and regionally.


Yong Deng has tried to identify the IR theoretical approaches in the Chinese foreign policy implications. This has resulted into China’s increase in power and influence globally. He has done a systematic work by discussing all the major aspects from realists, neo-realists, interdependent and neo-liberal approaches through Chinese foreign policy analysis. How China tackled its human rights stand and dealing with China Threat theories has been
discussed in detail. The foreign policy approaches used by Chinese leaders have been contributed distinctly.


  The Cambridge History of China is a detailed collection of the data about China’s domestic politics as well as foreign policy during Mao era. This vol.15 consists of detailed analysis of the leadership and the decision-making process during Mao era. Foreign policy has also been analyzed in context to the domestic policy extensions between 1966-1982. China’s permanent membership to U.N. Security Council is considered as a major breakthrough in Beijing’s future as well as failure of Cultural Revolution which compelled the CCP leaders to enter into Open Door Policy again with the United States for the enhancement of its power.


  Both the scholars have written this book by introducing and sensitizing students with Chinese foreign policy by analyzing the issues. Alternate policy choices are suggested at the end of each chapter that makes this work unique from other literature available on the topic. China’s relations with its neighbours, other great powers as well as its dynamic policy implications have been discussed in the book.

This edited book has been divided into four sections on Theory and Culture, Perspectives and Identities, Bilateral and Multilateral Relationships and Retrospect and Prospect. This gives a picture of Post-Cold War foreign policy and the latest strategies in the Multilateral World. Each section contains very different strategies than those used by Beijing during post-Mao era. The scholars such as Michael Ng-Quinn on The Analytic Study of Chinese Foreign Policy gives an idea of the Chinese strategies based on general analysis of different perceptions, Gilbert Rozman on China’s Quest for Great Power Identity, as well as Allen S. Whiting, Samuel S. Kim, Harry Harding, Alastair Iain Johnston’s chapters has made this book a complete analysis and a unique piece of work.


The Cambridge History gave the factual data while Harold Hinton has considered the foreign policy in a systematic manner through dividing Mao era into different phases. The other section is about influencing the foreign policy decision-making process as well as China’s image in different parts of the world. The comprehensive study of Chinese foreign policy during Mao era has been conducted by Hinton successfully.


David Kang has focused on China’s relations with the East Asian states. He considers it as strength for the East Asian states rather than a threat to the region. He has discussed about
the economic, military, as well as other opportunities for the states of the region. But he considers that all the states in the region do not opine the same for China. Their views differ and all of them do not welcome China’s influence in the region. China’s basic interest in the region is to get the raw materials and sell finished goods in the region.


The book has been written by Paul Kennedy focusing mainly on the strategies and policies adopted by different states from 1500 to 2000 with the help of economic changes and policies adopted by great powers and get into military conflicts. This historical data is useful for the analysis of enhancement of power attributes such as economic strength, military strength and the technological advancement of states in order to rise as a great power with their specific impact on the international order. Each great power has contributed something typical for its rise in the international system.

Kennedy has analyzed the uneven growth and rise of states through technological advancements and organizational breakthroughs. There is no constant growth which has been discussed but mainly the European states which began to rise and then fall since the 1500 AD has been discussed in detail. Kennedy has discussed on the basis of time during which the state that was economically strong and militarily most capable in the world at one point of time along with the fall of that state. In short, beginning with the fall of Ming, Ottomans, Moguls and Muscovy Tokugawa Japan to the rise of Spain, The Netherlands, France, The British Empire and now the United States has been observed with its economic and military strategies.
By the end of World War II, the bipolar world emerged but the decline of Soviet Union during 1990, gave a way for PRC to emerge as a great power. The economy of Japan and China has contributed in the growth of North-east Asia as one of the stronger economic region other than the West. Japan’s alliance with United States has given obvious results. But the rise of PRC needs a deep study and analysis to investigate the economic and military strategies used by it for the rise.

  This book is based on the basic information of China’s Foreign Policy covering almost all aspects such as diplomatic relations, economic relations, military strategy as well as decision-making process and its relations with other great powers of the world during post-Cold War era. Though Lanteigne has discussed briefly about Mao era and post-Mao era foreign policy, post-Cold War era foreign policy has been discussed at length.

  Levi Werner could be considered as first scholar to do detailed study of China’s foreign policy from the beginning of the 20th century. Open Door policy with America was signed during the end of 19th century. Gradually, the First World War and its impact as well as experiences with Germany, America and Japan led China to move towards earlier Russia and later on towards Soviet Union. The beginning of Communism in China was imported from Russia through Mao Tse-Tung. The theory of Communist Foreign Policy and the principles of Mao were proposed and accepted on the establishment of The People’s Republic of China in 1949.

The book is about the rise of China as depicted in the title is mainly aimed to address the concern of China’s rise and its impact on the international system. This means how United States and other great powers in the system should deal with China that has gained power. The authors have discussed about the capabilities that China has enhanced in the economic sector. China has militarily developed the sophistication and has been involved in the South China Sea islands for access to the deeper sea. Its activities in South China Sea are of major concern for other states of East Asia. Part two of the book is mainly concerned about the Asia-Pacific Security issues. And the last part of the book is about the policy choices. How United States and the other great powers should deal with China- is it safe to keep China engaged or China should be contained?

This book is unique in itself, focusing on China’s security capabilities and its impact in the Asia-Pacific region.


This book is giving the idea of completely different perspective based on China’s actual behavior based on Chinese Diaspora throughout the World. The Chinese community has always been helping the state during all ups and downs through which China has passed successfully in order to rise as a great power. With the Globalization in the world, the economic and trade policies had changed which had been adopted by Beijing much easier compared to other states in the world.
China’s multilateral relations through ASEAN and SCO have been discussed in chapters to understand its regional and Asian behavior.


  This is a book mainly discussing the Chinese pragmatic approach in its foreign policy behavior. The book is divided into three parts. The first part is to understand the Chinese foreign policy from the international system-centred approach which is different from the domestic-centred approach. The second part is about the pragmatism adopted in the foreign policy giving priority to the national-interest instead of ideological goals. The third part is based on China’s strategic relations in the multipolar world during the 21st Century.

  This book reflects the realist foreign policy approach in Chinese foreign policy behavior. The justification of pragmatism and strategic goals reflects China’s neo-realist approach in its foreign policy behavior.


  The authors of this book are trying to figure out the motivations behind China’s rise and its international image. They have tried to analyze various aspects of Chinese foreign policy, such as ruling party’s interests, international status, human rights, globalization, war on terrorism, international institutions etc. China’s approach and actions during the post- 9/11 have become of pivotal interests amongst the scholars in order to figure out China’s intentions.
2.2.2 Important Articles on Post-Mao Chinese Foreign Policy


As the dissertation is mainly based on the concept of power analysis, it becomes must to understand the concept of power and then decide how to incorporate the concept in the theoretical aspect of the dissertation. The titles of the articles in journals are always clearly stating about the key argument in them. Robert Dahl’s intuitions helped him give an operational definition of power amongst relations. As international relations is a discipline developed on the basis of relations between actors of the international system, Robert Dahl’s definition of the concept of power helps scholars to conduct the research by applying this definition in it.


Fairbank is of view that when there is a great power, one should have a record of its historical background. This historical background and the factual data helps one understand its psychological behaviour in the contemporary times. Therefore, he wrote an article on China’s foreign policy in historical perspective.


Since 1990s, China’s role in the international politics has made several diplomatic changes that are considered as one of the major changes amongst them. The multilateral relations became more important with the beginning of the 21st century. China has also been playing an important role in regional organizations such as ASEAN and SCO. Now China is also
getting involved into regional security organizations. China has proposed in ASEAN to expand a security alliance of it.

This article gives the latest diplomatic relations of China that completes the study of Chinese foreign policy till the beginning of 21st century.


This article is a unique work on foreign policy decision-making process with three different patterns of analysis. These patterns have studied the role of pre-eminent leadership, collective leadership and bureaucratic organization through its dominance in the decision-making process during the post-Mao era. Each pattern has its own place in Chinese foreign policy making.


Ronald Keith has a specific style to analyze China’s behaviour. He is more inclined towards China’s ideological policy implications. This article is also about China’s independent foreign policy based on the ideological implications and China’s psychological power.

Samuel S. Kim has discussed about China’s path to great power status in the post-Cold War era. He has defined the Comprehensive National Power and measured the economic as well as military power of China in the post-Cold War era. He further discusses the ways and means to rise as a great power and finally predicts the future of China in the international system.


The major change in Chinese foreign policy is seen in the economic aspect. Nicholas Lardy is considered as one of the prominent scholars to write articles on Chinese economic foreign policy during Deng era. This article is mainly based on the economic reforms introduced in foreign trade, foreign direct investment as well as foreign aids received. Liberalization was adopted in almost all goods and exports. Not only the four SEZs, but also coastal cities were also benefitting due to Open-Door policy.

This is the core article which needs to be reviewed in order to understand the economic rise of China through reforms implemented during Post-Mao era. This article could be considered as creating the background of China’s rise and initial step towards the rise of China with the help of economic reforms.

Philip Saunders has focused on Sino-American economic relations based on interdependence and the level of dependence as theoretical notion. The American support to China is one of the obvious reasons in the development of China. Saunders tried to study the Interdependence notion through empirical puzzle of China’s economic development. Saunders is trying to find out if China’s political power was in danger; it depended more and more on U.S. while its actions had begun affecting the other states of the world in international politics.

This article gives a perspective to study and analyze the empirical set of events through theoretical notions. Another important point raised by Saunders is China’s impact and role in international politics during the post-Mao era.


China is popular for its leadership. Each leader has contributed by ensuring continuous rise of China through peaceful means. Deng Xiaoping is considered as a statesman for China through his major policy reforms and implications. Michael Yahuda is one of the prominent scholars on China studies. He wrote this article to analyze the role of leadership and Deng’s characteristics to understand Chinese behaviour.
2.3 Research Gap

The above-mentioned works on Chinese foreign policy and rise of China as a great power have got their distinct place and are complete. There are few aspects such as discussing the role of foreign policy and its contribution in generating the power capabilities has helped China to enhance its power and influence globally has been discussed hardly in any of the works done so far. Another point is that the changes and reforms in the foreign policy took place during specific time which has been scarcely discussed in any of the works available on Chinese foreign policy. The third aspect is that very few studies are discussing all the power attributes such as economy, military, technology, diplomacy, culture in one work.

The key research questions for this piece of research work are insufficiently addressed. Attention paid to the relationship between the foreign policy and great powers as well as the characteristics of great powers in the contemporary times is scarce. It has been found very sketchy in few of the works done so far. Consequently this piece of research work shall contribute to a different aspect in Chinese foreign policy analysis.

2.4 Conclusion

The review of above mentioned literature has contributed in delineating this dissertation. Each work done on the topic has its own analysis which has been justified by the authors. Though the above-mentioned gap was found on which this dissertation is delineated to address the research gap.
Works Cited


