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Iran's Foreign Policy on Security in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and Its Impact on Egypt's Stability

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Abstract:

Two decades after the fall of the shah, Iran is still going through a long and frequently interrupted post-revolutionary transition, which has a significant impact on the country's politics and its external relations. This paper discusses the implications of Iran's foreign policy on security in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region with a specific focus on the national security of Egypt. The study was carried out in Egypt and North Africa, and it studied a sample of 50 adult male and female professors who specialize in Iranian affairs, politics, and diplomats. The purpose of this study is to assess the impact of Iran's foreign policy in the MENA region. The specific objectives of the study were: 1) to examine the current situation of Iran's foreign policy on security in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA); 2) to assess how Iran's foreign policy on security in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) impacts on Egypt's stability and; 3) to investigate strategies being used by Egypt to navigate security challenges and improve relations with Iran. The study is based on the shock theory. Data gathered from interviews and questionnaires using both qualitative and quantitative research methods have been used in the research. After gathering the data, they were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The findings of the study indicate that security challenges in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region are highly complex and are influenced by various factors such as politics, history, economics, and religion. The insights contained herein form the basis for understanding how Iran's foreign policy affects regional security and geopolitical stability, thereby necessitating context-dependent measures to address contemporary security threats in the MENA region.

Keywords: Foreign policy, security, international strategy

1. Introduction

Iran's foreign policy on security in the MENA region has been a complex and significant aspect of the geopolitical landscape for decades. Historically, Iran has played a pivotal role due to its strategic location, historical ties, and cultural influence within the region. The Islamic Revolution marked a turning point in Iran's foreign policy. "Since the start of the Islamic Revolution, Iran's foreign policy has placed a high priority on the idea of "exporting the revolution." The newly established Islamic Republic sought to export its revolutionary ideals and challenge the dominance of Western powers" and traditional regional actors (Abdo, 2016).

"The Middle East is in a delicate period of political transition, given the momentous changes sweeping the region since the onset of the 2011 Arab uprisings." As the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) experience swift transformations, numerous local, regional, and global entities compete for power and influence amidst shifting systems and traditions embracing new iterations. (Ennis & Momani, 2013).

Over the past four decades, Iran's incursion into the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) has been considered the most foreign presence in international politics. After the Islamic Revolution in 1979, Iran adopted a new vision, as the Middle East and North Africa region became, in the Iranian political perception, a fertile ground for political, economic, and even military activities due to the region's geographical location, political weight, and the importance of the energy variable.

In essence, Iran's international strategy within the MENA region bears profound implications for Egypt and the expansive regional security landscape. The intricate interplay of geopolitical, economic, and ideological aspects highlights the necessity to comprehend Iran's influence in shaping the security dynamics within the Middle East and North Africa (Katzman, 2015).

The study on Iran's foreign policy implications on security in the MENA region examines the multifaceted interactions between Iran and the countries within the geographic area. The study delves into Iran's political, economic, cultural and security-related engagements and the influence it exerts through alliances, conflicts, and diplomatic maneuvers. Analyzing Iran's foreign policy in the MENA region involves understanding its historical context, ideological drivers, regional aspirations, and the impact it has on the region's stability, security, and power dynamics. Overall, the

study on Iran's foreign policy implications on security in the MENA region provides insight into the intricate relationships and geographical dynamics that shape the contemporary landscape of the Middle East and North Africa.

Iran's exploitation of geopolitical influence to carve a niche for itself as a paramount regional authority and axis in the Middle East has unintentionally enhanced persistent Arab discordance. Iran has also begun to export the concepts of the Iranian revolution beyond its borders, pushing its foreign policy of "*Wali al-Faqih*" to be the main pillar of its interest in the region. Accordingly, it interferes in the affairs of the States of the region to achieve its interests, supports the financing of terrorism, violates Security Council resolutions on arms exports abroad, and threatens international freedom of navigation and commercial movement in the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea.

There is a delicate relationship between Iran's desire to control and expand its ideology and the security in the MENA region. The instability in the region, fueled by Iran, is assumed to have affected Egyptian security, both economically and politically, significantly since the capital of foreign investors is negatively affected as a result of the rise in terrorist activities and Iran's control of the Strait of Hormuz. Due to the passage of most oil tankers sailing through the Suez Canal, a key source of income for Egypt, Iran's control may lead to a decrease in material profits. The study sought to investigate the implications of Iran's foreign policy on the security landscape in Egypt, exploring the potential geopolitical, economic, and regional consequences of Iran's actions and relationships in the Middle East, focusing on understanding how these dynamics may impact Egypt's national security.

2. Methodology of the Study

The study adopts a mixed-approach research strategy, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods that entail thorough research into a person, organization, institution, or phenomenon. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to examine the intricate interactions and implications of Iran's foreign policy in the Middle East and North Africa in great detail, focusing on Egypt. Accounts from professors who specialize in Iranian affairs, politics, and diplomats are studied. The study's approach is appropriate since it allowed the researcher to record important points made by academics and practitioners who have written about Iran's foreign policy in the Middle East and North Africa.

This, combined with fieldwork, is used to gather information from people purposefully sampled by the researcher. The study's theoretical underpinnings, especially aspects regarding Iran's foreign policy on security in Egypt, are expected to help the researcher comprehend the input, activities, outputs, results, and impact of the study's qualitative and quantitative case study approach. Methodological approaches that are both quantitative and qualitative are applied. For qualitative data, descriptive design is used to describe the characteristics of particular countries. This method is suitable since it allows flexible data collection. While qualitative data offers a more in-depth understanding of the impacts, quantitative data offers helpful insights into the security situation in the MENA region.

The research employs a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling refers to a "group of non-probability sampling techniques in which units are selected because they have characteristics that you need in your sample. In other words, respondents were selected on purpose" (Gary, 1996). This technique is used to identify the sample population of professors who specialize in Iranian affairs, politicians and diplomats who are considered to have the information that is relevant to the objectives of the study. The sample is supplemented by theoretical insights from scholars of international studies, international conflict management diplomacy and political science.

The purposive sampling technique allows the researcher to use professors who specialize in Iranian affairs, as well as politicians and diplomats who have the required information with respect to the objectives of the study. The target groups are dependable resources for evaluating the implications of Iran's foreign policy in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, particularly Egypt. The sample size and techniques that are used provide the research with dependable information and an efficient system of capturing, in a small group, the differences that exist in the entire study area.

3. Literature Review

3.1. The Security Dimension of Iran's Foreign Policy on Egypt

Iran has been a significant player in the MENA region since the 1970s; during these years, Iran became the linchpin of Nixon's Middle East and the Persian Gulf policy. The Shah additionally strengthened his nation's military and security ties with Israel and the white-dominated government in South Africa. These two nations were significant in assisting Iran in advancing its nuclear capabilities. Iran's security strategy is one of its main worries. Iran considers itself to be surrounded by neighbors who are both friendly and Unfriendly. One of Iran's key neighbors is Russia, which has a cordial relationship with it. Russia has also been a significant supplier to Iran's nuclear plants (Irani, 2008).

3.2. Iran's Perspective on Egypt's Security Policies

El-Anis et al. (2018) present a labyrinthine and mutable perspective on Iran's security stance towards Egypt. Post the landmark Iranian Revolution in 1979, a protracted timeline of rivalry and suspicion has characterized the relationship between these two nations. Nevertheless, recent years have unveiled signs of a slow but steady détente as both countries strive to buttress their geopolitical influence and address shared security quandaries. Iran perceives Egypt as an influential player in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) geopolitical chessboard. Egypt, with its colossal population and formidable military prowess among the Arab nations, is a "member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League." As Iran attempts to counteract US sway in the region and further its own agenda in the Arab world, it regards Egypt as a potential confederate.

Simultaneously, Egypt is viewed as a vital regional antagonist by Iran, with their rapport marked by discord and distrust for decades. Iran's primary security apprehensions concerning Egypt encompass:

Egypt's robust alliance with the United States and Saudi Arabia: This solid bond between Egypt, the US, and Saudi Arabia has exacerbated the friction and intricacy between Egypt and Iran, thereby exacerbating their relationship. Iran perceives the US and Saudi Arabia as threats to its domestic security, and having a neighbor aligned with them is disconcerting for Iran. The collaborative efforts of Egypt and Saudi Arabia to offset Iran's clout in the region further intensify Iran's regional apprehensions (El-Anis et al., 2018).

Egypt's endorsement of the Sunni-led Arab coalition in Yemen, which is locked in combat with the Houthi rebels, whom Iran backs. Iran's support for the Houthi rebels engaged in the Yemen conflict and Egypt's backing of the opposing faction is perceived as a blow to Iran's dominance in the region. This has not been well received by Iran (Mukashaf, 2015).

Iran is perturbed by Egypt's onslaught on the Muslim Brotherhood, a group it sees as an ally. The Muslim Brotherhood, a proscribed Sunni Islamist group in Egypt, finds a sympathizer in Iran, a predominantly Shia country. They share a common Islamist ideology, and Iran fears that Egypt's crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood could destabilize the region's Islamist movement and embolden its Sunni adversaries (Mukashaf, 2015).

In response to these concerns, Iran has employed a multitude of strategies to destabilize Egypt's security, including: backing the Hamas terrorist organization based in Gaza, which has launched numerous rocket attacks on Israel; aiding the Yemeni Houthis, who have also launched missile attacks on Saudi Arabia; funding and arming Shia militia outfits that have fought against the US and its allies in Syria and Iraq; disseminating disinformation and propaganda against Egypt through its media outlets (Gross, 2018).

Aldhuhoori (2021) posits that Egypt's security landscape has been profoundly altered by Iran's actions. The Egyptian government accuses Iran of intruding into its internal affairs and supporting terror outfits with an aim to overthrow the government. In retaliation, Egypt has clamped down on Iranian-backed organizations and Shia Muslims within its borders.

3.3. *Egypt's Perspective on Iran's Security Policies*

Iran perceives Egypt as a consequential political actor within the confines of MENA (Middle East and North Africa). Egypt, being the Arab state with the most populous country and a formidable military, is a "member of the Organization of Islamic" Cooperation and "the Arab League." In its pursuit to counterbalance US clout in the region and further its own Arab-centric goals, Iran identifies Egypt as a prospective collaborator. However, Egypt remains sceptical of Iran for a plethora of reasons (Soltaninejad, 2018).

Firstly, Egypt is perturbed by "Iran's support for Hamas and Islamic Jihad" in the Gaza Strip, given that these groups have launched rocket assaults on Israel from Gaza. Secondly, Egypt is apprehensive of Iran's aid to the Houthi insurgents in Yemen, as the Houthis have assaulted Saudi Arabia, an intimate ally of Egypt. Cairo fears that these attacks may escalate into a more expansive conflict between Israel and Hamas, dragging Egypt into the melee. Additionally, Cairo is anxious that the Yemeni turmoil could destabilize the entire region, creating a power vacuum that Iran and other radical factions could exploit (Bahgat, 2009).

Egypt also harbors deep-seated fears about Iran's nuclear program. Cairo is worried that if Iran were to secure nuclear weaponry, it would disrupt the regional power equilibrium and incite other nations to chase their own nuclear ambitions (Dassa et al., 2007).

In a bid to address its security apprehensions concerning Iran, Egypt has enacted a series of measures, including:

- Augmenting its military links with the United States and other Gulf Arab states;
- Subduing domestic Islamist factions;
- Acting as a peacemaker between Israel and Hamas to forestall another Gazan conflict;
- Engaging in dialogue with Iran with the objective of bolstering ties (Monier, 2015).

3.4. *Egypt's Security Strategies and Possible Cooperation with Iran*

Frinch (2013) opined that Egypt and Iran are posed by the same challenges, and if they cooperate, they can help to resolve issues in The MANE region. The two countries can use their growing influence to Counterterrorism: Terrorist organizations like ISIS and al-Qaeda pose a threat to both nations. They might work together on counterterrorism initiatives, border security, and intelligence sharing.

Ensure Maritime Safety: The Red Sea and the Suez Canal are significant areas for both Egypt and Iran. They may work together to protect the right of navigation and stop piracy and smuggling on the high seas. Foster Regional stability: They might work together to resolve problems in Yemen, Syria, and other neighboring nations.

For Iran and Egypt, as well as the entire MENA region at large, security cooperation would be advantageous. It would aid in lowering tensions, fostering stability, and fending against shared threats. The long-term lack of political ties between Iran and Egypt has reduced national security and interest considerations in Iranian and Egyptian perspectives on one another. Iran and Egypt live as strangers to one another in the absence of governmental links, and as a result, there are no economic, trade, or cultural ties between the two nations. A well-established collaboration could see a joint security approach to issues affecting the MANE region (Soltaninejad, 2018).

3.5. Impact of Iran's Foreign Policy on Egypt

As Ramazani (1992) posited, the foreign policy of Iran towards Egypt carries ripple effects not only for these two nations, but also transmits further consequences to the expansive Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The repercussions, specifically in Egypt's context, hold substantial weight on the regional equilibrium and the grand international system. These reverberations can be discerned through Iran's interactions with Egypt, a critical actor in the regional theatre. Iran's Egyptian foreign policy has been shaped by antecedent factors such as the repudiation of the West and the zealous revolutionary ideology. One offshoot of Iran's external policy in Egypt is the challenge it mounts to the pre-existing regional arrangement. Iran's foreign policy in Egypt contests the prevailing sway of Western powers, aiming to carve out its independent sphere of influence within the MENA region. This ambition is evident in Iran's endorsement of Egyptian groups and movements that resist Western-backed administrations and view them as intentional Western dominion.

Abdo (2017) elucidates that Iran's patronage of Shia factions in Egypt could unsteady the nation and incite sectarian hostilities. Iran, a long-standing ally of Shia groups in the region, could exacerbate the strained relations between Sunni and Shia Muslims in Egypt by backing these factions. This might trigger violence and instability, further convoluting Egypt's ties with other Sunni-majority nations in the region.

Conversely, Verme et al. (2014) postulate that Iran's readiness to engage with Egypt could be a catalyst for enhancing bilateral ties. The nations have been adversarial for many years. However, in recent times, they have exhibited glimmers of a thawing relationship. The inaugural high-level dialogue in over a decade took place in 2016 between the two. Although these discussions did not yield tangible outcomes, they symbolized a noteworthy stride forward. If the nations can sustain this progress, it could foster regional stability and abate the potential for conflict (Verme et al., 2014).

In essence, the ramifications of Iran's foreign policy in Egypt are multifaceted and unpredictable. Iran's support for Shia factions could potentially destabilize Egypt and incite violence. Nevertheless, Iran's eagerness to engage with Egypt may also ameliorate bilateral ties and mitigate conflict risk. The eventual outcome will likely hinge on a myriad of factors, such as Egypt's internal political landscape, the regional security climate, and both nations' willingness to compromise.

Beyond Egypt, Iran's foreign policy towards the nation can have extensive repercussions for the larger MENA region. As a significant actor in the region, Iran's maneuvers in Egypt could trigger a domino effect. For instance, Iran's support for Egyptian Shia factions could embolden similar groups in other countries like Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. This might escalate sectarian tensions and violence in the region (Katzman, 2019).

3.6. Improving Ties between Egypt and Iran

Egypt and Iran have both displayed an inclination towards fostering their mutual relations. Egypt's drive is spurred by the necessity to protect the Suez Canal and Bab al-Mandab Strait and reinforce regional alliances on matters such as Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Palestine. Iran's impetus is spurred by the desire to alleviate friction with Arab nations and to secure a position in the Arab world.

Egypt harbors a desire to enhance its diplomatic ties with Iran for several reasons, including protecting the Suez Canal and Bab al-Mandab Strait. These maritime routes are crucial to Egypt's commerce, and are also pivotal for global trade. The strife in Yemen has impeded shipping via the Bab al-Mandab Strait, and Egypt fears that Iran could further destabilize the region (Al-Anani, 2023).

An additional reason is to fortify the regional alliance. Egypt aspires to assume a more proactive role in regional affairs and perceives Iran as a prospective collaborator in this endeavor. The two nations possess common interests in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen, and they could potentially collaborate to tackle these obstacles. Lastly, to diminish tensions in the Gaza Strip, Iran maintains strong links with Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, two militant factions that govern the Gaza Strip. Egypt strives to evade a military escalation between Israel and Gaza, and it views closer ties with Iran as a strategy to assist in achieving this aim (Al-Anani, 2023).

Iran, for its part, aspires to enhance its diplomatic ties with Egypt. To alleviate friction with Arab nations, Iran has been ostracized by the Arab world for many years, and it endeavours to enhance relations with its neighbours. Egypt is a pivotal player in the Arab world, and improved relations with Egypt would be a significant breakthrough for Iran. Secondly, Iran is intrigued by the prospect of securing a position in the Arab world. Iran is a Shia Muslim nation, and it aims to augment its influence in the Sunni-majority Arab world. Egypt is the most populous Arab nation, and it would be a significant coup for Iran to secure a position in Egypt (Milliken & Cafiero, 2023).

Normalizing relations between Egypt and Iran carries substantial regional and global ramifications and could reconfigure the existing regional hierarchy. Even with this, the willingness of both nations to tackle the myriad of challenges ahead is dubious, rendering it premature to oracle the outcome of the ongoing normalization process between the two countries.

3.7. Knowledge Gap

While the existing body of research has made significant strides in acknowledging the impact of Iran's foreign policy on MENA, there are notable gaps that need attention for a more comprehensive understanding. The situation in the MENA region is highly dynamic, and geopolitical circumstances change rapidly. A knowledge gap exists regarding the latest developments in Iran's foreign policy and their immediate and potential future impact on regional security. Additionally, the literature falls short of the analysis of the role of soft power and cultural diplomacy in Iran's foreign

policy. Understanding how Iran projects influence through cultural and ideological means could provide insights into the multifaceted dimensions of regional security.

Furthermore, the economic dimensions of Iran's foreign policy, including trade relationships, economic partnerships, and sanctions, can have significant implications for regional stability. A knowledge gap exists in understanding the economic aspects and their potential repercussions on security in the MENA region.

Studies have further fallen short of examining the role of non-state actors, including proxies and affiliated groups, in Iran's foreign policy. Understanding the relationships and dynamics between Iran and these groups can provide insights into the broader security implications in the region. While there might be general analyses of Iran's foreign policy in the MENA region, more specific studies focusing on the impact on individual countries or sub-regions have failed to provide a deeper understanding.

4. Theoretical Framework

4.1. The Shock Theory

The idea that the global free market emerged democratically is demolished by Naomi Klein's shock theory, sometimes known as the shock doctrine. The Shock Doctrine tells the compelling tale of how American "free market" policies have taken the world by storm by taking advantage of nations and people who have experienced natural disasters. It does this by exposing the ideas, the money trail, and the puppet strings that have driven the world's transformative crises and wars over the last forty years. The Shock Doctrine clearly illustrates the links between "shock and awe" warfare and economic policies. The theory goes on to apply these concepts to our modern history, illuminating in vivid detail how prominent historical events have served as intentional, functioning theaters for the shock doctrine (Klein, 2014).

Let us start our theories regarding shocks and rivalry with two fundamental presumptions:

Assumption 1: Significant inertia in foreign policy must be addressed in "some way for changes" in policy to take place.

Assumption 2: Varying degrees of activity or intensity define rivalries; in other words, they are linked to a typical behavioral spectrum that is subject to alter over a rivalry. Military conflict is more likely to occur in rivalries with greater intensity levels than in rivalries with lower levels of basic competition (Mansour, Thompson et al., 2020).

Mansour, Thompson, et al. (2020) characterize shock as "an abrupt" and major "change in the features of a physical, social, political, or economic system, or as a rapid departure from a state of equilibrium." Internal shocks include civil conflict, regime upheaval, and economic crises (which may have an impact on the ability to handle external threats or modify the status quo). Shocks are seen as disruptive events that profoundly affect threat situations in some way, which motivates reactions to the modifications. Policymakers' assessments of their internal and external contexts are modified by such occurrences. Thus, events that upend the status quo change the perception of what decision-makers can and should do about others. These shocks are seen by decision-makers not just as dangers but also as chances to further their involvement in the region, tip the scales of power, and strengthen their position at home. Here is where we can propose a third premise about how shocks might affect political processes both at home and abroad by influencing policymaking:

Assumption 3: Shocks, at least for some states or actors, help open windows to change by defeating inertia. Shocks just need to establish the possibility of change; they do not have to be the main force behind it. It is entirely up to the actors to jump through the window. Lastly, shocks can occasionally "cluster," which results in even more profound impacts. This indicates that there are, at least occasionally, situations where a rapid succession of shocks has a major impact on the dynamics of competition intensity (Mansour, Thompson et al., 2020).

5. Findings and Analysis

5.1. Iran's Foreign Policy on Security and Impact on Egypt's Stability

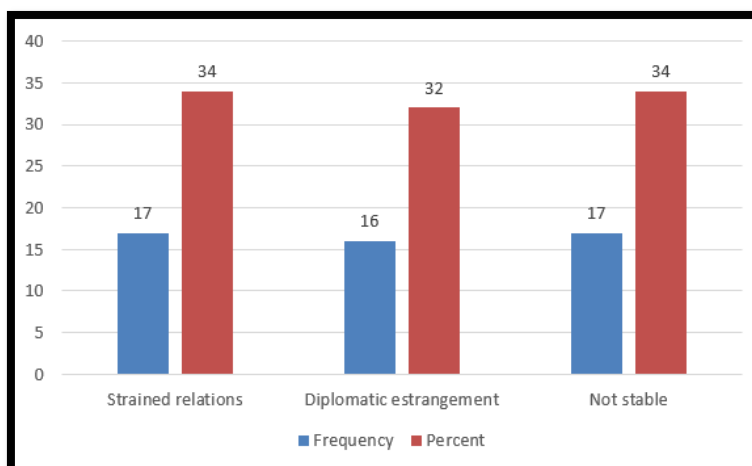


Figure 1: The Relationship between Iran and Egypt

Figure 1 above, focusing on the relationship between Iran and Egypt, suggests a predominantly negative perception, with 34% of respondents identifying it as 'Strained relations' and 'Not stable' and 32% noting 'Diplomatic estrangement'. This highlights a significant level of discord and instability, which could be impacting regional dynamics and Egypt's security posture.

	Frequency	Percent
Ideological differences	13	26
Not sure	17	34
Competition for influence	12	24
Diplomatic tensions	8	16
Total	50	100

Table 1: Iran's Security Foreign Policy towards Egypt

Table 1 on Iran's security foreign policy towards Egypt reflects a complex and uncertain landscape. A notable 34% of respondents are 'Not sure', suggesting either a lack of clear information or the ambiguous nature of the relationship. The presence of 'Ideological differences' and 'Competition for influence', cited by 26% and 24% of respondents, respectively, underscores the factors contributing to strained bilateral relations and diplomatic tensions (16%).

	Frequency	Percent
Tensions	9	18
Diplomatic strain	10	20
Impact on Bilateral relations	11	22
Regional instability	8	16
Competition for influence	12	24
Total	50	100

Table 2: The Impact of Iran's Security Foreign Policy towards Egypt

In table 2, regarding the impact of Iran's security foreign policy towards Egypt, 'Competition for influence' and 'Impact on Bilateral relations' emerge as significant consequences, observed by 24% and 22% of respondents. This suggests that Iran's policies are influencing Egypt's regional positioning and bilateral engagements. The 'Diplomatic strain' and 'Regional instability', noted by 20% and 16%, point to broader implications for regional security dynamics.

	Frequency	Percent
Implications in regional proxy conflict	5	10
Diplomatic tensions	6	12
Competition for influence	6	12
Concerns over Sectarianism	11	22
Potential for alignment	13	26
Impact on regional alliance	9	18
Total	50	100

Table 3: Diplomatic or Geopolitical Implications Arising from the Interaction between Iran's Security Policy and Egypt's Stability

Table 3 examines the diplomatic or geopolitical implications arising from the interaction between Iran's security policy and Egypt's stability. The responses indicate diverse implications, with 'Potential for alignment' surprisingly emerging as a significant factor (26%). Despite prevailing 'Concerns over Sectarianism' (22%) and 'Competition for influence' (12%), the potential for diplomatic engagement is notable. This reflects the complexity of the geopolitical landscape, where alliances and conflicts coexist.

5.2. Strategies Used by Egypt to Navigate Security Challenges

	Frequency	Percent
Political stability and governance	6	12
Strategic partnerships	12	24
Internal security measures	5	10
Maritime security measures	4	8
Border security measures	7	14
Counter extremism initiatives	4	8
Cybersecurity measures	3	6
Military modernization	9	18
Total	50	100

Table 4: How Has Egypt's Security Policies Helped Reduce Insecurity?

Table 4 provides insight into the various security strategies and measures Egypt has taken to keep everyone safe. It shows that Egypt has put in the effort and is using a combination of things to make that happen. From internal security measures to military overthrowing, they're doing it all. All these strategies together are part of what makes Egypt a stable and secure place.

	Frequency	Percent
Regional alliances	8	16
Diplomatic engagement	10	20
Military deterrence	6	12
Economic leverage	7	14
International coalitions	7	14
Security cooperation	5	10
Counterterrorism collaboration	7	14
Total	50	100

Table 5: How Can Egypt Counteract Iran's Aggression?

From the results of the above table, 'Working things out with talk' and 'Buddying up with other countries nearby' were key strategies respondents pointed to. Citing 20% and 16%, this indicates that respondents are more interested in working stuff out together rather than fighting on their own. 'Using our money as leverage' and 'getting some extra hands from other countries around the world', each mentioned by 14%, stress the importance of using a team effort to overcome difficult times.

	Frequency	Percent
UN general assembly	7	14
Diplomatic exchanges	5	10
Multilateral forums	11	22
Discussing regional conflicts	9	18
Joint economic initiatives	6	12
Multilateral forums	5	10
Discussing regional conflicts	7	14
Total	50	100

Table 6: Are There Diplomatic Initiatives or Dialogues That Egypt Has Engaged in to Improve Relations with Iran?

According to the responses of 22% and 18% of respondents, multilateral forums and discussing regional conflicts are the most common diplomatic initiatives Egypt has engaged in to improve relations with Iran. These responses suggest an openness to talking things out and cooperating, especially when in a neutral and multilateral setting. It really shows how nuanced their approach to diplomacy is.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the comprehensive analysis of Iran's foreign policy impact on MENA security, coupled with Egypt's strategic reactions, unveils the intricate dynamics shaping the region's security landscape. The findings highlight the multifaceted nature of security challenges fueled by political upheaval, arms proliferation, and humanitarian crises, among other factors. Additionally, they spotlight Egypt's varied tactics, including political partnerships, diplomatic talks, and socio-economic initiatives aimed at bolstering regional stability and countering Iranian influence.

Looking ahead, it is crucial for scholars to probe deeper into governance frameworks, disarmament endeavors, and counterterrorism actions to advance political stability and security in the MENA region. Policy suggestions stress the significance of diplomatic discussions, socio-economic progress, and regional collaborations in effectively addressing security predicaments.

By enacting these suggestions and embracing a synchronized approach, stakeholders can collaborate towards nurturing peace, stability, and growth in the MENA region amidst the intricacies presented by Iran's foreign policies and other regional dynamics. It is only through joint efforts and strategic partnerships that enduring solutions to regional security challenges can be attained, ensuring a more promising and secure future for the MENA region.

7. Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the effect of Iran's foreign policy on Egypt, the Middle East and North Africa, a number of crucial suggestions arise:

7.1. Tackle Political Instability

Scholars must delve deep into the governance structures and political dynamics contributing to instability in the MENA region. Research should aim to promote inclusive governance, strengthen democratic institutions, and encourage political dialogue among opposing factions. Scholarly analyses can offer insights into effective strategies for maintaining political stability.

7.2. Intense Exploration of Persisting Weapons Spread

Academics should unravel the intricacies of weapons spread in the MENA region, investigating the underlying causes and repercussions. Research efforts should prioritize disarmament initiatives and arms control measures, including bolstering regional mechanisms, enhancing border security, and advocating for transparency in arms trade protocols.

7.3. Probe the Persisting and Changing Dynamics of Terrorism and Extremism

Researchers should scrutinize the factors driving terrorism and violent extremism in the MENA region, examining aspects such as ideological motives, social grievances, and geopolitical dynamics. Research should stress the significance of cooperation among vulnerable countries, sharing of information, and tactics for disrupting terrorist networks.

7.4. Foster Discourse and Peacemaking

It is imperative for policymakers to center on diplomatic endeavors to tackle regional security dilemmas, engaging in productive conversations and conflict resolution endeavors. Recommendations for policy should encompass utilizing multilateral forums, diplomatic interactions, and confidence-building actions to nurture cooperation and confidence among regional stakeholders.

7.5. Boost Socio-Economic Advancement

Policymakers should prioritize socio-economic progress as a long-term strategy to address the underlying causes of insecurity in the MENA region. Policies should concentrate on financing education, infrastructure, and job creation schemes, fostering sustainable economic growth, and tackling socio-economic gaps that ignite conflicts.

7.6. Reinforce Regional Partnerships

Policymakers should give prominence to building stronger regional partnerships and collaborations to effectively confront common security challenges. Policy suggestions should involve enhancing security cooperation mechanisms, fostering mutual trust, and coordinating joint endeavors to address mutual security concerns.

By executing the aforementioned recommendations and emphasizing a comprehensive and coordinated strategy towards security, stakeholders can strive towards attaining peace, stability, and development in the MENA region, effectively navigating the intricate security landscape influenced by Iran's foreign policies and other regional dynamics.

8. Further Research

After analyzing the findings and core suggestions in this study analysis of the effect of Iran's foreign policy on Egypt and the Middle East and North Africa, there exist numerous avenues for further exploration that necessitate further investigation or research:

8.1. Unraveling the Evolving Dynamics and Intricate Interactions

Unveiling the changing landscape and delving into specific regions or nations sheds light on the shifting dynamics of Iran's foreign policy in the MENA region. By charting transformations over time and scrutinizing particular sub-regions or states, analysts can decipher trends and grasp the complex interplays between Iran, non-state actors, and regional security.

8.2. Assessment of Regional Security Strategies and Collaboration Endeavors

Scrutinizing the security strategies of other nations in relation to Iran and gauging the efficacy of past interventions lays the groundwork for collaborative endeavors among regional entities. By drawing lessons from

successful approaches and evaluating the impact of security policies, decision-makers can fine-tune strategies and bolster regional cooperation.

8.3. Empirical Inquiry through Surveys, Interviews and Gender Perspectives

Employing public opinion surveys, qualitative interviews, and integrating gender perspectives into security analyses enriches comprehension by capturing diverse viewpoints and reactions to Iran's foreign policy. This empirical approach educates policymakers about attitudes, perceptions, and gender-specific dynamics, enabling more inclusive and impactful policy responses.

8.4. Utilizing Multilateral Diplomacy and International Actors

Delving into the role of multilateral diplomacy, regional organizations, and international actors in mediating conflicts and fostering dialogue unveils opportunities for collectively addressing regional security challenges. Understanding the catalysts and limitations of multilateral solutions informs endeavors to promote stability and cooperation in the MENA region.

8.5. Advocacy for Evidence-based Strategies for Comprehensive Security

Incorporating insights from longitudinal studies, empirical analyses, and assessments of security strategies, policymakers can craft evidence-based strategies to tackle intricate security challenges in the MENA region. By synthesizing perspectives from various methodologies, researchers contribute to a deeper comprehension of Iran's foreign policy and advocate for comprehensive security solutions. By addressing these aspects comprehensively, researchers can deepen their understanding and contribute to evidence-based strategies for enhancing stability and collaboration in the region.

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