Does Human Security Matter? A Brief Conceptual Synopsis

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Abstract[1]

Human security, as a concept, is believed to provide a new way of thinking about the range of challenges the world faces in the 21st century and how the global community responds to them. However, it is divergently discussed in the fields of International Relations, Political Science, Military Science, and Security Studies. Its meaning might be more widely debated than agreed upon by scholars. For this reason, many security academics and researchers have developed new concepts to reduce conceptual ambiguity, such as collective security, regional security, and human security. Human security as a newly neologized concept of security means different things for different individuals, communities, and states. With this regard, two lines of conception and argumentation have been created about human security. The objective of this paper is therefore to discourse these lines of conceptions and arguments and critically reflect on how human security matters as a concept. In so doing, the paper argues that the concept of human security is useful, and has potential as a new idea, a critical theory, a normative framework, and an operative policy document in contemporary security matters and threats.

Keywords*: Security, National Security, Human Security, and Human Security Theory.*

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1. Introduction

The concept of security is largely reviewed and discoursed in the fields of International Relations, Political Science, Military Science, and Security Studies. However, its meaning might better be widely debated than agreed on among scholars (Baldwin, 1997; Alkire, 2003; Shinoda, 2004; Hussien et al., 2004; Debiel, 2005; Mclntosh, 2010). It has relative connotations in different contexts (Burgess, 2007; Liotta et al., 2008; Tadjbakhsh, 2009). Because of the divergent conceptual debates and contextual implications in the umbrella concept of security implies for, contemporary scholars, practitioners, and institutions have begun to develop new operative concepts of security, such as collective security, comprehensive security, regional security, and human security (Bajipai, 2000).

Human security is one of the dominant and newly neologized concepts that many security scholars and experts use to explain the causes and effects of insecurity from individual to global levels (Paris, 2001). Just like the umbrella term security, human security is also a value-laden concept that has referred to various conceptions and interpretations as a new idea or theory, as a starting point for analysis, a world view, a political agenda, or as a policy framework (Tadjbakhsh, 2005). Its implication remains an open contention. However, irrespective of the divergent conceptions and interpretations of human security in different contexts and specializations, there has been one belief among which many intellectuals and advocates dominantly argue for that human security marks a paradigm shift of attention from a state-centered security paradigm to a people-centered thinking of security. It gives more concern for individuals and people rather than the state (Edson, 2001; Hampson, 2008). Besides, the paradigm shift massively galvanized and mobilized scholars and institutions to debate, theorize, and research on human security. The debates and discourses eventually led to two lines of conception and argumentation. In terms of conception, narrow and broad perspectives are constantly debated. Likewise, optimistic/hopeful

and pessimistic/skeptical arguments are also constructed particularly on the usefulness of human security.

The objective of this paper is therefore to demystify the two lines of conceptions and arguments and critically assess, perhaps reflect on the usefulness of human security. The paper entirely argues that the concept of human security is potentially and widely useful as an idea, a theory, a framework, an operative institutional policy, and as a political instrument in contemporary security matters and threats. Significantly, the paper will add a conciliatory element to what has for a decade been an unnecessarily fractious debate on human security, and ultimately underpin the perspectives and arguments discoursed to acknowledge the usefulness of human security. To this end, there is one fact that this paper initially underlines that most social science terminologies and concepts are usually characterized by conceptual infeasibility, ambiguity, vagueness, and theoretical softness (Bastow et al, 2010), although they are useful and applied. Therefore, respecting this common feature in any social science research and discourse would be helpful to elucidate and heighten conceptual facts overlooked by some skeptical arguers, and basically those who argued against the usefulness of the concept of human security, for example, Paris (2001).

Structurally, the paper has four parts. The first part briefs the umbrella security and its shift towards the human security paradigm. The second part syntheses the narrow versus broad conceptions as well as the hopeful (optimistic) versus doubtful (pessimistic) perspectives made so far on the usefulness of the concept of human security. The third part dwells on the main argument and exposition of the paper. The last part concludes the overall reviews and reflections. Methodologically, the paper pursued a critical discourse analysis, so that many international documents and scholarly literature are thoroughly reviewed and discussed.

2. The Concept of Human Security: A Bird's Eye View

Since it was launched by the UNDP's Human Development Report in 1994, the concept of human security has gained international and institutional recognition to widely spread out as a broad development concept (Suhrke, 2014). The HDR definition puts two aspects of human security (freedom from fear and freedom from want). The first focuses on protection from chronic threats such as hunger, disease, and repression; while the second stresses protection from sudden harmful upheavals of daily existence, touching on housing, employment, and community life (Sajeev et al., 2003). In late times, the definition of human security however hosts more debates and discourses than ever before. That is why, Tadjbakhshs (2005) argues that much of the debate and literature on human security, be it critical or supportive, is increasingly produced by scholars and advocates, so that the concept remains controversial, far from over (Kettemann, 2006), and understandably confused (Owen, 2004). Specifically, the debates have been mired in confusion over what human security is – a concept, a paradigm, a theory, or a policy framework (Fukuda-Parr and Messineo, 2012).

Nonetheless, the growing conception made on human security can be modestly grouped as narrow versus broad. Proponents of the narrow version have sacrificed nonviolent threats for policy utility, while proponents of the broad one have sacrificed some analytic rigor and policy clarity for inclusiveness (Owen, 2004; Owen, 2004b; Matta and Takacs, 2015). The polarity between the two conceptions reflects the ongoing reconceptualization and development of human security (Roberts, 2006). In support of this, Kettemann (2006) argues that the academic debate surfaced on human security is indicative of future developments because both the narrow and broad conceptions are targeting to make the concept effective and plausible to be applied.

a) Synopsizing the Narrow versus Broad Conceptions of Human Security

Researchers and advocates who underpin the narrow dimension of human security assert that the merit of any definition should be judged by its conceptual clarity and policy consequences (Owen, 2004; Roberts, 2006). They have sacrificed nonviolent threats for policy utility and analytic rigor as reasons to focus human security on specific, possibly violent threats. They defend the narrow definition for the sake of immediate intervention capability rather than long-term strategic planning for sustainable and secure development (Mack, 2002; MacFarlane and Khong 2006; Fukuda-Parr and Messineo, 2012).

The narrow formulation will however do little to protect millions of people who die from nonviolent and preventable human security harms and threats (Liotta and Owen, 2006). In fact, most of the significant policies achieved in the name of human security have used this narrow definition (Owen, 2004; Howard-Hassmann, 2011). The proponents of this conception criticize the broad conception as it is too elusive so that utopian and ideal designation.

On the other hand, proponents of the broad one assert that on the need to explain the causes and effects of insecurity, human security must be concerned with human vulnerability overall, and therefore encompasses all forms of threats from all sources. They suggest that human security means something more than safety from violent threats. This conception has been popularly promoted by UN documents, the European Council and the Barcelona Group, the Commission on Human Security, the Government of Japan, as well as academics such as Kaldor (2004), King and Murray (2001), Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy (2007), Thomas (2000), few to mention.

Additionally, there have been dynamic perspectives developed toward human security as a 'foundational concept' (UNDP, 1994), a 'paradigm' (Haq, 1994), and an 'organizing concept' (King and Murray, 2001; Fukuda-Parr and Messineo, 2012). They counter the pragmatic rationale of the narrow conception

by citing the paramount importance of including a wider range of issues. They also mention the paradigm shift of referent objects from state to individual, perhaps people security which is manifold in composition and multidimensional in its security agenda (Owen, 2004).

b) The Optimistic versus Skeptical Arguments

Human security is deliberately protective. This is because people are deeply threatened by events beyond their state's control (CHS, 2003). It is also a necessary, not a sufficient precondition for human development (Liotta and Owen, 2006). As a new and dynamic concept of security, human security promotes prime concern for individuals and has plenty of implications in national, regional, and international development and cooperation maneuvers (Kettemann, 2006). In this regard, Fukuda-Parr and Messineo (2012) point out that the usefulness of human security as a regional effort to rethink and redefine common security policy is being used as a normative and analytical framework for policy analysis and advocacy over a number of emerging issues like climate change.

Furthermore, as Liotta (2002) argues, the practice of the changing security landscape from a state-centric to a people-centric perspective has potential utility for contemporary security analysts and policymakers. The inclusivity and preventive nature of human security is potential, which makes it a preferable and useful concept. It becomes a concept whose implementation would globally allow a more preventive and effective response to the threats facing people and communities (Owen, 2004; Suhrke, 2014). Moreover, Fuentes and Aravena (2005) recognize the usefulness of human security by prompting its integrative nature which focuses on people; its multidimensionality which includes people's all-inclusive matters of security; and its methodology which relies on holistic and mixed approaches.

On the contrary, many skeptical arguers against the usefulness of human security criticize it due to its conceptual ambiguity and vagueness. Those skeptical, perhaps realist arguers, for example, Paris (2001),

Newman (2004), Shani (2007), and Chandler (2008), remark that the concept of human security is too ambiguous, so that hardly operationalized and less useful for academicians, researchers, and practitioners in issues pertaining to security threats. They also add that human security has failed to prioritize different security issues (Fuentes and Aravena, 2005). It touches everything and then would have the potential to be nothing (Paris, 2001). Jolly and Ray (2006) further assert that human security makes the task of policy formulation nearly impossible as it does not have any definite boundaries and takes everything as a risk to people's security. In support of this, Chandler (2008) adds that despite its widespread use in international security policy discourse, the human security paradigm has had little impact on policy outcomes. As it labels all potential harms as threats to security, it makes causal analysis and prioritizing actions for intervention impossible. This is due to the possibility that policymakers often face different problems in prioritizing human security issues and agendas into feasible and measurable standards (Paris, 2001). The challenge is basically to move beyond all-encompassing exhortations and focus on specific solutions to specific issues or threats.

3. The Usefulness of Human Security: A Critical Discourse and Reflection

As mentioned above, many realists have entered the debate around the concept of human security, if only to challenge the practicality (Roberts, 2006; Tadjbakhsh, 2009). However, this new security thinking had the greatest and most popular success with the idea of 'non-military threats' of security at its core (Owen, 2004; Howard-Hassmann, 2011). That is why Fukuda-Parr and Messineo (2012) state that the progressive and pragmatic values embedded within the concept of human security make its practicability promising. It often results in policy changes that improve the welfare of people. At times, it remains a working concept for understanding contemporary crises.

The overarching argument for promoting human security claims is to be morally imperative, analytically useful, and practically applied (Kettemann, 2006). Therefore, it is hardly convincing to overlook the critical and analytical usefulness of the concept contributing to scholars, researchers, experts, policymakers, and organizations while they are dealing with contemporary security threats. In addition to this view, the usefulness of human security can be thoroughly discoursed and explained in light of the following perspectives, particularly to uphold the main argument of this paper.

3.1. The Usefulness of Human Security as a New and Growing Concept of Security

Human security represents a new language, a new idea, and a new way of thinking in security studies and international relations (Tsai, 2009). It becomes a concept in motion and growing with newly emerging human needs and international threats (Kettemann, 2006). At this time, human security identifies new threats to well-being, new victims of those threats, new duties of states, and/or new mechanisms of dealing with vulnerabilities (Howard-Hassmann, 2011). It emerges as a unifying and linking concept for new security problems and determinants of the twenty-first century, which marks a significant conceptual departure in security studies and international relations (Fuentes and Aravena, 2005). Unlike the old concept of national security, human security, a new concept of security, puts individuals, not the territory of the state in its prime referent object of security.

Human security as a new concept is challenging fundamental concepts such as national security, territorial integrity, and state sovereignty (Kettemann, 2006). It complements state security, enhances human rights, and strengthens human development (CHS, 2003). Human security allows individuals the pursuit of life, liberty, and both happiness and justice (Liotta and Owen, 2006). This is because human security is the idea that puts the individual at the receiving end of all security concerns (UNDP, 1994;

Alkire, 2003; Floyd, 2007). It also serves as a potent impression that promotes and sustains stability, security, and progressive integration of individuals within their states, societies, and regions.

Although human security is still looking for further reconceptualization maneuvers, its playing conceptual role for scholars, researchers, and practitioners is immense. They use it as an alternative idea to effectively understand and explain emerging non-military threats to security (Thomas and Tow, 2002; Gomez and Gasper, 2013). It also replaces the traditional concept of state-centric security as it is an insufficient concept to understand and protect people's security in today's local and global politics (Thomas and Tow, 2002). In this regard, Owen (2004) reveals that the idea of human security was born out of the understanding that the state can actually fail at its overarching role as a protector.

In other words, the concept has been developed as an idea that can be contrasted with 'national security' and that can direct attention to the emerging and wider spectrum of security threats (Thomas and Tow, 2002; Tadjbakhsh, 2009). Human security has also major implications for almost all aspects of thinking and acting on security which had for decades been built around the concept of national security (Howard-Hassmann, 2011).

Moreover, Fukuda-Parr and Messineo (2012) argue that human security is an important concept in contemporary debates about the world order because it opens up new lines of analysis and gives voice to new actors to deal with security matters. Its value addition in the security field is that it focuses on individuals and integrates non-military mechanisms to deal with security threats, basically as part of the capability approach. Human security as an idea thus supplements the expansionist perspective of human development by directly paying attention to what is sometimes called "downside risks" (CHS, 2003).

Therefore, cognizant of these important conceptual tenets and scholarly literature, it would be persuasive to argue that human security is a useful and progressively proactive concept that prompted intellectuals,

policymakers, and institutions to rethink security from a wider perspective. That is why Fukuda-Parr and Messineo (2012) further argue that human security offers an alternative explanation to security currently in circulation. It becomes a concrete concept that seeks to protect people against a broad range of threats to individuals and communities (CHS, 2003).

3.2. The Usefulness of Human Security as an Analytical Theory of Security

Theory is an organized way of thinking which helps to explain and present events in a systematic way (Walby, 2007). Most, possibly all theories in social science fields are dynamic in nature. They are constantly under thesis- thesis-thesis-antithesis-synthesis formulations. But despite this dynamic feature, many of them, for example, Marxism, realism, idealism, etc. are useful and operative to understand and analyze issues and contexts, and thus offer theoretical value for academicians, researchers, and practitioners in different areas of specialization. Likewise, human security as an emerging theory of security is increasingly used as a systematic theory to study security matters in today's global settings (Werthes and Bosold, 2005). As an emerging critical theory, human security overrides the state-centric, popularly called realism theory of security as it is insufficient to explain contemporary threats (Endson, 2001; Alkire, 2003; Liotta and Owen, 2006).

The realist theory of security is currently perceived as a traditional approach since it solely concentrates on a state's military and power to secure sovereignty with the prime referent object of the state, not individuals (Baldwin, 1997; King and Murray, 2001; Thomas and Tow, 2002; Matthew and Fraser, 2002; Sanjeev et al., 2003; Tsai, 2009). It is against this old viewpoint and limited focus on national security that many academic institutions began to offer degree programs in human security so as to broaden security consciousness beyond the usual understanding of national security (Tadjbakhsh, 2005).

More importantly, human security is used by different experts and practitioners as a plausible theoretical approach to explaining issues related to security, environmental change, conflict, and development. For instance, researchers on environmental change are using it as a useful and competent theory to explain the causes and effects of environmental insecurity (Matthew and Fraser, 2002). Experts in human rights and international law also ensure that human security theory propels legal analysts to move beyond a mere legalistic approach to get the underlying sources of inequality and violence which are the root causes of insecurities (Kettemann, 2006).

Human security is a flexible theoretical tool that can be tailored to different contexts and topics. No matter which topic is addressed, a guiding principle of the human security approach is understanding the threats experienced by groups of people, as well as the participation of those people in the analysis process (Gomez and Gasper, 2013). It often generates fresh insights since it pursues a holistic methodology of looking at specific threats and/or vulnerabilities with an eye for interconnections and multilayered interventions. The core of human security is the vulnerability of individuals and thus the theory aims to protect those who are most vulnerable. In this regard, Werthes and Bosold (2005) state that the emerging potential of human security lies in streamlining international activities through a general normative perspective, which at least in theory can create a more coherent policy option.

Moreover, human security as a pragmatic theory asserts that the primary threats to be dealt with are no longer the exclusive domain of military forces, rather threats such as economic failure, violation of human rights, political discrimination and environmental changes are among the threats that need to be addressed. It also encourages comprehensive measures that can be applied to various issues and threats that affect the everyday lives of people. For this reason, Mclntosh (2010) argues that human security theory provides a rationale for taking into account the concerns of the majority of humanity.

Human security enables individuals and pushes actors to respond to change by reducing vulnerability and challenging multifaceted causes of non-military threats (Howard-Hassmann, 2011). Owen (2004) also adds that human security as a theoretical approach in policy mandate is not necessarily incompatible, and hence the theory and policy of human security are surely better together than apart. Owen further concludes that human security as a theory could provide a useful scholarship for academicians and researchers to explore and predict emerging security matters from a broader perspective and provides a critical distancing for traditional thinkers to analyze security far beyond state-centric paradigms of security.

3.3. The Usefulness of Human Security as an Analytical and Normative Framework

The purpose of any analytical framework is to give a study an analytic and systematic evaluation of the context understudy so that the researcher can reach on a conclusion and foresee plausible policy implications (Dickinson and Prabhaker, 2009). Likewise, human security as an analytical framework helps researchers and policymakers to use it as a comprehensive outline while they are exploring and analyzing security issues and threats (Alkire, 2003; Owen, 2004). This makes human security a useful and applied framework (Howard-Hassmann, 2011; Fukuda-Parr and Messineo, 2012). Analytically, it expands the scope of analysis and policy in multiple directions, basically to explain the causes and effects of insecurity that have been overlooked by the traditional security framework (Gomez and Gasper, 2013). It also serves as an alternative analytical framework to investigate threats to security and its related matters (Thomas and Tow, 2002; Kettemann, 2006).

Additionally, the UN (2014) views that the application of the human security framework offers a comprehensive guideline that combines top-down norms, processes, and institutions with a bottom-up focus in which participatory processes support the important role of people as actors in defining and

implementing their essential freedoms. It is for such inclusiveness that human security is regarded as a comprehensive framework and imperative analytical tool for preventing threats and exploring options aimed at mitigating threats to peoples' security (Jolly and Ray, 2006). The practical use of human security further provides key insights even for institutions that undertake to act on security concerns as an analytical and normative framework (Alkire, 2003).

It is a truism that the core and normative principles of human security were initially reflected in the UN approach to security and development while attempting to integrate the two objectives (freedom from want and fear) into a more coherent and human-centered framework, perhaps document of UNDP' human development report (Fukuda-Parr and Messineo, 2012). Thus, the human security framework entails an ethical and normative dimension that helps researchers and practitioners to consider internationally prescribed frameworks while analyzing security issues (Fuentes and Aravena, 2005; Matta and Takacs, 2015).

For instance, some international legal experts, such as kettemann, argue that introducing human security as a practical framework in the international normative processes leads to and has indeed resulted in procedural changes in drafting international norms. It stands for the involvement of individuals in developing new international normative instruments (Kettemann, 2006). For this reason, it would not be excessive to say that human security can be seen as a value-based and people-centered framework for security. In support of this, Floyd (2007) pinpoints that the normative and analytical dimension of the human security framework offers a remarkable utility in dealing with the contemporary global crisis and political instabilities observed in many states.

In addition to all the discussed values, human security currently serves as a suitable framework for international cooperation since it encompasses different issues such as human rights and development,

and highlights the importance of coherent and holistic approaches to development (Liotta and Owen, 2006). It also serves to evaluate threats, foresee crises, analyze the cause of discord, and propose solutions entailing a redistribution of responsibilities (Tadjbakhsh (2009).

The human security framework is focused on analyzing causal processes and permits policy makers to establish linkages between traditional military threats and nontraditional security threats in order to create a coherent policy framework and response (Alkire, 2003; Owen, 2004; Fukuda-Parr and Messineo, 2012). However, despite the prevailing analytical usefulness of human security, the initiatives to institutionalize human security as a comprehensive framework for international security in the UN and its specialized agencies still need more attention and cooperation to develop an applied approach to security (Fukuda-Parr and Messineo, 2012).

3.4. The Usefulness of Human Security as an Organizational Policy Document

The conceptual shift of security from state-centric to people-centric thinking has tremendous policy implications. It brings new issues, actions, and priorities for global securities that were not on the international and collective security agendas before (Fukuda-Parr and Messineo, 2012). In this view, one of the defining characteristics of human security is its policy relevance and desire to change security policy in progressive ways. It becomes a form of forward defense against common threats to humanity (Heinbecker 2000; Howard-Hassmann, 2011). For this reason, the concept of human security as a policy document has been receiving more attention from key global development institutions and international communities to promote international common interest, particularly as the basis for the establishment of a human-oriented international policy (Jolly and Ray, 2006; CHS, 2003; Fuentes and Aravena, 2005; Tsai, 2009).

More recently, human security has been increasingly used by regional and international communities as a policy apparatus to fit with organizational interest and policy advocacy on matters related to contemporary issues ranging from migration to climate change (Fukuda-Parr and Messineo, 2012). It further extends security sideways to nongovernmental organizations and public opinion (Rothschild 1995; Fukuda-Parr and Messineo, 2012). For instance, the Study Group on Europe's Security Capabilities known as the Barcelona Group proposed human security as a doctrine for European security policy. For this group, human security is documented as freedom for individuals from basic insecurities caused by gross human rights violations (Tamminen, 2008).

Parallel to the potential policy implications human security provides for the multiplicity of regional and international organizations, in recent times considerable number of governments and civil societies have begun to use the concept for their multiple purposes, such as agenda setting and policy advocacy. They are used in diverse contexts, like foreign policy and international diplomacy for evaluating and proposing appropriate policy priorities (Fukuda-Parr and Messineo, 2012). That is why Gasper (2010) remarks that many organizations and civil societies find the concept of human security useful since its policy utility plays a shared language, highlights a new focus of investigation; guides policy evaluations and analysis, and motivates practical actions.

3.5. The Usefulness of Human Security as a Political Instrument

Since the publication of the Human Development Report in 1994 which contained a broad dimension of human security, major efforts have been undertaken to refine the very concept of human security through research and expert meetings to put human security as a core political agenda at both national and regional levels, particularly to respond to the needs of most vulnerable populations across countries (Fuentes and Aravena, 2005). Besides, the concept has increasingly gained importance in the political

realm and has been included in decision-making, policy design, and implementation activities (Owen, 2004; Suhrke, 2014). With this regard, Cilliers (2004) argues that the concept of human security imposes an obligation on the state to provide a facilitating environment for equality and individual participation through democracy, adherence to human rights, and the participation of civil society.

More importantly, the very political value of human security is its core issues and focuses which are relevant in relation to people, especially in post-conflict situations and socio-economically difficult conditions (Kettemann, 2006). It also serves as a dynamic leitmotif for addressing widespread and cross-cutting threats facing governments and people. For this reason, a number of countries have applied the concept of human security as a guiding political principle to articulate their domestic and foreign policies (Fuentes and Aravena, 2005). On top of this, human security has been a rational political response to both national and international policy as it pushes international actors and governments to take more mandates than simply economic growth and political stability (Owen, 2004).

Human security forms an important part of people's well-being. It is therefore an objective of political development. It is this optimism and rationale that governments of Japan, Norway, and Canada, among others, could take a plethora of political initiatives to promote the concept and institutionalize it within the UN security framework (Fukuda-Parr and Messineo, 2012). In these countries, human security as a foreign policy doctrine has become an opportunity to gain greater independence vis-à-vis international institutions, greater influence in the United Nations, and wider credibility on the international stage, particularly in the case of Canada and Japan (Tadjbakhsh, 2009). In support of this, Owen (2004) argues that human security is a political motif having multiple political utilities since it focuses primarily on issues affecting people, and gives a political voice to the otherwise politically marginalized communities.

4. Concluding Remarks

To conclude, even if there have been arguments made against the usefulness of the concept of human security, this essay presents the imperative value and utility of human security. It argues that human security is potentially and widely useful as a new alternative concept, a flexible theory, an analytical framework, an operative institutional policy, and a guiding political instrument. As justified earlier, most social science concepts, such as democracy, conflict resolution, positive peace, and human security are value-laden terms, so one cannot deny this fact in any social science work, possibly research. Social science concepts in general and human security in particular should not be criticized and undermined due to merely being value-laden term/s. Otherwise, it would be hardly convincing if one defined and analyzed these terms as if they are value-free and concert concepts.

Nonetheless, many skeptical realists who argue against the usefulness of human security overlooked the stated conceptual facts of social science terminologies, notably Paris (2001). Because they simply undermined the usefulness of human security by denying the common features of social science concepts as they are value-laden, ambiguous, maybe vague in nature, and have different meanings and implications in different contexts. This is not an exception to human security since it shares these all features in addition to the underdeveloped and emerging conceptual reality it has manifested.

However, due to their incapability to consider this conceptual fact, skeptical realists softly argue that human security has limited usefulness for academicians and policymakers as it lacks precise definition or conceptual clarity. In the humble view of this paper, it would not be impossible to conclude that having divergent implications and lacking precise definitions by no means undermines the critical and analytical values of human security. Thus, it is proper to support, perhaps recommend skeptical arguers to refine their conception of human security and reshuffle their viewpoints against the usefulness of

human security. Because human security is an overriding imperative beyond the conceptual ambiguity it manifests.

In a nutshell, human security is practically useful as a new alternative concept, a comprehensive theory, and an analytical framework of security in various academic discourses, research, and fields of study. For instance, as a new idea, it critically serves as an alternative concept that is currently contributing to widening up broader consciousness of security in lieu of merely focusing on the traditional notion of territorial and/or national security. In other words, human security progressively encourages a leap of consciousness in security thinking all over the world. It further helps to understand non-military threats which the old concept of state security overlooked for a long time.

Moreover, the concept of human security as a theoretical approach and analytical framework is potentially regarded as an applied paradigm. This is because it serves as a comprehensive theory and an analytical framework that is suitable for developing a common understanding of security and upholding global security and international cooperation. It theoretically helps academicians, experts, and practitioners to enrich and broaden their scope of analysis while they explain and analyze multidimensional causes and threats of (in) security. It can be operationally seen as a value-based and people-centered framework for security thinking since it gives prior concern for the people, not the territory of the state.

It is this theoretical and analytical usefulness of human security that increasingly attracted different international organizations, institutional initiatives, and government officials to use it as a working policy document to articulate their national and international policy objectives. This is due to its usefulness and all-inclusive values to understand and analyze threats, resolve core problems underlying potential

threats, and ultimately develop protective measures and actions on the human security agenda in the contemporary security dilemmas as well as peace and development issues.

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