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ENERGY SECURITY IN RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD EU AFTER RUSSO-UKRAINE WAR OF 2022

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Master's Thesis

Supervisor

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Istanbul, 2022

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The thesis titled ENERGY SECURITY IN RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD EU AFTER RUSSO-UKRAINE WAR OF 2022 prepared by RAND ALBADWI and submitted on 23 / 12 / 2022 has been **accepted unanimously** for the degree of Master of Arts in Political Science and International Relations.

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I hereby declare that all information/data presented in this graduation project has been obtained in full accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare all unoriginal materials and conclusions have been cited in the text and all references mentioned in the Reference List have been cited in the text, and vice versa as required by the abovementioned rules and conduct.

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signature

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my father and mother, who remained supportive of what I pursued in life. Their continuous support in my life motivated me to opt for this higher degree. Moreover, their encouragement also helped me in the realization of my goals throughout this journey. I am grateful for the passion and care they showed toward my goals.

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ABSTRACT

ENERGY SECURITY IN RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD EU AFTER RUSSO-UKRAINE WAR OF 2022

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This research examines energy security acting as a weapon of Russian foreign policy toward the EU. The research investigates Russia's assertive energy policy toward the EU, especially after the Russo-Ukraine war started on February 24, 2022. The key question raised in this study is, why is Russia using energy security as a weapon of its foreign policy toward the EU, and how it gains a geopolitical, geostrategic, and geo-economics advantage by monopolizing energy post-Ukraine war? Meanwhile, the secondary question it addressed is, how the EU has responded to the Russian energy security policy. The research employed a qualitative research technique, where data were collected online by utilizing both primary and secondary sources. Meanwhile, the thematic analysis technique was utilized to construct the narrative of this study. The research concludes that Russia uses energy as a strategic weapon against the EU. Russia has also diversified its energy supply routes to blackmail the EU as well as secure its business. Geopolitically, Russia has employed an offensive strategy where it employs even military tactics to achieve its energy interests, as has been experienced in the Ukraine war. Meanwhile, geoeconomically, Russia has launched EAEU to establish a new energy hub and start trade in Roubles along with exploring the Asian and African markets.

Keywords: Energy Security, Russia, EU, Ukraine, EAEU.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

ABBREVIATIONS

BCM	:	Billion Cubic Meters
BRI	:	Belt and Road Initiative
CARs	:	Central Asian Republics
CIS	:	Commonwealth of Independent States
DCFTA	:	Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area agreement
EAEU	:	Eurasian Economic Union
EC	:	European Commission
EU	:	European Union
GDP	:	Gross Domestic Product
IEA	:	International Energy Agency
LNG	:	Liquified Natural Gas
MCM	:	Million Cubic Meters
NATO	:	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSR	:	Northern Sea Route
OPEC	:	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
REW	:	Russian Energy Week
UN	:	United Nations

1. INTRODUCTION

This research investigates the Russian use of energy as a foreign policy weapon against the EU after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In doing so, it also examines Russia’s geopolitical, geostrategic, and geoeconomic leverage in the EU. Russia achieves this leverage through its gas supply companies such as Gazprom and Rosneft. [1],[2]

Energy has played a pivotal role in Russian foreign policy toward the EU after the operationalization of the Nord Stream 1 pipeline in 2011. Russia uses its energy resources as strategic, political, and economic assets, which has been clearly witnessed after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The political leverage of the Russian Federation in the energy sector remained much pronounced in the post-Soviet states in Europe. The new states were politically and administratively dependent on Russia. In fact, Russia managed them financially as well. To keep them under its own orbit, Russia used energy as a weapon of foreign policy. Therefore, Russia offered them cheap rates of energy resources. The advantage of these tactics was political as Russia was dependent on these states as transit routes for its gas pipelines to the EU. Thus, offering them cheap gas was a political weapon of Russia, where they benefited Russia by charging less tariffs on transit. Ukraine is an example of such a scenario, where Russia used energy as a weapon against it. However, the people of Ukraine wanted freedom from Russian hegemony and thus got close to the West after the “Orange Revolution”[1].

Russia used energy resources as a weapon against the EU as well for opposing its military offensive on Ukraine in February 2022. Geoeconomically, Russia has a monopoly in the energy market and EU states are dependent on it, which gives political power to Russia to maintain an emphatic foreign policy [1],[3],[4]. These political and economic advantages also paved the way for Russia’s geostrategic maneuverings in Ukraine.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky, on the other hand, alleged in July 2022 that, Russia's war in Ukraine was in fact an energy war directed against the people of Europe. Zelensky referred to this after Russia’s state company Gazprom reduced the gas supply from Nord Stream 1 to Germany. It became only operational after being shut for nearly 10 days from late June to early July. The EU lamented this and accused "Russia of using energy as a weapon".[5]

Significantly, the EU could not dissuade Russia from geopolitical initiatives to further its assertive foreign policy agenda. Because Russia provides cheap energy to consumers in the EU. Whether it was the annexation of Crimea in 2014 [6], or the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, the EU did not sanction the energy sector of Russia. Therefore, the major source of its revenue remained unaffected as only after the Ukrainian invasion, Russia is able to earn almost 100 billion US dollars from energy exports to the EU [7].

Geopolitically, the Russian energy policy revolves around the following themes: Manipulation of pricing mechanism; complete state control over gas pipelines and energy suppliers in the EU; manipulating gas supplies; developing new supply routes; restrictive contracts, which prohibit selling of Russian gas and oil to third parties. These contracts are aimed to keep the European energy market divided. Additionally, Gazprom utilizes bargaining tools and gives different rates to individual states. [8],[6]

Interestingly, the above-mentioned tactics are evident in the aftermath of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, as Gazprom halved its gas supply to Germany. Its head, Alexei Miller was quoted as saying, "our product, our rules. We don't play by rules we didn't create" thar is as shown by Hill [7]. The supply hurdles were also reported by Italy and Austria. The reduction of gas to Germany came on the eve of the German chancellor's visit to Ukraine in early June. The reduction in gas supplies was not only limited to Germany or Italy. In fact, Finland, Poland, Bulgaria, the Netherlands, and Denmark also faced similar Russian blackmail after they refused to pay in roubles for gas. It is stated that Russia's demand for payment in roubles was aimed at increasing the value of the rouble. [7]

The Russian politics on gas forced the European commission to devise strategies for rationing the gas. Therefore, it has urged the member states to reduce their consumption of gas by 15% in Springtime and be prepared for the possibility of the suspension of gas by Russia during winter. The gravity of the situation can be determined by the fact that per annum, the EU imports around 155 billion cubic meters of gas from Russia, and the rationing decision by the European Commission can lead to war time economy for Europe. [10]

In addition to geopolitics, Gazprom acts as a geostrategic tool as well. Therefore, it increases prices, gives discounts, and either halt or reduces the supply of gas for strategic reasons [8]. As shown by Birol [9]; states that Russia's use of energy as a weapon is a severe concern for the EU. He further adds that such an energy crisis was never witnessed in Europe's history before. Even before the invasion of Ukraine, the International Energy Association (IEA) had informed in September 2021, that Russia was limiting the gas supplies to the EU. Therefore, it must adapt other possibilities like wind, solar, and nuclear energy. But when the total import of gas from Russia is nearly 45%, then it is a hard task to switch immediately without any alternative infrastructure or avenue available.

Geo-strategically, Russians also use the revenue from energy resources to modernize their military might as shown by Bogoviz et al [11], and Borozna [12]. This strategic significance of the Russian energy supply to Europe can be gauged by the fact that the prominent newspaper Guardian in April 2022 stated that Russia is exploiting energy revenue from Europe to fund its military campaign in Ukraine. Merely by April 2022 since the start of the Ukraine war, Russia collected 35 billion US dollars from the EU in energy revenues, whereas, in that same period Ukraine was provided aid of only one billion US dollars [13].

The EU’s response to the Russian energy blackmail started back in 2014 when Russia annexed the Crimean region of Ukraine. The response mechanism included variables of diversification and the introduction of new rules and regulations that were to be abided by all energy players wanting a space in the EU’s market. Furthermore, the EU’s also put forward a plan to transition to renewable sources of energy to gradually phase out the demand for Russian energy. Along with these variables, the EU also applied geopolitical pressure by extending European’s Energy Commission mandate eastward and to the states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). However, it is pertinent to mention here that the Russian Federation equally responded with a similar pattern. Hence, it tried to strengthen its reach in the energy market by launching Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). The scope of the body is to introduce a single Eurasian market.

Given these circumstances, this study answers the following research question,

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

a. Why is Russia using energy as a tool of its foreign policy toward the EU, and how it gains a geopolitical, geostrategic, and geoeconomic advantage by monopolizing energy after the war in Ukraine?

b. How has the EU responded to the Russian Energy Security Policy?

1.2 OBJECTIVES

a. To explore Russian offensive and defensive energy security objectives with regard to the EU after Ukraine war.
b. To evaluate the geopolitical, geostrategic, and geoeconomic advantages of Russian energy as a tool of foreign policy toward the EU after the invasion of Ukraine.
c. To apply neoclassical realism to estimate Russian opportunities and limitations in the EU energy sector post-Ukraine invasion.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE

This research is significant because it interprets the Russian use of energy resources as a strategic, political, and economic tool of its foreign policy toward the EU after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Thus, not only achieving its end of energy security – but also formulating an assertive foreign policy toward the EU. Most of the scholarly work appears on the aspects of cooperation and competition of Russia with the EU on energy security either through the paradigm of realism or liberalism. This research on the other hand explores Russia's use of energy as a weapon after the invasion of Ukraine and focuses on the aspect of Russia's aggressive energy policies since February 2022. After the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, this research becomes more significant in understanding the Russian geopolitical, geostrategic, and geoeconomic designs in energy security. And more importantly, this research also contains the elaborate response of the EU toward the Russian Federation to finish its dependence on Russian oil and gas.

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

The scholarly literature produced on Russia's use of energy as a weapon of foreign policy in the EU is a mixed bag of theory testing, determining the nature of Russian objectives through its monopoly, economic leverage, security doctrine, and aspects of cooperation and competition. Though literature after the invasion of Ukraine is not widely published as of now, however, the literature on Russia's energy security policy with regard to the EU after 2010 is reviewed briefly below to ascertain the nature of Russia's political, strategic, and economic designs.

By Dimitrova [15]; evaluated energy relations of the EU and Russia. Her focus was the Russian monopoly over the energy trade in Europe, and thus securing its geostrategic as well as economic interests and its explained how Russia had a soft power over EU as a collective unit as well as over individual states of EU. As shown by Mohapatra [2]; termed energy as a “short term weapon” of Russian foreign policy toward EU. Therefore, Russia used it as a bargaining tool to achieve geopolitical and geoeconomic objectives.

As shown by Godzimirski [3]; on the other hand elaborated that how EU wanted to get out of this Russian energy blackmail after the Crimean annexation in 2014, in liberalizing and diversifying its energy sector. The EU as a unit believed that its cooperation in the energy sector would force Russia to merge its strategic interests with that of the EU. However, Russia believed in multipolarity and sought to utilize its energy sector strategically to gain economic leverage. Cobanoglu shows in [4]; explain the shift in Russian thinking to the economy. According to them, during the cold war Soviet Union spread its influence through ideology, however, post-cold war Russia engages states through its economic might and uses energy as an economic tool of foreign policy.

So, how did Russia gain this economic leverage? as shown by Turksen [8]; is an important work dealing with Russian energy supplies to the EU and the political and legal framework of the energy trade and its examined the issues of energy security related to centrality and mixed approaches by the individual EU states. Thus, according to Turksen, Russia has an upper hand because of the bilateral agreements it has signed with member states. Because of these agreements, its policies do not get scrutinized by European Commission, which wants market liberalization. Turksen’s work is significant for fact that it explores all energy related treaties of EU states with Russia.

More importantly, this economic leverage of Russia is linked with the Russian security doctrine as well, which was launched in 2012 by Bogoviz et al.[17]. Based on that doctrine, Bogoviz et al. argue that energy infrastructure security is crucial to Russia in neighboring countries. Because energy exports account for 50% of the Russian budget. Therefore, Russia considers geopolitical competition as a threat to energy security. In this regard, states that Russia has effectively used the politics of energy within EU to its own advantage. While the EU was busy debating issues related to energy security and interconnectedness of the energy structure between the EU states, Russia on the other hand was consolidating state hold on oil and gas companies supplying it to the EU.

As mentioned by Borozna [12]; investigated Russian energy security and its linkage with geoeconomics and geostrategy specifically in the EU zone. She argued that Russia's emphasis on energy security is to enhance its military capability and reclaim its past glory. Similarly, as shown by Madhukar [1]; also links energy security with Russia's national security. She differentiates between the oil and gas potential of Russia. She equates oil with Russia's political power, while natural gas with economic power.

More recently, by Bunde [18]; after the Russian invasion of Ukraine commented on Germany's and France's dependence on Russian oil and gas. He criticized both states that they were short-sighted and could not properly analyze the Russian motives for annexation of Crimea in 2014. Bunde stated that not only did the Germans and French brokered Minsk II agreement in 2015, but Germans also agreed to Nord Stream 2 in 2015, which made them even more dependent on Russia. Therefore, in the current environment post Ukraine invasion, Germany cannot openly manoeuvre against Russia for fearing an economic collapse. As shown by blank [19]; on the other hand focused on the Balkan region and Russian oligopolistic capture of the market, thereby turning into a regional hegemon, influencing the states in political decision making.

As far as the literature on the European response toward the aggressive energy security policy of the Russian Federation is concerned. Many authors have offered critical analysis on the EU's elaborate response. This ranges from liberalisation and regulations, diversification of energy sources, transitioning to the renewable sources of energy, as well as competing in the geopolitical sphere to gain the lost ground to Russia in the energy market.

Given this context, by Siddi [20]; has elaborated on the market liberalisation of the EU to avoid the Russian blackmail. Similarly, as shown by Siddi [20]; and Cottey [21]; also argued about the nature of relationship between the EU and Russia, which they term as interdependence. Because both need each other in energy trade. By Chernysheva et al. [22]; stated that the EU is liberalising the market so that there is fair competition among the gas companies. And Gazprom is not the single manipulator. Nonetheless, by Boute [23]; states that liberalisation has hidden agendas of the EU as well. These are related to extend the EU model of Energy Community to the breadth of entire Europe.

By shown as Chernsheva et al. [22]; on the other hand focused on the aspect of diversification. They state that the EU are pondering over diversification of supplies as well as building its own internal infrastructure of LNG and shale gas on emergency purposes. As shown Jirusek et al. [69]; are of the view that diversification techniques have forced Gazprom to give competitive prices to the consumers in Northern Europe. As shown by Meanwhile, Chumak and Prokip [26]; have focused on the close cooperation between the EU and Russia so that Ukraine is converted into an energy hub and thus reducing Russian role in the energy market of the EU.

By Mitrova and Westphal as shwon in [17]; while considering the modern responses of the EU, explained the EU's transition to renewables. They said that it must be done for the long-term energy stability. As shown by Zuk and Zuk [24]; however feared that with rightist politicians on the rise in the EU and energy crisis, for the short-term transition to renewables is only a dream. Ferguson and Hast in [27]; commented on the geopolitics of the EU vis-à-vis Russia in energy sector. They reveal the EU's geopolitical design for Eastern Europe to make ring around Russian sphere of influence. By Ryon [28]; elaborates on the US influence over the EU in its relationship with Russia, and claims that it is inspired by geopolitical competition. In this regard, Russell [29]; highlights the US sanctions on the EU gas companies in under President Trump.

The literature reveals that the Russian foreign policy toward the EU since 2010 was based on cooperation as well as competition. Cooperation to secure economic interests and gain profit through sales of energy products to the EU, and competition at the strategic arena to stop NATO from expanding westwards as well as thwarting the east European states from joining the EU. However, there is evident gap in the literature analyzing Russian energy policy toward EU after the invasion of Ukraine, which this research aims to cover. As far as literature on the EU’s response is concerned, it mostly deals with the variables of liberalization and regulations, expanding the base of the EU’s energy market, looking for more energy avenues, adapting to renewables, and denying Russia a geopolitical space within the EU and beyond by playing politics of sanctions. Moreover, the literature also deals with the pre-war energy relations of the EU and Ukraine, which was aimed at turning

Ukraine into a powerhouse, that could light the EU. Nonetheless, the literature is scarce post-war in Ukraine and the recent developments. Thereby, this dissertation aims at filling these gaps, and completing the picture by taking a holistic account of the energy security within the EU.

1.5 THE ORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

In explaining the theoretical perspective of this research, this study takes motivation from the works of Romanova [30], Goldthau and Sitter in [31], by Smith [32], Huseynov [33], and Siddi [20]. This section after briefly highlighting what neoclassical realism is according to its founders delves into explaining the nature of theoretical discourse on EU-Russia energy relations in academia. Thereby, discussing realism and liberalism from the perspective of Russia and the EU respectively briefly. After setting the context, the discussion moves on to explaining neoclassical realism in the context of energy security. Neoclassical realism posits that foreign policy is devised based on "opportunities and limitations" in international affairs. In doing so, states also take into account their relationship with society, domestic situation, strategic culture, and leadership roles. Thus, contrasting neorealists, stress cooperation too rather than only competition.

In Europe, the interlinkage of energy and foreign policy is either presumed in realist or liberal terms [34], [35], [31]. For realists, energy security, as well as trade and other forms of business investment are considered as part of the geopolitics [30], [20]. Meanwhile, for liberals, the market decides these issues. Thus, EU has based its energy security doctrine on the principles of a liberal view of the market. Russia on the other hand is depicted to be using energy as a weapon of geopolitics as advocated by the realist school of thought [31].

Romanova in [30]; argued, that neoclassical realism's assumption that leadership and domestic issues are also realized when making a decision about foreign policy, is not practiced in Russia. Because post-2000, the decision-making power is vested in the President, and he influences his will on the administration. This is an authoritative position that makes President Putin a strong leader. Thus, separating him from society [30]. Other than Romanova, Kropatcheva in [36] has seen Russian foreign policy through the prism of neo-classical realism as well. However, her focus like that of Romanova was on the traditional foreign policy goals in military and political domains. Meanwhile, this research on the other hand evaluates the neo-classical realism in the domain of Russian energy security policy after the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

As shown by Smith [32]; in his work on energy security in Europe post-Ukraine crisis in 2013-14, has criticized the analyses of the phenomenon from the prism of realism and liberalism only. Smith is of the view that mostly the phenomenon of energy security within the perspective of the EU is analyzed from the prism of either institutionalism or intergovernmentalism. The limitation of such lenses is that they provide regional context only, i.e., that of the EU only and how it as a block perceives opportunities or challenges. Therefore, ignoring the interests of other powers in the region, specifically that of Russia. By Smith [32]; further elaborates that, as far as the analysis of Russian foreign policy is concerned vis-à-vis energy security, most of the literature appears to deal with the phenomenon in the domestic context of Russian politics. That includes aspects of authoritarianism, economic issues within Russia, business elite influencing foreign policy, orthodox church influence, entrepreneurial bureaucracy.

[32] believed EU-Russia energy relations can be best analyzed through neoclassical realism. Neoclassical realism combines both structural as well as classical realism. Thus, neoclassical realism picks up the variable of domestic dynamics as well as “state interests,” and “individual preferences of leaders” in devising foreign policy from classical realism. Meanwhile, from structural realism, neoclassical realism borrows the idea that it is the international system that influences the foreign policy of a state. Thus, systemic, state, and individual-level of analyses are the analytical toolkit of neoclassical realism. Consequently, as far as power is concerned, it emerges from the international system. Thus, states rather than calculating power from the economic and military resources they possess, observe it from their position in the international system [32].

Given this context, neoclassical realism has three core variables as explained by Smith in [32]:

a. Independent variable: Distribution of power in the international system.
b. Intervening variable: Identity, perception, and other domestic factors.
c. Dependent variable: Foreign policy decisions.

These three variables play a significant role in the energy relationship between the EU and Russia. Especially in the context of Ukraine, based on these three critical variables, the EU and Russia compete. Russia under Putin believes that the US is no longer a superpower, and therefore, Russia must enhance its power in the international system. How Russia is enhancing its power by utilizing its strong area, which is hydrocarbon resources. These hydrocarbon resources act as intervening variables as well. Because these are significant for not only Russia's economy which stabilizes the internal politics, but also for the EU's population which again acts as an agent of stabilization in the domestic circuit.

How Ukraine fits into this foreign policy quagmire between Russia and the EU? The short answer to this puzzle is its trade partnership with both the EU and Russia. Ukraine's exports to the EU were slightly higher to EU than Russia, similar is the case of imports. Meanwhile, with Russia, this relationship is too significant from the perspective of Russians. As Ukraine is the third largest trade partner of Russia. Thereby, Russia is keen to maintain this relationship. Meanwhile, the EU on the other hand, has offered a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area agreement (DCFTA) to Ukraine, which means integration of Ukraine with the EU. Furthermore, it is also significant to note that the stained relationship between Russians and Ukrainians is also because of divergence in trade interests. For instance, in 1994, the Ukrainian trade with Russia was 49.5%, which dramatically lessened to only 29% in 2012 [32]. In this scenario, for Russia, the involvement of Ukraine in the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union was significant. However, Ukraine was reluctant to join [32].

Earlier, immediately after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, there was an aspect of cooperation between the EU and Russia because there was no aspiration in the new leadership of Russia for competing the West. Thereby, EU too was keen to enhance trade relations [37]. Nevertheless, since the arrival of President Putin in 2000 in power corridors, the dynamics of Russian foreign policy have changed. It now competes for power [38]. While Russia aspires for power in the international system vis-à-vis West, yet it must be considered that economically, the EU is still more powerful than it. So, there is competition geopolitically and geo-strategically, yet there is interdependence geo-economically [39].

So, how do the EU and Russia try to soft balance or bandwagon in Ukraine and other Eastern European states towards their fold? As far as the EU was concerned, it applied its economic clout as well as normative influence (like values of freedom, democracy, rule of law, and human rights) to win over Ukraine. Meanwhile, the Russians used the bandwagon or intervening variable of identity to recall shared history and culture with Ukraine. It is interesting to note here that throughout the last decade, the Ukrainian attempts at balancing Russia through neo-liberalism failed and Russia was able to assert its power [33].

It is also important to remember that the shared neighborhood are geo-strategically significant states because of their status as transit states in the supply of energy to the EU. Therefore, as far as the EU is concerned, it is aspiring to export its influence to the Eastern neighborhood. Thus, it can be stated that within the EU zone, the EU may follow neo-liberal and normative policies, however, as far as the eastern flank is concerned, its policies can well be regarded based on the principles of neoclassical realism [33]. Geo-strategically, it can be gauged by the statement of a former German Defence Minister who stated that “if we do not export stability, we will import instability” (as cited by Huseynov [33].

Based on this above cited argument, the EU eagerly consumed the former Soviet states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the EU. This foreign policy decision of these three states reflected the intervening variables of neoclassical realism, where more than 2/3 of the population of these countries decided to join the EU in a referendum. Moreover, the enlargement also consumed states like “Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria” [33]. This trend of the EU’s eastward expansion was carried forward by none other than European Commission itself. It did not stop here and rather decided to make a ring of influence around the Russian territory in a policy called the European Neighbourhood Policy [33].

Meanwhile, for the post-soviet states of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Belarus, and Ukraine, the EU introduced Eastern Partnership Programme. That was exporting normative values of the EU to these countries. Thus, for achieving this goal, the EU set Association Agreement (AA) and DCFTA. In addition to this free visa, a regime was also proposed [33]. This was also complemented by the Energy Community doctrine.

It is interesting to note that President Putin is also inspired by the EU in pursuance of his own energy integration as well as other trade projects in the region which he calls the Eurasian region. Nonetheless, his modus operandi is different than that of the EU – even if the end objective of the integration is the same. Thus, in contrast to the soft power approach of the EU, President Putin has opted for geo-economics where he treats his resources as a major boost to Russian foreign policy. More importantly, in President Putin's schemata, energy security also acts as a major component in geopolitics and geostrategy through which he either persuade or coerces his neighbours [40],[41]. However, the Russian designs failed to win public support in the former Soviet space. Thus, it launched campaigns of soft power as well. Before 2010, Belarus negotiated cheap gas with Russia, and remained successful too in getting it. Meanwhile, the Ukraine given the size of its economy and divergent national interests than that of Russia could not maintain cordial relations with Russia [33].

However, more recently it has been found that Russia is applying neoclassical realism in some form. It has worked to build a narrative on a new identity that reflects its notion of a Eurasian zone. And secondly, it also wants to enhance its geoeconomic clout and thus asserting soft power. However, even then neoclassical realism is limited as societal discussion on foreign policy is limited and moreover, the state is also practically acting in hard power domain. Nonetheless, it does not mean that Russian society is not interested in foreign policy. They are, and also defying orders on many occasions, which shows in their protest against the unilateral decisions taken by the President [30].

This is also reflected in Russian state renewed policies internally that now try to mobilize people on their agenda, gaining their confidence in significant foreign policy decisions. Over the last decade, domestic politics has evolved in Russia, and it is not completely easy to ignore the population. Probably, this is the reason that in the recent Russo-Ukraine war, the President of Russia opted for mobilizing support for the war cause throughout the Russian Federation, and also focuses more on the cultural aspect by focusing more on Russian values and threats to it from the "Western imperialism" as he calls it.

In the next chapter, neoclassical realism and its variables will be analyzed in the current dynamics of the Russo-Ukraine war, and its impact on the energy trade between the EU and Russia.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this research is encouraged by qualitative research paradigm. Qualitative research is explanatory and explore the context of the phenomenon. Thereby, making the evaluation of a phenomenon comprehensible [42],[43],[44]. The context in this research is Russian foreign policy vis-à-vis the EU and its use of energy as a strategic weapon. Thus, this research is explaining actions of Russia in the realm of energy security to enhance its political and economic power in the EU region.

Ontologically, this research is influenced by interpretivism, which concentrates on the inter-subjectivities of the phenomenon [45]. The rationale for applying the interpretive lens is complex nature of the cooperation and competition between Russians and the EU. This relationship between the two is difficult to comprehend in an objective manner as suggested by the positivist school because of the evolving nature of geopolitics in Europe. After the invasion of Ukraine by Russia in 2022, geopolitics has taken a different trajectory, which is completely different from what the neorealists and neo liberals were assuming. The former gave the rationale of mutual assured destruction and thus concluded that Russia would not risk a major war, meanwhile, the latter gave the reason of market interdependence for taking any such steps. Both schools were generating results objectively and predicting the future, yet both schools failed to predict the future as it has been now after the Russo-Ukraine war.

In [46], they have eloquently explained this ontological confusion in the following words, [Positivism requires] objectivity, replicability and falsification. Such standards carry a distinctive load of assumptions about the social world and its potential knowability by human researchers. First, they anticipate the ultimate stability of the social system, which ensures replicability and generalizability of research findings. Second, they are founded on the assumption that a researcher should try to occupy a position external to the studied phenomena and to minimize possible bias by following a set of procedures that help achieve objectivity, which is deemed possible and desirable in social-scientific and natural-scientific settings alike. In contrast, interpretivist scholars claim that the positivist criteria of objectivity, replicability and falsification are inapplicable to social analysis, because its subject – social reality – differs fundamentally from the natural world.

Consequently, the competitive nature of the foreign policy of both powers is based on intervening variables like market stability and integration (for both the EU as well as Russia), political stability (for the EU because of fear of instability in the former Soviet space), public opinion (especially in the EU), and hegemonic geostrategic designs to deny each other any strategic leverage near their borders. Whereas cooperation comes along the arena of trade especially in the energy sector. Even if the EU wants to diversify its energy market, yet it needs Russian gas in the contemporary era as well as in near future. And there is no escape from this fact as well. Similarly, Russians too are keen to provide oil and gas to Europe to keep its economy functioning. Thereby, while both powers are competing each other on geopolitical and geostrategic issues, geoeconomically they both have a relationship of inter-dependence.

In this scenario, the predictability of the future outcomes of the EU-Russia relationship is uncertain. Furthermore, there is also no clarity on the conclusion of Russo-Ukraine war. Thus, what can be achieved is understanding the nature of relationship of the two powers, and implications of the Russo-Ukraine war for the energy market in the EU as well as EU's political response to securitize its energy sector.

Meanwhile, epistemologically, this research has utilised the neo-classical realism to evaluate the relative gains and losses of Russia as shown by Kropatcheva, [36] in a bid to utilise energy as a foreign policy tool toward the EU after the invasion of Ukraine. The significance of neoclassical realism for interpretive research like this is that it does not undermine the context or normativeness of it. Therefore, the findings of this research will consider the aspect of export of European values to its Eastern neighbours in exchange for political and strategic leverage for the EU, which is also briefly highlighted in first part of this chapter.

Moreover, this epistemological tool is also able to highlight the Russian foreign policy goals. Even though, there are scholars like Romanova as shown in [30]; who believed that Russia followed a neorealist paradigm of foreign policy. However, in 2022, there is a definite shift in the Russian foreign policy framework. More importantly, neoclassical realism in this research is not applied to depict Russian foreign policy vis-à-vis energy security according to the principles of neoclassical realism. Rather neoclassical realism is employed to analyse Russian practice of the foreign policy.

1.6.1 Data Collection

The data for this research is collected by relying on primary and secondary sources. In primary data, official documents are explored. Meanwhile, in secondary data, literature, newspapers, and audio-video content on the digital platforms is explored. Divided between two sub-sections, the first one elaborates the techniques employed in collecting the primary data utilised in this research. Meanwhile, secondly a detail is provided on the sources of data.

1.6.1.1 Primary data

As far as the primary data is concerned, these are explored online on the government websites and the institutes dealing with the energy security. These documents are related to official reports of both Russian state and European individual governments, as well as the European parliament. It is important to mention here that only those Russian official documents available in English are explored for this research. Similarly, the biggest trading partner in Energy sector from the EU with Russia is Germany, therefore, its government websites are explored to find the relevant official data on energy deals. The significant aspect of the German official websites is that it has the automated feature of English translation, thus, most of its official correspondence is available in English language. Similarly, primary data on Italy and France relations with Russia is also explored in the same manner.

As far as primary data from oil and gas companies, international organizations, and intergovernmental organizations such as the EU is concerned, online medium is employed to gather data. Therefore, to ascertain the standpoint of oil and gas companies, the websites of Russian companies like Gazprom and Rosenft are explored to find relevant material to the research question and themes of this research. Similarly, German energy company, UNIPER, Italian ENEL, and French EDF is explored in the same manner. Significantly, these are prominent companies which this research explored particularly to understand the nature of energy trade. Nonetheless, other energy companies in the EU are also highlighted in this research which are not named here.

The significant portion of primary data of this research is also composed of reports from international organizations like the International Energy Agency (IEA) and inter-governmental organization such as the European Parliament and its executive body, the European Commission. Furthermore, commentaries and reports from the thinktanks based in Europe and Russia are also considered as primary sources.

The induced themes like geostrategy, geopolitics, and geoeconomics are explored in these primary sources for the selection purposes. Interestingly, the official primary sources are also an important contributor in interpreting the grand geopolitical designs of both the EU and Russia. Furthermore, the themes that erupted from the literature in chapter 2 of this research, such as energy integration, energy and gas hubs, diversification and liberalisation of the energy market, and renewables are specifically looked for in all primary data to examine and understand the development in this regard, as far as the EU is concerned. Similarly, the pursuance of EAEU for energy hegemony by Russia that emerged in the literature review is also viewed in Russian official sources. This variety of primary documents provide diversification in data, and first-hand information of the governments, international organizations and companies, which is value addition for analysis of this research.

1.6.1.2 Secondary data

Similarly, for secondary data, literature as well as audio-visual data is consulted online. Books and journals available at the repository of digital library at the university are explored to find the relevant material to research question and objectives of this research. Along with these sources, to ascertain the nature of energy relationship between the EU and Russia, leading newspapers in English language from EU and Russia are consulted.

The major sources of audio-video data are news channels like the BBC, Russia Today, Sputnik, Al-Jazeera, TRT World, France 24, and Deutsche Welle. The news reports as well as commentaries on these channels are examined to find a link with this research. Similarly, from the print media, the leading English language daily of Russia, i.e., the Moscow Times is consulted to gauge the narratives in Russia on EU-Russia energy relationship. Whereas a mix of English language dailies are employed to observe the EU’s stance. These sources explain the current dynamics, especially after the war in Ukraine post February 2022 elaborately. And thus, aid to this research in understanding the nature of energy relationship between the EU and Russia and how it has impacted because of the war in Ukraine.

Similarly, books and journals also aid to the findings of this research. The literature helps in evaluating the themes that emerged in the literature review. Owing to the diverse scope of literature covered in chapter 2 of this research, the findings of this research utilise the literature that is specific to the themes emerged in chapter 2.

1.6.2 Analysis

The analytical tool employed in this research is inspired by thematic analysis. Hence, themes like geostrategy, geopolitics, and geoeconomics are explored to ascertain Russia's deployment of energy as a weapon against the EU. These three themes are interlinked with each other and appears interchangeably in the literature – specifically geostrategic and geopolitical aspects are often interconnected. In some cases, geopolitics is used by the authors and commentators as umbrella term, that encompasses geostrategy and geoeconomics too. However, in this research, all three have been analysed separately where geopolitics is considered as political objectives of the EU and Russia in Europe. Geostrategy is connected with the military objectives of the NATO and Russian army to aid larger political objectives. Meanwhile, geoeconomics is treated as energy trade.

The coding technique used in this is inductive, which is motivated by the works of scholars like Bryman [42], Nowell et al.[47], and Linneberg and Korsgaard [48]. Thus, themes extracted in literature review are explored to find relevant data. Those thematic data chunks are collected and stored in an MS-Office file on the computer given a thematic name. Subsequently, data is analysed and relevant one to the question is kept, while rest of it is deleted. This way a narrative is constructed on thematic grounds, keeping the chronology and coherence of the story into context.

1.7 LIMITATIONS

There are limitations of this research as well. For instance, no specific interviews either in-depth or focus group discussions will be conducted to know the perspectives of political actors. Because the study is conducted for Master research, therefore there are funding restraints. Consequently, it entirely depends on published primary and secondary sources. Moreover, the scope of the research is limited to Russian energy policy toward EU, therefore, details about global oil and gas market orientations are out of scope of this study. The geopolitics, geostrategy, and geoeconomic dynamics are all linked with Russian foreign policy objectives in the domain of energy security rather than traditional modes of political or military cooperation and competition.

1.8 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This dissertation is compartmentalized into a total five chapters. After explaining problem, setting the research question, objectives, a brief review of literature, setting of theory, and highlighting methodology in chapter 1, this dissertation turns to chapter 2. That is related to Energy Security as a Geopolitical and Geostrategic tool of Russian Foreign Policy. This chapter brings to the table the discussion around Russian use of energy as a weapon against the EU. In chapter 3, the geoeconomics of energy security according to Russian foreign policy is elaborated. Meanwhile, chapter 4 discusses at length the European Response on energy security dealing with issues like liberalisation, diversification, regulations, renewables, geopolitics, and energy crisis after the Ukraine war. Chapter 5, which is the last chapter of this research concludes the thesis.

2. ENERGY SECURITY AS A GEOPOLITICAL AND GEOSTRATEGIC TOOL OF RUSSIA

The energy trade between the Russians and the EU started back in the second half of the Cold War. In the decade of 1980s, the Europeans started importing Siberian gas through Trans-Siberian pipeline. This trade had the US's reservation, but the EU leaders continued with the project. Similarly, this import of gas was not limited to Western Europeans, in fact, even the Central Europeans and the Eastern Europeans erected gas pipelines infrastructure under the Soviets. As a result of this development, the energy import from Russia reached 40% of the total energy imports of the EU states. Central and Eastern Europeans are more reliant on the Russian gas. The highest amount of gas imports is done by Germany with 50% of total energy imports from Russia. For that matter, Nord Stream 1 pipeline was completed in 2011 – which supply energy to Germany passing through the Baltic sea and a parallel Nord Stream 2 has also been completed in 2022 – thus giving Russia a strategic edge in energy security over the EU [28], [21], [23].

This chapter is divided between a total of nine sections. In section one of this chapter, conceptual argument around energy security is provided. It has seen how the Russians perceive the energy security phenomena and how the EU leaders over the last two decades have evolved in their thinking on the concept. Then in section 2, this chapter explains the Russian energy security policy. Moving onto section 3, the Russian objectives of diversification of supply routes are highlighted. This section is followed by the discussion on geostrategic and geopolitical use of energy security by Russia in section 4. Meanwhile, in section 5, implications of Russian geopolitics and geostrategy around energy security are addressed. In section 6 of this chapter, EAEU is examined in detail. In section 7, limitations of Russian foreign policy are evaluated vis-a-vis energy security. Whereas in section 8 Russian Asian policy on energy security is explained, in case there is a halt in energy trade between the Russian Federation and the EU. And lastly, section 9 considers the Russian offensive and defensive policies to protect its energy mix.

2.1 WHAT IS ENERGY SECURITY?

Energy security emerged as a cause of concern at the state level for the first time in early 1900s during the first world war to deliver oil to the combatants. In academia, the aspect of energy security gained traction in the “oil crises of the 1970s” [49]. Meanwhile, in 1980s and the subsequent decade, there was little interest of the scholars in the field because of oil market stabilisation. Nonetheless, during 2000s, the debate around energy security started reappearing in the academia because of high demand, frequent disruptions of supply within the EU, and talks of decarbonatization [49].

It is interesting to note that energy security conceptually was defined differently in different periods of time. In the 1970s and 1980s, the energy security was taken as a phenomenon, where energy supply was stable without fluctuations in the price. Meanwhile, post 2000s the energy security phenomenon is diversified and goes beyond the aspect of stable oil supply. Thus, in recent times it has been witnessed that energy security is related to “equitable access to modern energy and mitigating climate change” [49].

Therefore, with regard to the definitional aspects of energy security, the contemporary scholars have urged to abandon the classical era definitions and rather focus on the issues such as “globalization, diversification of energy markets, exacerbation of transportation problems, climate change, and international, economic and environmental considerations” [50]. Scholars like Bohi and Toman in [25]; are of the view on the other hand that the concept of energy security should also include components like sustainability and fair price.

In the first decade of 2000s, the energy security revolved around four pillars, i.e., “availability, accessibility, affordability and acceptability” [51]. Meanwhile, the IEA defined energy security, “as the uninterrupted availability of energy sources at an affordable price” [52]. Nevertheless, there are scholars who argue that these components are not enough to address the challenges to energy security. For instance, Von Hippel et al. [53]; advocated that variable like technology, climate, managing of the demand, and domestic socio-political context must also be included in the energy security mix. Moreover, scholars like Esfahani et al. [50]; stated that human security is also impacted by lack of energy supplies. Thus, they believe that geopolitics must also be considered while defining energy security [50].

Given this conceptual framework of energy security, both the EU and Russia have devised energy security policy keeping in view their own interests. For Russia, “energy security is defined as the state of defence of the citizens, society, state, and economy from different threats in satisfying their energy needs by the economically accessible energy resources of the acceptable quality, as well as from the threats of violation of the uninterrupted energy supply" [17].

EU on the other hand has securitized the energy supplies being inspired by Copenhagen School of Security Studies, which claims that "an existential threat to a referent object" [54], is a security threat. Thereby, denial or disruptions in energy supplies by the Russians is an existential threat for the EU [54], [20], [22], [28], [24]. This attitude of Europeans is in line with International Energy Agency (IEA) description of energy security [54], which is also explained above.

2.2 RUSSIAN ENERGY SECURITY POLICY

"Russian political ambition is built on its expansive geological fortunes, its robust political authority over its national energy companies and the pivotal role assigned to energy in assuring national security and foreign policy leverage" [55]. Furthermore, Russian beliefs about energy security springs out from dealings with the European political and market leaders, who have securitized the energy supplies [54]. Based on this rationale, Russia perceives hydrocarbon resources as a "strategic commodity," and thus has effective state control over the transportation mechanism and market-oriented negotiations by its energy companies. This control over the hydrocarbon resources has evolved Russia into an" energy superpower" that can influence, persuade, dissuade, or coerce global energy trade, as well as international politics [30].

Therefore, the Russian energy trade is directly linked with its national security doctrine, that was launched in 2012 [17]. Based on that doctrine, energy infrastructure security is crucial to Russia in neighbouring countries. Because energy exports account for 50% of Russian budget. Hence, Russia considers geopolitical competition as a threat to energy security [17]. In this regard, Tichy states that Russia has effectively used the politics on energy within EU to its own advantage in consolidating state hold on oil and gas companies supplying it to the EU.

This is done keeping in view the two core strategic objectives of the Russian state: one, to ensure security of the distribution routes; two, to ensure security of the market access for Russian energy companies [54]. Furthermore, Russia's emphasis on energy security is to enhance its military capability and reclaim its past glory as well – thus energy security acts as a key component of Russian national security [12], [1],

The objective of the energy security for the Russian state is to protect its role of a giant player in the marketplace because hydrocarbons actually run the economy of Russia. Consequently, acquiring customers and enhancing demand is a primary goal of Russia [54]. To explain it further, as shown by Proedrou [56]; states that Russia's significance as a global energy leader has geopolitical and geoeconomic components associated with it. Geopolitically, Russia, exploits its status of energy superpower in winning over key states, and penalises those states that deny Russia any geopolitical leverage. Moreover, yet another crucial component of Russian geopolitics vis-à-vis energy security is also influencing the electoral behaviour in the states that import oil and gas within the EU.

According to the government of Russia, energy security is the prime aspect of its national security. The Russian tackling of the energy security has been dynamic and has witnessed continuous evolution in approach. The change can be evaluated in two distinct scenarios; before the Russian occupation of Crimea and after it. Prior to making Crimea part of Russia, the state's mindset was not offensive – it was rather based on cooperation. However, after annexation, Russia has gone toward the aspect of competition [57]. To state it more clearly, according to the Russian Energy Strategy released in 2009, the official line of argument was based on stability, that stated that energy security "must be provided without prejudice to any national interests whatsoever." The Energy Strategy of 2009 also explained that "stable relationships with traditional consumers of Russian energy resources and shaping equally stable relationships on new energy markets are the most important vectors of the country's energy policy in the sphere of global energy security provision in accordance with national interests of the country… [Therefore, Russia] is open and built on the principles of predictability, responsibility, mutual trust and taking into account interests of energy producers and consumers." [57].

However, if one analyses the Energy Security Doctrine of 2019 of the Russian state, it is revealed that Russian energy security is "being hampered by restrictive measures introduced by several foreign states against Russia, including on the oil and gas sectors and the power system, as well as opposition from a number of foreign states and international organizations to energy projects that are under development with Russian participation." Furthermore, Russia also realizes the shrinking of energy markets where Russia traditionally exported gas and oil [57]. The 2019 doctrine was succeeded by Russian Energy Strategy, 2035 – that was released in 2020. This document asks for expanding energy exports to Asia as well as turning to the LNG sector [57]. Based on the arguent made here, it is necessary to analyse the Russian oil challenge as well as its gas potential in future, which are explained in subsequent paragraphs.

2.2.1 Russia's Oil Challenge

It is interesting to note here that Russia is considered the third major oil producing state in the world. Only the US and Saudi Arabia produce more oil than it. Nonetheless, it must also be remembered at the same time, that the Russian oil reserves are not third in the world but sixth, where countries like "Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Iran and Iraq" are well ahead than it. As per the recent estimates of 2020, the Russian oil reserves have gone down almost 7% from the concentrations documented in early 1990s. Meanwhile, the US and Saudi Arabia's reserves have increased during the same time [57].

Russia officially is optimistic that its oil reserves would increase by the year 2024 till year 2035. However, there is a challenge for Russia in the oil sector. That challenge is its fast depleting traditional and known oil reserves. This challenge is exacerbated by the economic sanctions placed on it by the Western players. Thus, denying Russia technical expertise in the field to overcome the challenge. Nonetheless, despite these challenges Russia has opportunities in the shale oil sector, which it is exploiting as well.

However, like stated before, here too Russia would require the technical know-how of the West. And as long as the sanctions are in place, no Western companies woud risk doing business with the Russians [57]. After Russo-Ukraine war of 2022, there is not enough optimistic voices in Russia as far as oil exploitation is concerned. However, this argument comes from [57]. The Chinese expertise in the field cannot be ignored, which has a great experience of exploitation in the Irani, African, and Central Asian market. If China is able to provide the technological assistance to Russia, the Western sanctions would prove meaningless.

2.2.2 Russia's Natural Gas Options

As of now, Russian state has decided to explore and exploit its gas potential more than the oil. Russia currently is the largest gas exporter throughout the world. Meanwhile, its production capacity is only second to the US. More important is the fact that Russia has the world's biggest gas reservoirs, and unlike the oil reserves, the Russian gas reserves are growing. It can be established by the fact that they found 10% more reserves in 2020, than they were in 1991 [57]. As per the Russian Energy Strategy, 2035 – it is expected by the state that there would be significant increase in gas production as well as its exports to diverse markets around the world. This includes gas supplied through pipelines (both natural as well as LNG). The significant market would be Asia. As of now, the pipeline, known as "Power of Siberia" supplies gas to China. This pipeline was envisioned in 2014, which was operationalized in 2019 – with the average annual capacity of 38 BCM. Significantly, in February 2022, Russia stated that it was about to operationalize yet another pipeline, called "Power of Siberia 2" which would provide gas to China for the next 30 years. This second pipeline has the total capacity of 50BCM. The pipeline would reach China passing through Mongolia, taking the Western Siberian gas to the mainland China [57].

2.3 DIVERSIFICATION OF SUPPLY ROUTES

The origin of the Russian-Ukrainian gas clashes is traced back to 2004, when Ukraine witnessed "Orange Revolution." As a consequence of this pro-Western people's movement, Viktor Yushchenko assumed the office of President. Thus, by 2006 Yushchenko took Ukraine out of the Russian alliance. The impacts of this Ukrainian decision were drastic as the Russian side increased the gas price to US dollars 250 per 1000 cubic meters, which earlier was charged at the rate of US dollars 50. This was the time when the differences arose, and price bargaining started. The Ukrainians were agreed to give Russia 130 dollars per 1000 cubic meters. However, they nationalized all of the gas pipelines traversing its territory in 2007 so as to bar Russia of initiating any joint venture with the Ukraine private entities. Gazprom in 2008 responded to this by halting gas supplies to Ukraine. It cited that Ukraine did not pay its dues of 1.5 billion dollars after the price increase in 2007. During 2008, the gas price was raised to 250 dollars per 1000 cubic meters by Russia. In response to this, Ukraine also asked Russia for higher transit fee. Russia again set the price at 458 dollars. These gas clashes continued throughout 2009, where both sides blamed each other. In the process, the gas supplies to the EU got impacted [58].

Nonetheless, Russia during the last ten years is able to diversify routes of its gas pipelines to the EU. Not only this diversification benefits them, but Russia has also a clout in exploiting the supply of energy to the EU. It occasionally issues threats of disruptions to the states, that are unreceptive of Russian foreign policy goals. Thereby, making them dependent on Russia economically [56]. For instance, Russia dissuaded Ukraine from joining Energy Commission of the EU by luring them into the tactics of providing cheaper gas in 2011. However, when it did not comply, the Russians decided to bypass Ukraine post 2014 – which acts as a transit state for Russian gas supply to the EU [20].

Thereby, all new pipeline projects of Gazprom like Turkish Stream, Nord Stream 2, and South stream are bypassing the Ukrainian territory. These decisions were inextricably linked to Russian geopolitical objectives, which were to degrade Ukrainian sway in energy trade. One of Gazprom's agenda remained to consolidate its influence in the EU's energy trade – thus, it remained committed to finishing constructing Nord Stream 2 and Turkish pipeline in proposed time [20].

2.4 ENERGY AS A GEOPOLITICAL AND GEOSTRATEGIC TOOL

Russian energy security is inspired by geostrategy so significantly that it ignored the fact that Ukraine transported almost 33% of Russian energy into the EU. Prior to the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, many authors perceived that the dependence of the EU on Ukraine as a transit country, would dissuade Russians from invading it. However, there were voices like Chumak and Prokip, who believed that Russia could alter the status quo. Chumak and Prokip interpreted this in the backdrop of completion of projects like Turkish Stream and Nord Stream 2. They asserted that with these pipelines, the revenue that Ukraine generates from Russian pipelines would disappear – and thus impacting their energy partnership with the EU [26].

Furthermore, the new energy strategy of the Ukraine was a geostrategic threat for Russia as well. It had three principles:

a. To reform Ukrainian energy mix by 2020 and to transit to 8% renewables by same period. By 2025, integrate Ukrainian energy sector with that of the EU, especially the European Network of Transmission System Operators (ENTSO-E).
b. By 2035, fully Europeanize the energy market, develop nuclear energy, and enhance renewable to 25% [26].

Ukraine envisioned its rebranding of the energy complex after the Russians annexed energy rich territories of Crimea and Donbas. Interestingly, Crimea had not only offshore gas and oil resources, but it also had the solar powered plants. Similarly, the Donbas region in the east of the state has large coal reserves. This annexation put extreme pressure on the Ukraine's energy mix. Just after the annexation of Crimea in February 2014, the Russian side also abandoned the Kharkiv Accord of 2010 with Ukraine. According to this accord, the Russians had to give Ukraine gas on discounted price until 2042, in exchange of the Sevastopol naval base in Crimea. As a consequence of this, the gas prices in Ukraine shot up to 83%, impacting industry and consumers alike. Nonetheless, these developments also forced the Ukrainian policy makers to prepare an alternative energy security policy, which is not dependent on Russia.

After the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Russia has threatened to stop energy supply if the EU states interfered in the war. Russia even announced that it would stop Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 would be cancelled. This development of war has forced the EU (both Western and Eastern zones) to think alike. Earlier, the Western zone took Russian energy supply only as a commercial activity.

Geo-strategically, Russia can claim that security environment does not allow them to supply energy to EU, or it can also blame it on Ukraine that its military had attacked the pipelines and thus supply disruptions occurred, All of it would be considered legal. Post Ukraine war, the most significant shift that has occurred between the two (EU+Russia) is move from bilateral trade to the block level trade. For instance, Germany has suspended the agreement on Nord Stream 2 pipeline. And the European Commission has come forward to monitor the agreements with Russia. This means that now Europe also wants to exercise its leverage and is not ready thus to offer Russia free access to market.

As soon as Russia invaded Ukraine in early quarter of 2022, it started monopolising its upper hand in the energy sector. Thereby, Russia which supplies almost 40% of gas to the EU started practicing disrupting techniques. These practices were in response to the sanctions the EU imposed on Russia after the war. For instance, in late August, Russia halted supply of gas from Nord Stream 1 pipeline. Moreover, it was also reported that Russia was burning approximately 10 million US dollars' worth of gas on the daily basis in a gas plant near the border of Finland [68].

Alternatively, it offered that it was ready to supply gas through Nord Stream 2, which in fact was under the sanctions. Pundits believed that it was a ploy of Russia to operationalize the Nord Stream 2. Nonetheless, Germany refused to agree to the conditions President Putin offered to reopen the taps of Russian gas. Similarly, the EU alleged that Russia was using gas a weapon against the bloc. However, the Russians denied this allegation [7]. It is interesting to find that the disruptions in the Russian gas since the invasion of Ukraine have become frequent. For instance, in June, the [7] reported that, supplies from Nord Stream 1 were halted by 75%. Similarly, in July, the pipeline was shut for almost 10 days, where Russians gave justification that a maintenance was going on in the pipeline. The supply remained closed throughout the month of August as well. Whereas in September the media reported leaks in both Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 pipelines [7].

It is also interesting to note that Russia offered the EU a completely new path of supplies, the Turk stream passing through the Black Sea. This pipeline was operationalized in October 2020. It is alleged that the Turk stream pipeline project is geopolitical in nature, where Russia wants to limit its reliance on Ukraine. The Turk Stream project website claims that it is more reliable, modern, and secure than the old and less maintained system of Ukraine (Turkstream, n.d). The annual gas supply capacity of the pipeline is around 31.5 billion cubic meters (BCM) as per the claims of the Turkstream project [74]. Through this pipeline, Russia plans to supply approximately 3 BCM of gas to Greece, and 3 BCM of gas to Bulgaria respectively, which earlier were supplied through Ukraine [70].

This also hints at the cooperation between Russia and Turkey which is taken within the EU as an alliance against the block. Significantly, if seen in the perspective of neoclassical realism, as defined and explained in chapter 1 of this research, it becomes clear that Russia is not limiting its options with only competition. Rather, Russia is keenly developing its friendly relations in the region for relative gains. Turkey exactly provides such a situation for Russia. It acts as gas hub for Russia – from where Russian gas can be transported to different regions of the EU. It is significant to see that this energy trade brings revenue for Turkey as well.

2.5 IMPLICATIONS OF RUSSIAN GEOPOLITICS AND GEOSTRATEGY

The Russian geostrategy vis-à-vis energy security has produced mixed results for Russia in the EU. As far as Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and some other Eastern European states are concerned, this Russian strategy has produced fruitful results. For instance, the states like Belarus, Hungary, and Armenia have obliged by the Russian strategy [56]. In fact, the Hungarian Prime Minister did not even openly condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 to not antagonise President Putin. Geo-strategically, the energy resources of Russia provided it with leverage to interfere in the internal politics of the eastern European states, who were formerly part of the Soviet Union [71].

On the other hand, in states like Lithuania, Poland and Georgia this strategy of the Russians did not work. Moreover, even in Western Europe, this strategy has failed, and consumers have turned sceptic about Russian strategy of mixing trade and politics [56]. To sum up the geopolitics of Russia vis-à-vis energy security in the EU, Pascual in 2015 had eloquently explained that Russian strategy of "starving the markets," "flooding the market," and "assisting friends," has offered them only a limited success in the EU.

2.6 THE EURASIAN ECONOMIC UNION: A GEOPOLITICAL TOOL?

As shown by Romanova [30]; is of the view that "instruments of both geopolitical and market approaches can be identified in Russian policy." Thus, regionally, Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is regarded as a "tool for a neo-imperial drive for Russian hegemony in the post-Soviet space," meanwhile, this platform also acts as a counterbalance to the expansion of the EU in the region with greater Russian geopolitical and geoeconomic interests. One of the major counterbalance factors of the EAEU are designing the energy mix on the same model as that of the EU energy market. In addition to the EAEU, the Belt and Road Initiative of the Chinese is also designed to exploit the energy resources in the Eurasian belt and connecting it with mainland China through roads and rail roads. In this regard, the post-Soviet space, is often termed as a grey zone, where major energy players like the EU, Russia, and China compete for geopolitical, geostrategic, and geoeconomic hegemony [23].

A parallel examination of the Russian gas laws reveals that EAEU has also institutionalized the quid pro quo – as far subsidy in return of allegiance is concerned. So, if the EU is advocating for liberalisation, and then using it for strategic purposes, the Russians on the other hand have nationalised the energy sector and tied it with domestic rules and regulations. Thus, even the EAEU cannot perform market-oriented deals in energy sector. The modernisation of energy security regime from the EAEU perspective requires reforming gas industry, especially the aspect of monopoly of Gazprom in energy export. The other major difference between the EU and the Russian area of influence is that, while the EU focuses on the integration of the energy mix for security against monopoly of Gazprom, the EAEU on the other hand focuses on the cheap gas supply from Russia [23].

Yet another interesting aspect of the post Ukraine war scenario is the Russian increased political activity in strengthening of the EAEU. For instance, in a recent summit of the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council, that was held in Yerevan, Armenia on October 21, 2022, the oil and gas sectors were emphasized by all the members. The participants also reviewed the preparation of agreements on the formation of a common market for gas, oil and oil products[59].

The members also signed treaties. One such was related to creation of a shared market of oil and gas within the EAEU zone – which would be having same laws for gaining access to the commodities as well as their transportation for all the member states of the EAEU. The Russian Prime Minister on the occasion stated that,

One of the most important objectives for all EAEU member states remains the formation of common markets for gas, oil and petroleum products. We discussed this at length yesterday, as well as the electricity market. When we first agreed on this ten years ago, few could have predicted the rise in prices consumers around the world would face. But I believe that our union reliably protects its members from unjustified overpricing of energy, which proves that we have made the right choice of integration strategy and have been successfully implementing the previously concluded intergovernmental agreements [59].

With the common market, the EAEU states will trade in oil and gas in Roubles rather than the US dollars. For that purpose, the documents have already been signed in the meeting held in Armenia [59].

2.7 LIMITATIONS OF RUSSIAN GEOPOLITICS IN ENERGY TRADE

At the hypothetical level, it is a prerequisite to securitize market chain reactions in energy relations between the EU and Russia. Considering both buyers and sellers have interests. Therefore, a securitization attempt by the EU can be considered as a threat by the Russians, and Russians similar attempts can be regarded as threat by the Europeans. If these aspects are not managed with care, it will result in corkscrew of securitisation. Significantly, as an example, the EU's energy regulations and environmental rules, aimed at securitizing EU's energy security are regarded as a threat by Russians for their national energy security [54].

[21] believes that the energy relationship between Russia and the West is not of dependence rather of an interdependence. Thus, this interdependence has also avoided a major war between Russia and the EU along with other variables like nukes, globalization, cost of conventional war, and democratic norms. Therefore, this interdependence also pacifies the severity of ties no matter what the situation is [21]. as shown by Michael Sulick [63]; has elaborated this more eloquently, that "Russia is just as dependent on Europe's energy market as Europe is on Russian energy supplies. Russian sabers will surely continue to rattle against NATO, but steel won't strike steel."

2.8 RUSSIA'S LOOK EAST POLICY FOR ENERGY SECURITY

Other than the EU's market, Russia has turn east policy as well. And along with this, in the sheer geopolitical competition post the Ukraine war, Russia has increased activity in the Arctic region as well. This is evident by the fact that Russia is developing unexploited energy reservoirs in the region, specifically to enhance its economy. This economic activity in the region is pushed by the projects like Northern Sea Route (NSR) and Yamal LNG. The NSR is significant for the fact that it reduces maritime distance. Moreover, the NSR also enhances the military power of Russia in the region. The NSR is a geopolitical project, which results in a global maritime route and thus increases the competition between the US and Russia. For that purpose, Russia is also overhauling its Soviet era bases in the Arctic region so as to protect its energy fields. Russia is doing these activities in the Arctic region to remain relevant as an energy superpower and keep using it as a weapon of foreign policy [60].

The voices from Ukraine in shape of Sukhodolia in [62] as well as some of them within the EU believe that the Russian energy security doctrine is based on politics rather than economy. For instance, in a discussion held by Foreign Policy Research Institute, the panellists agreed that Russia was testing waters of the EU leadership, and that when Russia's entire modus-oprandi is based on geopolitics, then how would the EU's sanctions affect them [61].

2.9 OFFENSIVE GEOSTRATEGY OF RUSSIA VIS-À-VIS ENERGY SECURITY

The above paras have discussed the defensive strategies of the Russian Federation in securing its energy objectives by signing treaties with the EAEU states. It is interesting to note that in a major geopolitical move to secure Russian energy interests, Russia decided to employ offensive strategy of the foreign policy. Thus, it invaded Ukraine, in a bid to thwart the EU's designs for the country.

It is vital to explain the crucial foreign policy methods, the Russian state employs in achieving its practical tasks. These methods, as have been revealed by the strategic documents are inspired by the tactics of Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti (KGB) (the Soviet era secret service organization). Thus, following the KGB tactics, Russian state focus on two key aspects: 1. Controlling the targeted country's economy and crucial national companies – given that it deviates from the Russian economic interests; 2. Employing techniques of hybrid war in the targeted country. In such a situation, Russia supports political division and separatists' movements [62]. These scenarios were evident in the "gas wars" between Russia and Ukraine in the year 2006 and 2009. Similarly, it was also witnessed in 2003 and 2011, when Russia forced the Ukrainian state to sell its gas transit system to Russia [62].

Strategically, Russia has made it part of its offensive strategy to target energy infrastructure of the hostile country. This achieves them crucial social, political and economic advantages. Socially, Russia blackmails the society who are dependent on the Russian gas. Politically, energy disruptions have a political cost for the politicians who have to answer the public.

Meanwhile, economically, the hostile country is impacted in collection of revenues that come through transit of the energy.

It is significant to see that Russia's Chief of General Staff in 2013, V. Gerasimov stated that, "the emphasis of the methods used in the confrontations is shifting towards the widespread use of political, economic, informational, humanitarian and other non-military measures implemented with the use of protest potential. All this is supplemented by covert military measures, in particular the implementation of information countermeasures and the actions of special operations forces." [62].

Back in 2014, Russia exactly did the same in Ukraine. Damaging Ukraine's critical energy sector was the key aim of Russian military strategy. The attacks by Russia on Ukrainian' energy infrastructure was both direct and indirect. Indirectly, Russia attacked the economic interests of Ukraine – often launching cyber-attacks against the critical energy infrastructure and thus disrupting it. Meanwhile, directly, Russia took hold of the energy infrastructure physically by capturing the facilities. After the capture of Ukrainian energy infrastructure, it is Russia, that controls its function. Thereby, it is Russia that decides whether to allow gas from the system to the EU or not. To keep the supply routes functional or blocked for indefinite period. Over the last eight years, such tactics have greatly reduced the defense potential of the Ukrainian state as far as energy sector is concerned [62].

The invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has seen similar events as witnessed in 2014. In the regions, where Russian military has occupied the territory, the energy infrastructure is under the effective control of the Russians. However, even in places, where Russians have no direct control, they have attacked the crucial infrastructure. For instance, in October 2022, the Russian air force launched air attacks against the electricity grids throughout Ukraine – thus impacting more than 2 million people in the West, East, and South of Ukraine [64].

The geostrategic manoeuvrings of Russia, such as sabotaging gas pipelines to the EU are criticized by intellectuals in the West. For instance, Depteris in 2022 while writing for the Time Magazine opined that such a geostrategic activity will only impact the Russian Federation in the long run in economic and political terms. He was of the view that Russia is doing that because of the EU's support for Ukraine in the war started in February.

Interestingly, Depetris term this war as a gas war, just like Sukhodolia in [62] has termed all conflicts of Ukraine with Russia as fought for controlling energy routes.

A significant geostrategic move by Russia in the aftermath of war in Ukraine is pursuance of a regional strategic alliance against the West. Russia has already started projecting the conflict as a clash of civilization. Putin has repeatedly commented on that rhetoric and thus tried to create a divide of East and West to sell to not only the domestic population but also to the regional population. This potential alliance could be formed with the states like India, Pakistan, African countries, Southeast Asian region, countries in the Latin America, and of course Russia's strategic partner, China [61]. All of these countries are energy deficient and would go for cheap hydrocarbon resources of the Russian Federation. The policy of net zero carbon emissions however would remain only rhetorical, and Russia would try to avoid environmental regulations. Because, as far as renewables are concerned, there is no significant expertise in Russia.

This chapter sums up the discussion around Russian geopolitical and geostrategic ambitions in the following thematic units; that Russia's definition of energy security is different than that of the EU. While the EU takes energy security as an importer, Russia on the other hand takes it as an exporter, which means that Russia's interests are unlimited supply of oil and gas to keep its economy running. More importantly, Russia has knowingly or unknowingly followed the principles of neoclassical realism to look for opportunities in the energy trade by playing geopolitics and limit the competition. Unlike Romanova in [30]; who stated that Russian domestic factor is not witnessed in the Russian foreign policy is only ignoring the other variables of the neoclassical realism, i.e., independent and dependent variables where the former refers to the international system while the latter to foreign policy dynamics. Russian geopolitics and geostrategy is not only limited to realist school where it only competes through hard power. Rather this chapter has shown above that it looks for soft power and cooperate too. However, in instances, it fails and in other it succeeds. For instance, in case of the CIS countries, Russian designs have succeeded, whereas in case of Northern Europe it has failed. More significantly, it is known to Russian policy makers that they have limitations too, and it's a relationship of mutual interdependence with the EU. Russia needs that market. However, at the same time, to prepare for the difficult times Russia is also strengthening its role as a leader of the EAEU as well as looking towards Asia in case the trade is halted with the EU. Similarly, as a competitive force, Russia has shown its resolve to be an aggressor as well and has invaded Ukraine in a pre-emptive fashion to stop its integration with the EU, which is primarily an energy relationship between the EU and Ukraine. This shows that Russia is not only exploiting opportunities by cooperation but also by competition. Thus, employing both offensive and defensive techniques. This is a clear depiction of the application of neoclassical realism.

3. ENERGY SECURITY AND GEOECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS FOR RUSSIA

This chapter contemplated on the geoeconomics side of the Russian energy security policy. It discusses how Russia has designed policies to take advantage economically from the EU region. Therefore, this chapter critically took into account the many assertions according to which the Russian attempts at energy security were addressed only as a political or strategic phenomena. This chapter on the other hand brings to light the economic side of the equation as well. Thus, revealing that Russian designs around energy security are a mix of geopolitics, geostrategy, and geoeconomics. This line of argument is also crucial to understand the research question of this dissertation, that Why is Russia using energy as a tool of its foreign policy toward the EU, and how it gains geopolitical, geostrategic and geoeconomic advantage by monopolising energy after the war in Ukraine?

Given the above context, this chapter is divided into seven sections. Section one of this chapter explains the conceptual arguments over the phenomenon of geoeconomics. It examines how this term got currency in the field of international relations, which was earlier only treated as part of the umbrella term geopolitics encompassing all variables like politics, strategy, and economy. Similarly, in section two of this chapter, the geoeconomics of the Russian Federation is evaluated. According to Russian geoeconomic framework, the policy of economic penetration in region and beyond started way back in the 1990s. Meanwhile, the major threats it considers to its state are related to hurdles created by the foreign players in the economic objectives of the Russian Federation. One such is economic sanctions as well, which are normally imposed by the Western powers. Section three of this chapter considers the Russian monopoly in the EU's energy market as a major geoeconomic tool of the state and its foreign policy. This section highlights that Russia achieved this monopoly by the techniques of cooperation and competition following the paradigm of neo-classical realism.

Section four of this chapter briefly touch upon the integration of the EAEU as an economic strategy, designed to achieve the Russian objective of creating a single market inspired by the EU Free Trade arrangement, and the Chinese initiative of the Belt and Road. It also takes into account the Russian overtures of making Turkey as a gas hub for supplying gas to the EU, which is also a Russian design of diversifying its supply routes. Similarly, section five of this chapter examines the Western sanctions against the Russian Federation, and its response to counter major geoeconomic challenges. Section six on the other hand narrates the economic relationship between the EU and Russia after the Russo-Ukraine war. It highlights from the Russian perspective that how trade between the two still continues both in oil and gas sectors, despite the contrary claims by the leadership of the EU. The last and seventh section of this chapter focuses on the Russian Energy Mix. This section examines the developments carried out in the Russian energy sector over the last five years. The section examines the official position of the Russian state and explore the development of the state in the LNG sector, diversification of its energy market, especially to that of the Asian market in case the European market is unavailable.

3.1 WHAT IS GEOECONOMICS?

Geo-economics has been defined differently by different scholars. There is no agreed definition of the term. However, as a conceptual understanding, it is agreed by the scholars that geoeconomics is referred to the use of economics for attaining foreign policy objectives. In this context, geo-economics also interlaps with the terms like geopolitics and geostrategy. Geo-economics gained currency after Edward Luttwak argued in 1990s that after the Cold War, the hard power manoeuvrings have been lessened and economic tools would define the hegemony of any power. More interestingly, this was also the time that states around the world were adopting capitalism and state-owned companies were growing stronger [65].

as shown by Blackwill and Harris [66]; more recently have eloquently explained geoeconomics in their book War by other means: Geoeconomics and statecraft. They have stated that the geoeconomic tools employed by states are related to international trade, investment frameworks, politics of sanctions, monetary plan, energy policy, financial aid, and cyber policies. Thus, geoeconomics according to Blackwill and Harris, is the integration of old and new economic tools. Financial aid, trade, and investment remained a crucial variable of economic pressure in the past as well, however, in contemporary era, energy security and cyber world has also been included in the geoeconomics framework.

The difference between geopolitics and geoeconomics is the way framework is applied. For instance, in geopolitics, which is often treated as an umbrella term for geo-economics and geostrategy, the ambitions are overt and aided by military means. The operational dynamics of geopolitics are confrontation. However, in geoeconomic framework, the ambitions are covert. Whereas the operational dynamics of geoeconomics are accommodating behaviour by the states. Similarly, in geopolitical setup, there is concept of centripetal forces, where threat perception is done keeping in view the anarchic international system, thus, balance of power remains the primary concern of the state actors. Geoeconomics on the other hand advocates for the centrifugal forces, where threat spectrum is at the minimum level, balance of power does not dictate the state's foreign policy. As a consequence of these difference, it is revealed that geoeconomics is a viable tool to pursue relative gains in the international system [67].

3.2 GEOECONOMICS AND RUSSIA

Russia's economy is dependent on the exploitation of hydrocarbon resources and exporting them to generate revenue. The World Bank estimated that such an export accounts for 46% of Gross Domestic Product of Russia. Breaking down this percentage, the oil and gas make around half of the total, whereas chemicals and metals are others.As shown by Hall [68]; states that during the first quarter of 2022, oil and gas stood at 21.7% of the total GDP of Russia. This was the highest ever number since 2017.

As shown by Sukhodolia [62]; has given an account of Russian geo-economics revolving around energy security. According to Sukhodolia, the Energy Strategy of the Russian Federation analyse the "foreign economic and policy threats to energy security [which] are partially realized through a number of foreign countries economic measures aimed at restricting access of Russian fuel and energy organizations to certain modern technologies and equipment, the possibility of attracting long-term financing, implementation of long-term financing projects with foreign partners, as well as through the termination of the joint operation of the energy systems of these states with the energy systems of Russia or changes in the technological and (or) economic conditions of such joint operation." [62].

As a part of official policy of the Russian Federation, Economic penetration was adopted as a tool of geoeconomics as early as 1992. For this economic penetration, the Russian state used specific tools such as "barter supply of resources, escape of investments by joint ventures, money laundering, criminal schemes, etc." [62].

More significantly, it was during this time that the Russian geoeconomic clout was seen expanding within the EU, especially in the CIS and Western European countries. The Russian influence was expanded with the host of techniques. For instance, huge Russian capital in the Western Banks, trade relations with the Western companies, cordial relations with the political factions within the EU, and hiring of specific lobbyists with soft corner for Moscow [62]. Meanwhile, as far as the Russian company Gazprom was concerned, it created a system of transitional companies, which were functioning in almost all states of the EU. These techniques provided significant economic advantage to the Moscow and their revenue from the oil and gas sector continued to increase at pace.

3.3 MONOPOLY OF RUSSIA IN ENERGY TRADE IN THE EU

Russia has the monopoly over energy trade in the EU, as a result of which, Russia is able to acquire soft power in the EU. Russia exercises this monopoly through its national company Gazprom [15]. The [25] argues that Gazprom extracts market concessions as well as asserts political influence for the Russian state in its energy dealings with the EU states. In doing so, Gazprom charges very high prices from the states with whom the Russian state is not on cordial terms [69].

The Russian monopoly in the energy sector can be established by the fact that post Russia-Ukraine 2022 conflict, Russia sold 100 billion dollars’ worth of gas to the EU. This is despite the rhetoric of EU leaders of diversification. However, speaking in terms of the figures in (Figure 3.1), Russian share has been reduced in first and second quarters of 2022, compared to the previous years. For instance, in first quarter of 2022, Russia’s percentage of natural gas imports by the EU stood at 30% and in the quarter two further declined to 22%. Interestingly, this figure was 39.7% in 2021. In 2020, the percentage was around 42%, meanwhile, in 2020, EU witnessed highest imports ever at 45.5% from Russia [73]. It can be said that after 2010, on average the EU imported 35 to 40% of its gas from Russia. This clearly shows the dependence of the EU on hydrocarbon resources of Russia. This situation in the EU gave Russia a leverage, which they utilised for more than a decade. A year by comparison since 2010 borrowed from the Statista is suffixed below to get an idea of the market share of Russia.

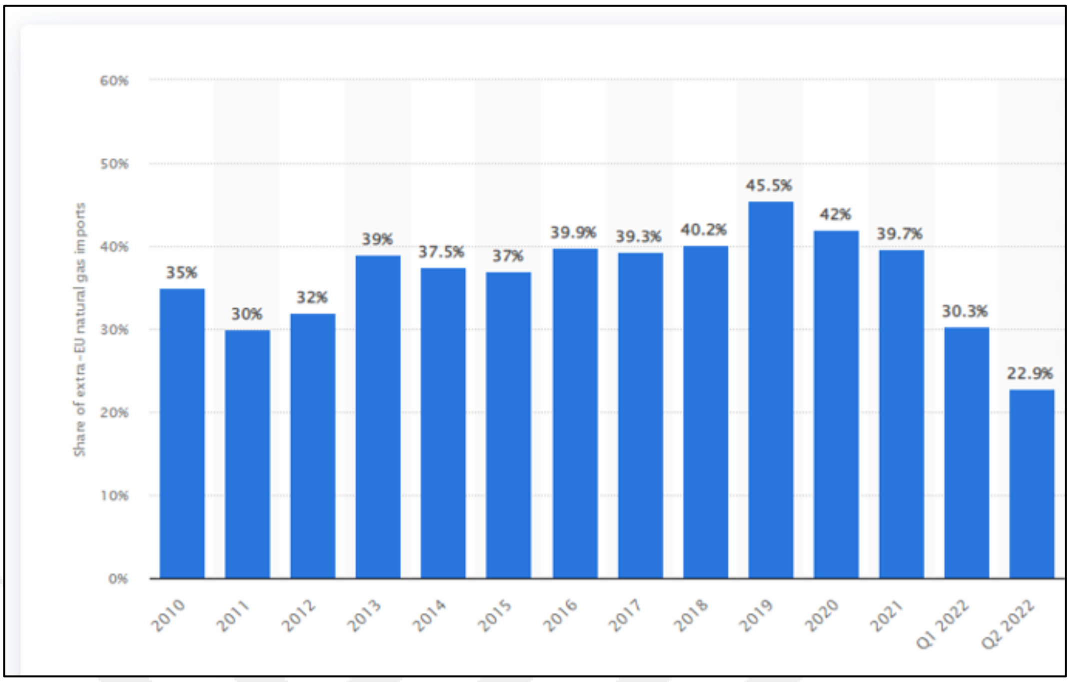

Figure 3.1: Natural Gas Percentage Imported from Russia.

It is further interesting to note that, Russia has played same price increase/decrease strategy with the EU that it had already played with Ukraine after the "Orange Revolution." That is to say that, even if the percentage share of energy imports from Russia have declined, Russia still has managed to earn more revenue compared to the years when Russia had high percentage share. This is because oil and gas prices have witnessed highest increase ever since 2015, ultimately benefitting energy exporters. In the (Figure 3.2) below, estimates by the IEA have been shown on average. These tell the revenue of Russia in billion dollars of 2022, and in the previous years on average. The figures indicate that Russian exports of oil and gas before 2022 touched only 50 billion dollars on average from March to July, whereas in winters the amount rose up to 60 billion dollars (IEA, 2022). However, it never went beyond that. Nonetheless, after the war in Ukraine the Russian export bill is approximately 100 billion dollars – even though the percentage of usage of Russian oil and gas has been reduced.

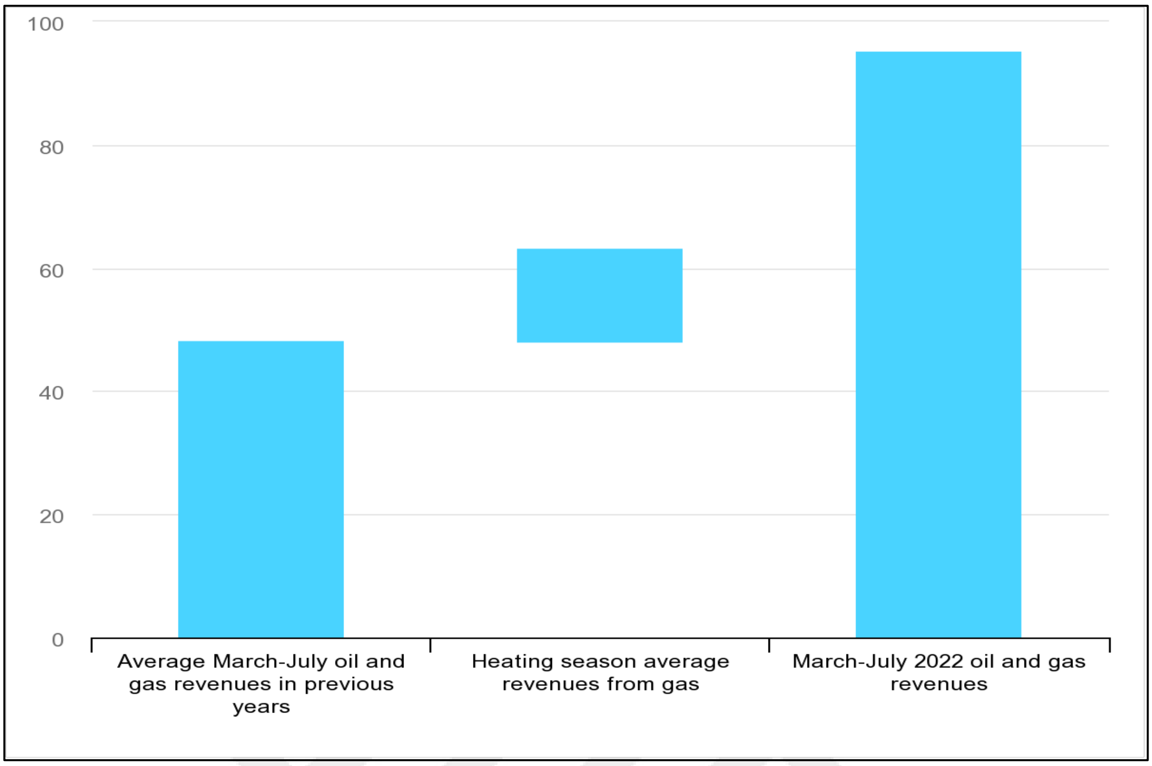

Figure 3.2: Russia's revenue from the EU (Oil & Gas) – Source: IEA

Economically, Gazprom still enjoys a manipulating power in the EU energy market through blackmail. This is happening despite many diversification methods introduced by the EU Energy Commission over the past decade, which are also discussed at length in the following paragraphs.

This monopolization of the energy trade was examined in detail by the Director General of European Commission's Competition Authority in the year 2012. The authority alleged that Gazprom exploit the EU's market in the following three ways: Firstly, the Gazprom prohibits its buyers from resale of its fossil fuels – thereby, discouraging the desired competition by the European Commission. Secondly, in Central and some of the Eastern EU states, the Gazprom charged very high rates from the consumers. Thirdly, while negotiating for the new routes of the gas pipelines, Gazprom offered differential prices to the states, which did not side with its geopolitical or geostrategic ambitions. Meanwhile, those states which agreed to Russian foreign policy objectives were given far less rates. For instance, states like

Poland or Bulgaria which are its neighbours are offered very high prices, even though the transports charges are not as high as well [69].

The [3] elaborated that, EU wanted to get out of this Russian energy monopoly after the Crimean annexation in 2014, in liberalizing and diversifying its energy sector. The EU as a unit believed that its cooperation in energy sector would force Russia to merge its strategic interests with that of the EU. However, Russia believed in multipolarity and sought to utilise its energy sector strategically to gain economic leverage. The [4] explain shift in Russian thinking to economy. According to them, during the cold war Soviet Union spread its influence through ideology, however, post-cold war Russia engages states through its economic might and use energy security as an economic tool of foreign policy.

So, how did Russia gain this economic leverage? [8] believes that mixed approaches by the individual EU states to energy market resulted in Russian monopoly and economic leverage. Thus, according to Turksen, Russia has an upper hand because of the bilateral agreements it has signed with member states. Because of these agreements, its policies do not get scrutinized by European Commission, that wants market liberalization.

More recently, [18] after the Russian invasion of Ukraine commented on the Germany's and France's dependence on Russian oil and gas. He criticized both states that they were short-sighted and could not properly analyse the Russian motives of annexation of Crimea in 2014. Bunde stated that not only did the Germans and French brokered Minsk II agreement in 2015, but Germans also agreed to Nord Stream 2 in 2015, which made them even more dependent on Russia. Therefore, in the current environment post Ukraine invasion, Germany cannot openly manoeuvre against Russia for fearing an economic collapse. [19] on the other hand focused on the Balkan region and Russian oligopolistic capture of the market, thereby turning into a regional hegemon, influencing the states in political decision making.

Interestingly, the International Energy Agency (IEA) has asked the EU to not widen the scale or initiate new ventures with the Gazprom. It suggested to branch out its energy complex, especially in the supply sector. With 40% of the EU gas directly coming from Russia and further 30% of crude oil also originating in Russia makes it difficult for the EU to fizzle out the Russian market monopoly. Thereby, Russians blackmail the EU states – because, the executors of Russian foreign policy understand the fact, that in the short term, Europe has no other alternate to their oil and gas. As explained above as well, there is limited infrastructure, and less resources of LNG available right now.

More recently, after the invasion of Ukraine and economic war between the EU and Russia, where the EU now wants to introduce price cap on the gas, the Gazprom has threatened to totally stop energy supplies to the EU. The CEO of the Gazprom, Alexei Miller, was of the opinion, that energy trade between the company and the EU does not require any sort of price cap. Therefore, if such a mechanism is introduced by the EU, it would be akin to breaking the contract. He stated that, "such a unilateral decision is definitely a violation of the essential contract terms, which will entail the suspension of supplies" [75].

As shown by Elliot [75]; also reported that the European Commission has been contemplating on the mechanism to fight prices of the gas within the EU as after the Ukraine war, prices have been increased exponentially. The European Commission thus hinted at the intervention from their side. It is unclear how the European Commission would reduce the prices, because Russia has completely halted supplies to the EU from the Nord Stream and Yamal-Europe pipelines. The Gazprom only supply gas to the EU through Sudzha point in Ukraine and via Turkstream.

The researchers in [21] believes that economic leverage argument of Russia with respect to energy supply is greatly exaggerated. According to him, if supplies to the EU are disrupted or suspended in case of any geopolitical conflict between the EU and Russia, directly or indirectly, the major blow this development would deliver to none other but the Russian economy itself. Thereby, this energy interdependence of the two sides would also act as a restraining variable in case the war between the two is eminent [21].

3.4 EAEU MARKET INTEGRATION AND TURKEY AS NEW RUSSIAN ENERGY HUB

In a recent held conference of the EAEU in Armenia, the member states focused on the need of integrated economy of the region. In doing so, the EAEU's internal market integration was the first step envisioned. Afterwards, the integration of the information system was stressed, followed by an analytical system where uniform analysis could be provided for the issues the EAEU were facing, especially in e-commerce. [59]

Geo-economically, Russia is interested in converting Turkey as an energy hub in Europe. The call for this was presented in Russian Energy Week (REW) forum by the Russian President, Putin. He was of the view that, Fourteen billion cubic metres of gas are in transit to Europe via TurkStream. Not a lot, but still something. We could move the lost volume of transit through the Nord Stream pipelines along the bottom of the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea region and thus make Turkiye the main route for the supply of our fuel, our natural gas to Europe and create a major gas hub for Europe in Turkiye, if, of course, our partners are interested in seeing this happen," Vladimir Putin said. Turkish Energy Minister Fatih Donmez said it was technically possible to implement the Russian President's idea and proposed starting negotiations on the technical and economic parts of the project [59].

Interestingly, in late October, the Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, agreed to the Russian proposals. While talking with the press, Erdogan stated that he had ordered the Turkish energy authorities to research on the possibilities of making Turkey an energy hub to transfer gas to the EU. Erdogan was also of the view that Turkish authorities were looking for a best possible location to form distribution centres, which are near to the EU as well as easy to manage. This development came after Erdogan had met Russian President in Uzbekistan in late October 2022. Erdogan also stated that both Russia and Turkey are not in mood of making the Europeans wait on energy supplies [76].

Erdogan also commented on the nature of hurdles in the energy trade between the EU and Russia. He was of the view that while there is issue between the Europeans and the Russians, however, no such issue existed between the Turks and the Europeans. Therefore, Turkey is ready to play its part and bridge the gap in trade of gas. He also commented that Turkey is a reliable partner of the EU, and that the EU can buy gas from it to meet its demands [77].

The Foreign Minister of Turkey, Mevlut Cavusoglu while talking with the media persons stated that, Turkey is looking into this matter very keenly and observing the nature of investments coming to the country for the project. He also stated that, the new project's scale would also be determined by the nature of demand and supply. Therefore, Turkey would see what amount of the gas the EU need to import from the gas hub of Turkey. He was also of the opinion that Turkey desired to see the EU coming out of this energy crisis, and for that matter Turkey was there to provide a helping hand. Because according to Cavusoglu, stability of energy market of the EU is in the best interests of the Turkey and its people, as they wanted to see the European people come out of this energy distress, especially in the winter season of 2023 [76].

However, not all analysts agree that the Turkish energy hub is a viable option, especially after the EU has made it clear that it is going to finish the energy trade with Russia. Jerusalem Post in its commentary revealed that it was a stunt of Erdogan for elections, and that it was not possible despite the high rhetoric in the Turkish media. Interestingly, just after the news broke about the Turkish energy hub, Elizabeth Rosenberg, the US's Assistant Secretary on Terrorist Financing and Financial Crime (TFFC) paid a visit to Ankara in late October and tried to dissuade the Turkish authorities from cooperating with Russia. Rosenberg discussed aspects of the economic sanctions, which the Turkish government and companies can face – provided they continue with the project [80]. An interesting take on these developments came from Maria Shangina, who is an expert on the Western sanctions at International Institute of Strategic Studies, who is of the view that the Turkish experimentation with the Russian gas can invite Western sanctions in a time when Turkey is already fighting the inflation [77].

In this regard, the statement from Ibrahim Kalin, the Turk President's spokesman is also important. His assertions are sceptical of the Jerusalem Post commentary and many other intellectuals and analysts of the EU-Russia relations. Kalin stated that, for instance, if the Russian gas is not deemed in demand by the Europeans, who else they will buy from? According to him, in that case, the Europeans would acquire gas from the Azerbaijan and Iran. And in both cases, the gas would have to reach Turkey and then be transported to the EU. So, according to Kalin, if situation gets to this, then accepting Turkey as a gas hub is in the interests of the EU, which must not be ignored. Then even if the gas is coming from the Russian Federation [77].

So, what are the prospects of the Turkish energy hub in the near future? Having seen the commentaries on the issue from multiple perspectives above, it seems that dissuading Turkey from the project is only a part of geopolitical framing. And it comes mostly from the US, that is not directly affected by the energy crisis in the EU. More importantly, it is interesting to find that even after the politics of sanctions and hard speeches against the Russian Federation, and talks of phasing out of Russian energy, the fact remains that the EU is still importing more than 20% of the Russian gas. Therefore, the current political rhetoric will remain limited to the rhetoric only, and it is highly likely that the EU will go with the imports from the Turkish energy hub backdoors and continue with the criticism of the Russians on media. This is because international system does not operate on emotions. Though emotions convey public opinion and is part of the dependent variable as propounded by the neoclassical realism theory. However, the independent variable of international system, as well as the intervening variable of the economic dynamics in shape of high inflation and acute energy crisis will force the parties, i.e., Russia and the EU to cooperate amidst the conflict in Ukraine. This is where lies the opportunity for Turkey to exploit the capitalism and remain relevant in the geoeconomics. Not only Turkey, these geoeconomic dynamics also help Russia to continue with its energy trade with the EU. This where the Russian diversification of the energy market also plays a crucial role.

3.5 GEOECONOMICS AND POLITICS OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS

At REW, the Russian deputy Prime Minister, Alexander Novak also spoke. He was of the view that, there was great uncertainty in the global oil market. That uncertainty was linked to the political discourse of the leaders in the West. As a consequence of which, the world is heading toward a global economic recession. It is because of this uncertainty that OPEC countries have decided to limit the oil production to 2 million barrels a day. Novak also lamented the EU's and other Western states sanctions against the oil producing nations. He argued that "oil sanctions have been introduced against Iran, Venezuela and Russia, which together account for over 20 percent of the world's daily oil consumption. What predictability can we speak about, if decisions are being taken against the countries that ensured the stability of the energy market?" [59].

It is worth mentioning that the REW was also attended by the CEO of Gazprom, Alexei Miller.

Miller warned the EU that acting against the Russian Federation on war footings and hurting it economically through sanctions would make the EU suffer more. Miller argued that it would impact the EU in gas sector not only in the wintertime of 2022, but also expectedly in 2023 and throughout 2024. Miller was of the opinion that, "European experts note that currently the European balance is short of 800 million cubic metres of gas a day; this is one-third of EU consumption in an abnormally cold weather." Miller further argued that the EU's usage of gas during cold time could be anywhere around 60 BCM – and the underground storage facilities which the EU champions and terms as an answer to Russian disruptions have the capacity of only 20 BCM.

Miller does not take seriously the EU's ability to store gas underground. Miller in this connection opines that, If Russia totally stops supplies to the EU – then the EU's underground facilities will only have 5% of the total gas left. With this equation in mind, the EU can survive only the current winter, however, there is no guarantee of gas in the winters of 2023 and 2024. And without the Russian gas, it is not going to have warm homes and offices. Miller further states that, "If there are five abnormally cold days at a stretch, entire cities and territories will freeze" [59].

3.6 EU-RUSSIA ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP

Immediately after the Russian offensive in Ukraine and the EU sanctions on Russian companies, The Deputy Prime Minister of Russia issued a detailed statement regarding the economic relationship between the EU and Russia. Novak argued that the EU's leaders' statements were irresponsible and could potentially harm the energy relations between the two. Novak criticized the EU's statements of gradually finishing the Russian energy imports. Novak opined that it was because of the EU's failed policies that there was a price hike in the energy sector. If such trend continued the world could witness per barrel of oil shoot up to 300 dollars, which has already touched to 133 US dollars [59].

Novak stated that Russia was accused of halting gas supplies from Ukraine, however, according to him, it rather increased supplies from Ukraine to 109 Million Cubic Meters (MCM). This is around 40 BCM of gas per day to the EU's consumers. Other than Ukraine, Yamal, Nord Stream, Turkish Stream, and Blue Stream were all functional. Novak also stated that irresponsible statements like discussed above and targeting Russian energy sector strategically could mean complete halt of the gas in future.

As far as the oil sector was concerned, Russia fulfilled 30% of EU's demand, which accounts for 150 million tonnes of oil out of 500 million tonnes each day. Meanwhile, Russia was also providing another 80 million tonnes of other petrochemical resources to the EU. These products according to Novak were cheapest for the EU – despite the fact, that Russia's partners were put under extreme pressure by the EU. Hurting Russian oil and gas sector means hurting the EU's own market as the EU cannot find replacement to Russian products, and that too in cheap prices. Russian Deputy Prime Minister even challenged the EU to stop imports from Russia. In that case, he was of the opinion that his country will reroute oil and gas to other regions.

3.7 RUSSIAN ENERGY MIX

As part of geo-economy, Russia is looking to expand its energy mix. This includes increased investment in LNG sector. This was revealed in Energy Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2035, a second such document. The previous one was introduced back in 2003, that had the scope till 2020. Globally, Russia is at no. 6 in LNG exports with the capacity of producing 28.9 million tonnes of LNG [72]. Interestingly, Russia's LNG exports to the EU have increased compared with the previous years. In October 2022, the Russian LNG export to the EU was at 13.2 million tonnes. This figure was recorded at 10.9 million tonnes the previous year. Within the EU - Netherlands, France and Belgium are among the significant states that are importing LNG from Russia [78]. In the (Figure 3.3) below, data from Robinson is borrowed showing growth of Russian LNG per month since August 2021.

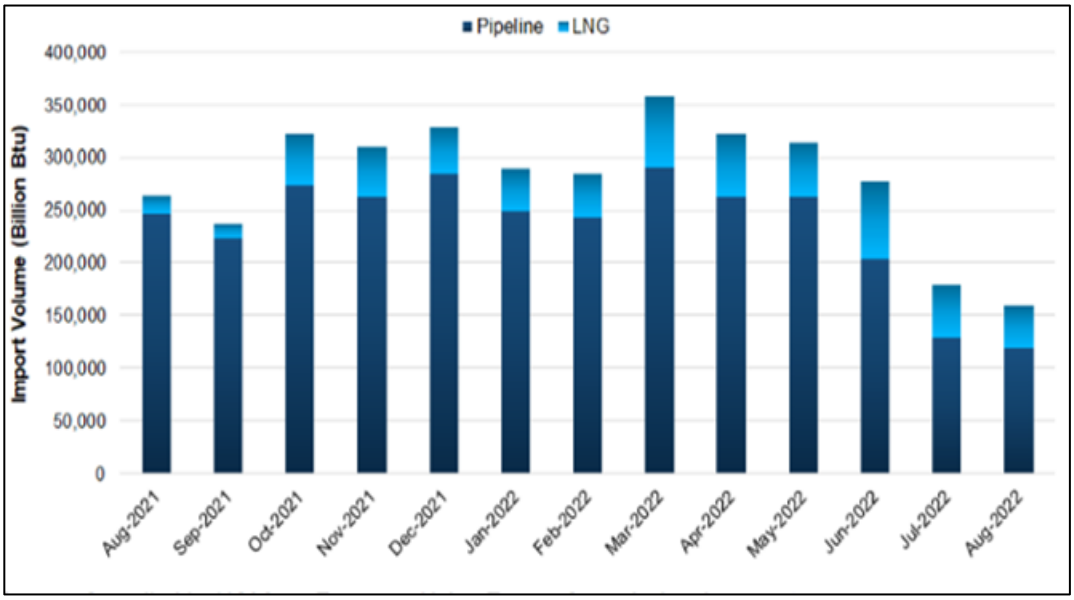

Figure 1.3: Russian export of LNG to EU. Source: Robinson [78].

To compete the EU LNG market, Russia is also planning to launch its own LNG infrastructure. The Deputy Prime Minister, Novak was of the view in June 2022, that Russia was planning to enhance its production of LNG from 30 million tonnes to 100 million tonnes. He also reiterated that world cannot sustain without the Russian oil and gas in near future. Criticizing the EU's go green policy, Novak commented that,

Today we are in a volatile situation. Over the year, prices for all energy resources have gone up: gas costs four times more on average, oil prices are up by 80 percent, and coal has more than doubled in price. Consumers bear significant costs. In this situation, the green agenda has faded noticeably; it's more like khaki now [59].

While it is true that gas prices have shot up exponentially in the EU since the start of war to approximately 372% - nonetheless, the phenomenon has brought with it bad news for Russia as well. That is, the imports of the Russian gas have been reduced to 9% as of October 2022 in the EU, which was around 40% in January 2022 [79].

Azerbhaijan, Algeria, and Qatar are ready to take the place of Russia in the EU energy market, and in fact, all these states have signed deals with the EU too. The cost of Ukraine war for Russian energy market can be gauged by the fact that it will lose 6.6 billion US dollars in tax collections per annum, provided the energy supply is completely halted to the EU – either way, by the EU or Russia itself [79].

So, what if hypothetically, the energy relations between the EU and Russia comes to a total standstill? What will Russia do alternatively? Russian plans are quite explicit in this regard. And more often openly expressed by its leaders as well. In such a scenario, Russia intends to sell gas to the Asian market, especially that of China and other Asian countries. The Siberian gas that currently is transported to the EU would be shifted to China, with which Russia has signed a deal for 30 years as well. In fact, in 2021, Russia exported almost 16 BCM of gas to China, which it plans to increase by a further 10 BCM next year [79].

In contrast to the energy trade of Russia with the EU, it is estimated that only in 2021, Russia supplied somewhere around 160 BCM to 200 BCM per day. Consequently, Gazprom earned a yearly revenue of around US dollars 120 billion. At the present moment, the gas supplies to Asia stand at 1/5th of the total supplies Russia provides to the EU. Thereby, Russia cannot earn a big profit from Asia as it used to earn from the EU. Moreover, there are no elaborate supply routes to pipeline infrastructure established to Asia by the Russian Federation at the moment. And it could potentially take time to bridge this gap arising out of no energy trade with the EU [79].

What does it mean for both the EU and Russia? The fall out of this geopolitical and geostrategic competition between the two powers would be not easy to resolve. It has costs for both regions. It is not like Russia would acquire the energy market elsewhere overnight, and the same is the case with the EU as well. If the Russian energy supply is designed for the EU, similar is the problem of the EU, which has to establish new routes and pipelines too. Therefore, the political and strategic rhetoric aside, the aspect of interdependence is difficult to ignore for the near future.

There is yet another problem for Russia that arises out of the EU's sanctions against the country. It is related to Russian collaboration with European firms in the energy sector. So, even if Russia plans to shift focus towards Russia, it requires the liquefaction of LNG. That technology is provided by firms based in the EU. As a consequence of the EU's economic sanctions, Russian exploitation of energy resources in Arctic and Sakhalin island have come to standstill [79].

So, because of this case scenario, Western intellectuals think that Putin in its bid to become Peter the Great. This has resultantly made Russia weaker by committing a blunder of invading Ukraine and thus undermining the energy trade with the EU altogether [79].

However, it is interesting to reflect on the assertions made by Depetris [79]. His argument that Western sanctions would fracture the Russian economy is greatly exaggerated. Thomas [61] has seen the politics of Western sanctions since 2014 on Russia. According to him, prior to the Russian offensive on Ukraine in February 2022, there were almost 2500 sanctions slapped on Russia. Post war, 7000 more sanctions have been introduced. However, these sanctions could not achieve the objective of hurting Russian economy per se. As Russian economy is hardly experiencing 5% of recession, which at the time of placing sanctions, was predicted to be 20% by analysts based in the EU.

As shown by Thomas [61]; is also of the view that while the EU's diversification programs sounded more of a theoretical phenomenon, Russia on the other hand was able to diversify its energy sector. Thomas referred to the enhancement of the Siberian gas pipeline that started transporting gas to China. It has also become Russia's biggest economic partner, a position, which was earlier held by Germany. Moreover, Thomas also cited examples of the Russian economy being sanctions proof. He stated that for instance, in 2014, Russia was imported 45% of the food, however, in 2022, it is self-sufficient. Similarly, Russian banks are also shock proof - as it remained stable in the wake of sanctions post Ukraine war. More importantly, Russian currency rather than devaluing gained further value against the US dollar post war.

This chapter concludes that geoeconomics is ignored in the analysis of Russian energy security doctrine, which in fact was part of the Russian official policy since late 1990s. The argument of scholars that Russia only employs politics in energy security is thus also akin to a limited understanding of the phenomenon of Russian energy security. This chapter has found that Russian energy security in the domain of geoeconomics is in line with the theory of neoclassical realism, even if the theory is not officially employed by the Russian state. However, the dynamics of relations among the EU and Russia have forced the Russian state to look for relative gains in the anarchic situation of international system. Thus, Russia has enhanced its energy mix, and worked on its economic relationship with the EU and other players in the EAEU region by employing offensive and defensive tactics. This assertive economic policy of the Russian Federation is also aimed at countering the economic sanctions the Western allies have imposed on it. Therefore, this assertiveness also helps the Russian state to keep its monopoly in the energy trade. It is expected that the mutual interdependence of the EU and Russia would continue in this geoeconomic realm despite the conflict in Ukraine and the political rhetoric of the EU leaders to ban all kinds of Russian gas imports.

4. EUROPEAN RESPONSE TO RUSSIA'S ENERGY HEGEMONY

This chapter takes into account the EU's response toward the Russian use of energy as a tool of foreign policy. Therefore, this chapter explains the variables like liberalization and regulations, diversification of the energy market, transition to renewable sources, and geopolitical tools that the EU has carried forward to protect its energy mix. However, before explaining the above-mentioned variables it is necessary to reflect upon the EU-Russia energy relationship historically and how the EU introduced various directives to protect its energy market succinctly.

The energy trade between the Russians and the EU started back in the second half of the Cold War. In the decade of 1980s, the Europeans started importing Siberian gas through the Trans-Siberian pipeline. This trade had the US reservation, but the EU leaders continued with the project. Similarly, this import of gas was not limited to Western Europeans, in fact, even the Central Europeans and the Eastern Europeans erected gas pipeline infrastructure under the Soviets. As a result of this development, the energy import from Russia reached 40% of the total energy imports of the EU states. Central and Eastern Europeans are more reliant on Russian gas. Meanwhile, the highest amount of gas imports is done by Germany with 50% of total energy imports from Russia. [28], [21] [23].

As Russia had a monopoly over the supply of oil and gas to the EU – therefore, the EU desired to liberalize its market to encourage competition. Thus, First Electricity Directive and First Gas Directives were introduced in the second half of the 1990s. These directives were replaced with the Second Energy Package in 2003. Nonetheless, despite these packages, Russia remained as a manipulator in the oil and gas sector. The reason behind that was individual states responsible for the energy regulations. As a consequence, Russia would often disrupt the supplies to the EU. For instance, it was witnessed in 2006 and 2009 that Russia stopped gas to the EU passing through Ukraine. Thus, the EU decided to introduce further reforms in liberalizing of its market. In this regard, the EU launched Third Energy Package (TEP) in 2009 [81].

TEP introduced new rules that were designed to integrate the market. TEP also provided for European Network of Transmission System Operators that was tasked to collaborate with National Regulatory Authorities within the EU. The prominent feature of the TEP are unbundling, where the transmission network owner can only act as its operator through independent system operator, which is not part of the company. Unbundling was not limited to transmission but distribution as well. Similarly, as far as gas storage was concerned, the TEP provided for the access to third parties as well. Here too unbundling was required of the storage system operators. The TEP has also third country clause, which is directed against the Russian company Gazprom. This is introduced so that it is not able to manipulate the energy market of the EU. Therefore, even third country companies must also practice unbundling within the EU. [81]

4.1 LIBERALISATION AND REGULATIONS

The EU has focused on the energy trade from the prism of liberal lens of the market. Therefore, it requires of the energy companies to follow laws of the Energy Commission, which are competition oriented. This competition among the companies ensures consumers interests, who do not prefer fluctuations in the prices. Moreover, the liberal lens also ensures the EU to secure supply of energy. The EU regulatory framework and market orientation basically decides the energy relations between the EU and Russia, even if there are geopolitical agendas at play. The EU was able to reduce the monopoly of Gazprom up to some extent because of these regulations, thereby, Gazprom was influenced in new pipeline projects following the EU's regulations. Even during the decade of Ukraine crises both internally and externally with Russia – the relationship between the EU and Russia did not experience any interruptions with the energy supplies [20].

Many authors before the Russian invasion of Ukraine believed that this energy relationship between the EU and Russia would remain of mutual dependence for at least some time in the near future [21]. The major factor they cited is also market contracts between Gazprom and the EU companies – who have signed deals until 2030. Termination of these deals invite major fines for both sides [20].

Nonetheless, for liberalising the energy market of the EU, the Energy Commission give value to quality of energy supplies and fair price, that is agreeable by not only energy companies within the EU but also household consumers. Furthermore, the quality and pricing of gas is complemented by the fact that its infrastructure such as pipelines and transit routes are secured. And additionally, the gas that arrives in the EU must also be compatible with the household and industrial equipment used in the EU [22].

However, there always remain an uncertainty in following liberal lens in letter and spirit because of geopolitical tensions. Since 2014, the EU has trust issues with the Russians – thereby, it has securitized the external energy trade. In this regard, the EU is also looking passionately at other avenues of energy, especially Caspian region [20].

As a significant example of the EU regulations. It has introduced the Energy Community Treaty, the goal of which is "to extend the EU internal energy market rules and principles to countries in Southeast Europe, the Black Sea region and beyond on the basis of a legally binding framework" [23]. Just before the war in Ukraine, it was evident from the energy relations of the EU and Russia that various methods of power were adopted by both sides. For instance, the EU carried forward the agenda of regulations as well as geopolitics. Meanwhile, the Gazprom was also not following the EU's regulations but also using them to its own benefit, which was witnessed in the dealings of Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) [20].

4.2 DIVERSIFICATION OF THE ENERGY MARKET

The EU has even planned for diversification of pipelines because of the crises in Ukraine since 2014 [22]. If the EU is able to diversify its energy infrastructure, established new LNG terminals, utilised its own shale gas, and invested in the renewable energy – the impacts on Russia would be drastic. It will potentially lose the European market. Thus, depending on China. To solve this diversification puzzle, at the present moment, the major priority of the EU after the Russian invasion of Ukraine is to introduce new suppliers into the energy mix – which is also a geopolitically influenced move. At the foreign policy level, this move of the EU has implications for the market (where liberalisation is preferred), consumers (where prices are regularized), and for third parties (where access is provided to the gas pipeline). Thus, these steps can reduce the Russian strategic influence in the EU to a large extent [23].

It has been witnessed that Gazprom had to lower its prices in some of the Baltic and Central European states when diversification of energy was achieved. For instance, in Northwest Europe, there is a competition between the energy companies, thus the prices are lower too

– eventually benefitting the consumers. The competitors are companies such as British Petroleum, the Norwegian Equinor, the Dutch Essent, and the LNG terminals. Therefore, the Gazprom prices are not high as well [82]. The advantage of diversification of energy sources have pressured the Gazprom in the region to set their prices according to the market rate [69].

For instance, in Lithuania, that has developed its own Floating Regasification Unit, has enabled it to diversify its market, and reduce its reliance on Russian gas. As soon as the Lithuanian government signed the contract with Norway to bring in LNG to the country, there was evident reduction in prices from the Gazprom. Nonetheless, Lithuanian example has proved so much successful that it started exporting gas to other Baltic states and Central European states [69].

With this example in mind, the EU is aspiring to further diversify its energy sector – especially when LNG has shown its remarkable potential. Furthermore, the EU is also pondering on the concept of Energy Union. This union is meant to connect north and south of Europe, so that price parity could be established between all regions of the EU apart from the cost arising on transport. This strategy also helps the EU in energy security. Thus, resources have been allocated for varying projects like, interconnector pipeline, gas storage houses, LNG regasification. Furthermore, gas hubs are also encouraged within the EU for more competition [69].

In the Eastern Europe, Ukraine lagged behind in energy security despite the fact that it had inherited a large number of nuclear reactors from the Soviet era. Furthermore, Ukraine's national energy assets are also not efficiently used. Oil is not explored. Gas is mostly imported. Meanwhile, coal areas are under the occupation of Russia, especially the Donbas region. According to the EU–Ukraine Association Agreement, the energy cooperation between the two is related to greater energy security, which is affordable as well as sustainable, and also stimulate economic growth. This would eventually integrate the whole energy market of the EU [26].

This was envisioned to merge the technical prowess of the EU with the capability of Ukrainian infrastructure of gas storage. Thus, creating a major energy hub in the Eastern Europe, that would secure threats to the energy security of the EU. Ukraine astutely followed that agenda of integration of its own energy security with that of the EU. In this regard, on June 28, 2017, Ukraine officially became part of ENTSO-E – which would export almost 20 billion kilowatts of Ukrainian electricity to the EU. [26]

Nonetheless, there is barrier in achieving Ukrainian energy integration with the EU. That is Nord Stream 2. According to Chumak and Prokip [26], Nord Stream 2 will bring negative consequences for the diversity in energy market sought by the EU. Furthermore, it will further entrench the EU energy security with geopolitics as the Russian strategy would not liberalise. However, as shown by Chumak and Prokip [26]; interpreted that no matter what the conditions in future may entail, the gas flows from Ukraine would continue to the EU. And if added with export of Ukrainian electricity, the state could transform itself into an energy hub.

It was for this reason that the then President of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko, in 2018 criticized Nord Stream 2 in Brussels. Because the Ukrainians perceived that Nord Stream 2 was initiated for the reasons that after expiry of 2020 transit agreements with Ukraine, Russia had no plans to use Ukrainian territory for gas supply to the EU. Poroshenko termed the Nord Stream 2 pipeline as “the Trojan horse for European security” which is also a “political project against Ukraine” having no just economic grounds.

The process of diversification is widely debated and pursued not only by EU Energy Commission but also by the academicians mentioned here. However, there is a significant variable, which has been ignored by most – and that is cost of the diversification. Surwillo and Slakaityte examine this aspect in detail in their work. According to them, oil can reach the EU through sea routes – however, even that would need critical infrastructure, which is not erected in the EU at the moment. Similarly, it is also costly, and so far, no resource allocation has been witnessed by the individual states or the European Commission.

4.3 TRANSITION TO RENEWABLE ENERGY

As shown by Bros, Mitrova, and Westphal [17]; regarding the EU’s response to energy security are of the view that, “the question is no longer only about the creation of an internal market, but also about its relationship with Russia. Politics seem to predetermine legal, regulatory, and economic considerations.” After Russo-Ukraine war of 2022, the aim of the

EU energy strategy is transitioning to renewable energy resources in the long run, ending dependence on the Russian energy in the short term, and finding alternate avenues of hydrocarbons for the short term. Thus, ending Russia's use of energy resources as an economic and strategic weapon [23].

The energy crisis in the EU can lead to social crisis and eventually political crises. Because energy security is not only a collective concern of the EU but also an individual state concern. Moreover, Europe as a collective unit as well as individual states have started contemplating on "acceleration of energy transition." to renewable sources of energy. However, at present, there is no certainty about the possible manifestation of the above two ideals [24].

Within the EU, Germany has "accelerated the energy transition model", which means that instead of 2050 deadline of complete shift to renewable energy, German state is contemplating to achieve this goal by 2035. Thus, shift could be seen from centralization to decentralisation in energy sector. However, this shift is linked with many variables. For instance, to what extent an individual state is dependent on fossil fuel, how long the Russo-Ukraine war lasts, and what would be the nature of global geo-politics. Because energy transition at the global level would need all stake holders on board [24].

4.4 GEOPOLITICAL AND GEOSTRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE EU ENERGY RESPONSE

The energy regulations of the EU are in fact intended to counterbalance the Russians in geostrategic arena, as well as geopolitically influencing the neighbours of the EU, especially the CIS. As per Ferguson and Hast in [27]; "concerns about spheres of influence are at the centre of a rising Western anxiety over Russia's political policies and objectives."

Geo-strategically, the EU energy strategy is aimed at limiting the Russian hegemony not only in the NATO areas but also in those zones of Eurasia where NATO is not mandated. Furthermore, this strategy has also the backing of the US. In fact, it is a well-documented doctrine of the US evident in Countering Russian Influence in Europe and Eurasia Act, where it is stated that "it is the policy of the United States … to assist in promoting reform in regulatory oversight and operations in Ukraine's energy sector." To oversee this policy of the US, USAID also formed the Energy Security Project in "assist[ing] the Government of Ukraine to integrate into European energy markets by helping key government agencies and the energy regulator to meet EU 'energy…requirements, including the Third Energy Package." [23].

[23] has revealed that, the EU influences the neighbouring states to follow its regulations on energy – thereby, initiating a "regulatory imperialism" which is aimed at achieving strategic goals. Other than the regulatory mechanism, another geopolitical tool the EU employs is diversification of energy supply routes to the EU [20]. Within the foreign policy framework of the EU, the embracing of "traditional aspects of geopolitics," and further blending it with the marketing of European values, has been termed as a "hybrid approach to geopolitics" [23].

As an impact of war in Ukraine, energy security of the EU is transitioned into national energy security, that is to say it has been securitized. Therefore, geopolitical, and geostrategic elements have gained a rapid pace. As a consequence, this narrative of national security will potentially take to back-burner the global issues of climate change. Because, to consolidate energy security and diversify supplies, the EU will have to take drastic steps in enhanced supply of energy. In the words of Zuk and Zuk [24], "energy policy would be subordinated to the political, military, and economic goals of the state." Furthermore, Zuk and Zuk also believe that right wing forces in the EU would further politicize the energy crisis and bring the debate of use of coal and other fossil fuel to table.

As a geostrategic pressure tactics post invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the EU as of now has abandoned the Nord Stream 2 pipeline – even though the infrastructure is completed. Similarly, the EU is also set to revise its complete energy policy with the Russians. Nonetheless, this complete policy change is dubbed as a difficult task. Because it has a lot of variables to address. For instance, the aspect of climate change has to be taken to task as well, which the EU wants to address.

Geo-strategically, the EU states are highly focused on energy security. For the European energy security, risks are divided into two categories: one, internal; and two, external. As far as the evaluation of internal and external threats to energy sector of the EU is concerned, provide a detailed explanation. On internal risks, they argue that they are directly linked with economic and political dynamics of the individual states. And along with it, how much energy is in the demand, how are the technical capabilities of the energy sector utilised in providing better service to consumers. Furthermore, internal threats are also assessed keeping in view the level of investment in the energy sector, upgradation of energy facilities, sustainable innovations, availability to the industry, as well as their smooth functioning without the influence of geopolitics. [22]

Similarly, if seen externally, the primary threats here too are of political and economic nature. It is important in this regard that foreign actors through their organizations can interfere or influence operations of the economy. Thus, as far as the energy security of the EU is concerned, the major external threat in this connection is that it has aspects of politics associated with it. Thereby, also bringing the fluctuations in the energy market, and thus impacting the stability of the energy market

It is important to mention here that, the over dependence of the EU on imports of the energy products is also because of its reliance on the US in geostrategic matters. The EU leaders have traditionally sought a strategic autonomy in political decision making. For instance, in 1950, the French leader Charles de Gaulle spoke of "strategic autonomy." It was only in 2016, that energy sector was securitized in the EU, and thus this term gained currency again [28]. The EU leaders as early as 2016, started desiring strategic autonomy in this sector with the pronunciation of EU Global Strategy. Although, EU is a net importer of oil and gas products and its desire of energy autonomy seems less plausible – however, the key is not relying on a single source in this regard [28].

For instance, in 2017, the US asked for sanctioning the companies within EU that were working in collaboration with Gazprom on Nord Stream 2 [29]. Then, Germany and a few other EU states, rejected the US demands and termed them interference in their internal matters. It was perceived in Germany that the US was promoting its LNG instead by demanding such sanctions and depriving the state of securing cheap gas from the Russians [29]. Nonetheless, in late 2019, President Donald Trump sanctioned Gazprom and demanded to abandon Nord Stream 2. Thus, intimidating the Wintershall and Uniper from Germany, ENGIE from France, and Austrain company OMV from operations. The was akin to interfering in the liberal market orientation of the EU, which took it as a geostrategic interference by the US in their trade interests [28].

On October 19, 2022, the EU leaders met in Prague to discuss the situation after the war in Ukraine. In a speech by Oliver Várhelyi, the EU's Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, he raised the following key issues with regard to the geopolitical situation after the Russian adventure.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine was particularly raised by the leaders as a direct attack on the European and global order. It is also a frontal assault on the basic tenets of the post-Cold War European and international security order that Russia has signed up to itself. Hence a fundamental question: on what principles can we best organise the political and security order of Europe? For the foreseeable future, it is impossible to conceive a new security order or 'peace architecture' in Europe of which Russia would be an integral part. Russia remains a geographical neighbour and a member of the international system – but right now, we have to build a European security order without the Kremlin. In Prague, the European leaders sent a strong signal directed not only to Russia but also to the rest of the world about Europe's sincerity with regard to defending rules-based multilateral order as enshrined in the UN Charter, and against the backdrop of Russia's weaponization of energy and food that is affecting the global economy. The Prague meeting represented the need for common resolve and action underpinned by a broader and longer-term strategic approach among Europeans [83].

The EU has responded against the Russian invasion of Ukraine through economic sanctions. The geopolitical and geostrategic ambitions of Russia are countered by the clever use of geo-economics by the EU. However, does it provide any useful counterbalance against the Russian Federation? The answer to this question lies in the sustainability of the efforts being made by the EU. Just like the CEO of the Gazprom, Alexei Miller has already pointed out, and as mentioned in chapter 3 of this dissertation that the EU cannot sustain for long without the Russian gas is a significant variable to ponder on. Because, so far, the Azerbaijani, the Qatari, and the Algerian gas to the EU has yet to arrive and consolidate the supply side of the energy trade.

4.5 THE EU RESPONSE TO RUSSIA’S ENERGY BLACKMAIL AFTER THE UKRAINE WAR, 2022

4.5.1 REPowerEU

Immediately after the war in Ukraine, the EU leaders have started looking for alternative energy sources, that can eliminate the EU’s dependency on the Russian energy. In fact, the leaders of the EU have come up with a working plan as well, known as REPowerEU. This plan has the potential to tackle the high rates of the energy products within the EU and make energy available for the consumers in the coming winters. The high prices of gas within the EU is being experienced for some time now – however, the uncertainty is still there and the EU member states require immediate response. Therefore, in this regard, REPowerEU is all set to work towards the diversification of energy, accelerate the transition to renewables, and look out for alternatives of gas in making electricity. Thus, if applied properly, this framework can reduce the EU’s dependence on the Russian energy significantly [84]. In light of the REPowerEU plan, the statements from the EU leaders are crucial to understand, which are highlighted below. The first significant statement in this regard came from the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, who was of the view that,

We must become independent from Russian oil, coal and gas. We simply cannot rely on a supplier who explicitly threatens us. We need to act now to mitigate the impact of rising energy prices, diversify our gas supply for next winter and accelerate the clean energy transition. The quicker we switch to renewables and hydrogen, combined with more energy efficiency, the quicker we will be truly independent and master our energy system. I will be discussing the Commission's ideas with European leaders at Versailles later this week, and then working to swiftly implement them with my team [84].

Similarly, the Commissioner for the Energy Commission, Kadri Simson opined on the Russian aggression that,

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has aggravated the security of supply situation and driven energy prices to unprecedented levels. For the remaining weeks of this winter, Europe has sufficient amounts of gas, but we need to replenish our reserves urgently for next year. The Commission will therefore propose that by 1 October, gas storage in the EU has to be filled up to at least 90%. We have also outlined price regulation, state aid and tax measures to protect European households and businesses against the impact of the exceptionally high prices [84].

Meanwhile, Frans Timmermans, who is also the Executive Vice-President on the European Green Deal, argued that,

It is time we tackle our vulnerabilities and rapidly become more independent in our energy choices. Let's dash into renewable energy at lightning speed. Renewables are a cheap, clean, and potentially endless source of energy and instead of funding the fossil fuel industry elsewhere, they create jobs here. Putin's war in Ukraine demonstrates the urgency of accelerating our clean energy transition [84].

So, how exactly the REPowerEU is intended to work out? According to the European Commission, finishing the energy imports from Russia can be achieved prior to 2030. However, in doing so, the EU states must totally adopt the REPowerEU plan. This will have positive impacts on the European energy system. It will drive the EU's energy system towards two tier mechanism: 1. Achieving diversification by utilising the LNG from non-Russian sources, as well as focusing on the biomethance sources; 2. Quickly turning to the renewable sources of energy throughout the EU – whether domestic or enterprise level [84]. Furthermore, the idea of "Fit for 55" would also lessen the use of hydrocarbon resources within the EU by 30% - which is almost 100 BCM of gas. Interestingly, the European Commission has projected that if REPowerEU is operationalized properly, it has the ability to replace the 155BCM of hydrocarbons the EU imported from the Russia in the previous year. It is also argued that approximately 2/3 of the replacement can be achieved only within the next year [84].

4.5.2 EU-Ukraine Energy Integration

It is interesting to note that, even after the Russian aggression on Ukraine since February 2022, the EU's plans to include Ukraine in the EU's energy mix and treat it as an energy hub continued. The EU still is on its way to merge the Ukrainian electricity grid with that of the EU. In this connection, the meeting of the European Commission with Ukrainian Energy

Minister in July 2022 is too significant. On this occasion, the Commissioner of the European Energy Commission, Simsons asserted that,

Our support in the energy sector focuses on making sure that Ukraine's electricity and gas systems remain operational. The fact that electricity and gas have continued to flow shows the extraordinary determination and commitment of those who work in the Ukrainian energy sector. Together, we managed to synchronise Ukraine and Moldova to the European grid in record speed in March. This was a historic and symbolic moment. I will continue to support taking the next steps towards full-scale electricity trade with Ukraine [85].

The commercial trade of electricity between the EU and Eastern European states like Romania and Slovakia have already started by July 2022. This was almost a 100-Megawatt trade between the two partners. Nonetheless, the ENTSO-E is about to double the trade by the end of this year. Ukraine is a significant partner of the EU in electricity trade, and continuation of this trade would compensate the damages it has incurred during the war with Russia. Similarly, this would also benefit the EU, who would get cheap electricity, especially in such times of energy crises. More significantly, it would also reduce the dependence on Russian energy products [85].

Simsons was also of the view that,

Ukraine, together with Moldova and Georgia, will be able to benefit from future common purchases of gas, LNG and hydrogen. With the gas TSOs in neighbouring Member States, we have helped secure increased reverse flows between the EU and Ukraine until the end of the year. And we are ready to facilitate their extension. Ukraine has the largest gas storage capacity in Europe – it is in our joint interest to have it used for our security of supply. The same goes for implementing the new EU rules on gas storage to be incorporated in the Energy Community very soon. We are also assisting Ukraine on the ground. Damaged energy equipment is repaired by channelling specialised equipment from Member States via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. Items that Members States cannot deliver are procured via the Energy Support Fund for Ukraine established by the Energy Community. In addition to this, we have been working with the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group as well as the International Atomic Energy Agency to ensure nuclear safety in the country. This remains a priority and we should not forget Russia's reckless behaviour in this regard, in violation of international law. It is extremely impressive not only that Ukraine has managed to keep its energy system running throughout the war, but they have also been making progress towards a more modern, more sustainable energy sector [85].

For 2022, the Presidency of the Energy Community rests with Ukraine. The entire community is committed to fulfil their promises on achieving the energy targets of year 2030. Furthermore, the Energy Community also agrees on completing the remaining lacunas in the legislations to totally integrate the members of the Energy Community with the energy market of the EU. Despite the Russo-Ukraine war, the energy talks between the EU and Ukraine continued throughout September to achieve the much-desired integration of both markets. This integration of Ukraine with European market will open wide arena for Ukraine in the energy trade as well as other businesses across the EU. Furthermore, the EU is also committed to rebuild Ukraine after the war. The head of the European Energy Commission was confident that ending energy trade with Russia was in the interests of both Ukraine and the EU. As it will usher the two sides into a sustainable energy system, which will be future and shock proof both [85].

The EU states have agreed in principle to totally finish the energy trade with the Russian Federation in the long term. They have decided this after the Russian aggression against the state of Ukraine. This unanimous decision came in the meeting of the European Council held on May 30-31, 2022, in Versailles, France. Thereby, according to the meeting, the members decided to immediately ban around 90% of the petroleum products from Russia by the year end. Thus, leaving only 10% of the crude oil to be allowed from the Russian Federation being supplied through the current pipeline infrastructure [86].

According to the declaration made in Versailles on May 31, 2022, the European Council concluded that,

The working of the REPowerEU was agreed by all the members of the EU in Versailles declaration. During the meeting of the EU leaders, they also oversee the progress on the plans of finishing Russian gas. For that matter, they agreed on monitoring the energy mixes, and other dynamics to speed up the process. The EU leaders on the occasion argued for, Diversification of supply sources and routes, and securing energy supply at affordable prices. In this respect, leaders encouraged the prompt use, ahead of next winter, of the EU energy purchase platform; invited the Commission to explore ways to curb rising energy prices, including the feasibility of introducing temporary price caps; invited the Council to take work forward on the EU external energy engagement strategy; and noted the importance of indigenous energy sources for the security of supply [86].

The EU leaders also agreed on speeding up the process to renewable energy, which requires speeding up of the licencing as well. So that a proper supply chain mechanism as well as capacity of the companies could be built involved in the innovation. Moreover, it was also stressed on the occasion that the the entire EU would be interconnected in future energy programs so that all members are having shared interests and shared projects. As a consequence of this approach, the EU in future would be having a shock proof energy mix without the dependence of outsiders [86].Thus, the European Council advised the members to immediately start financing the REPowerEU project so that it can deliver in time. The meeting also agreed upon to guard member interests in case of following bilateral energy programs – thereby securing the interests of the entire bloc [86].

The European Council has taken action on the advice prepared by the EU Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER). Consequently, it has asked the European Commission to reform electricity market so as to make it prepared for the emergency looming around [86]. According to the European Council, in current circumstances, the key for the EU states is to act together in harmony and defeat the crises pertaining to energy. This way all members would prepare a sustainable response towards the crises. In this connection, the European Council advises the member states to buy energy together as a bloc rather than going bilaterally with individual companies. This way, the EU would also be able to mitigate the impacts on the smaller and weaker nations of the bloc who are impacted the most by the Russian disruptions [87].

As specific goals to address the energy crisis in the EU, following response mechanism is prepared by the EU,

a. guarantee inexpensive and reasonable energy for customers.
b. enhancement of energy security as well as vigilance in emergency situations.

c. boosting the energy capacity of the EU.

To achieve the above dream, following aims have been set by the EU members,

a. slashing energy expenses of domestic users/SMEs.
b. lowering EU's energy needs.
c. ensuring energy supplies.
d. hastening the transition to renewable energy.

4.5.3 Cutting The Cost Of The Energy On Consumers

Inflation complemented by the energy crisis have given deep cuts to the pockets of consumers in the EU. This is not only limited to domestic houses only, but the small companies are also impacted by the crisis. Thus, the EU has responded by taking emergency measures. The new laws were enacted by the EU in October 2022 to tackle the high prices of energy. The new rules are based on the following variables as explained by European Council:

a. Dropping electrical energy use
b. Limiting profits of electricity manufacturers
c. Obtaining a unity donation through fossil fuel companies

The advantage of these rules is that with the less use of electricity, the prices would automatically come down as well as also have a positive impact on the monthly bills of the consumers. The plan is to minimize the use of power in peak hours. The EU member states claim that they can cut this use by 5%. This will also lessen the demand of gas, which is required in generating electricity [88]. Furthermore, these new regulations will also let the member states to gather funds which are surplus in the power sector. These funds would then be reallocated to the weak sections of society, giving much needed financial support to them. However, it is pertinent to mention here that these new regulations are not long term and are only intended for emergency purposes, especially during the winters of 2022 and 2023 [88].

4.5.4 Gas Storage

To mitigate the energy crisis in the EU, the European Council has taken significant measures so far to ward of the Russian blackmail from the member states. These measures are as following:

a. To ensure supply of natural gas for season of winter
b. Reduce the demand across the bloc

For achieving the above task, the European Council by the end of June 2022, introduced new set of regulations – that delineated the protocol of storing the natural gas. Thereby, all storage centres must remain full before winter. Meanwhile, all underground storage centres shall have 80% of gas by November 1, 2022. Similarly, in the winters of 2023, this percentage must go up to 90% [88].

According to the regulations, the EU is eying for creating an environment of unity throughout the region, which would help all member states of the EU, even if they don't have the gas storage arrangement of their own. Thus, those states not having facility would be supported by those who have facilities to store almost 15% of their gas. Moreover, to avoid any external hazard to the facilities, the regulations provide for attainment of necessary certification. Following this regulation, by the mid of October 2022, majority states of the EU stored the desired volume of natural gas [88]. Significantly, the EU states are also eying for signing a contract on European Green Deal to reduce carbon emissions by 0% till the year 2050. To achieve this goal, the EU needs to totally reform its energy system by transitioning to the renewables. In this regard, the EU states principally agreed to a "Fit for 55 package" in June 2022, which is making the European Green Deal as a law of the EU. Thus, according to the new law, when passed would accelerate the EU's transition to the renewable energy [88].

More recently, on November 1, 2022, Kadri Simsons visited Ukrainian capital Kyiv to assess the damages to its energy infrastructure by the bombardment of Russian air force. He reiterated his earlier position on the behalf of the EU leaders that the EU would help rebuild the Ukrainian energy infrastructure. He also met with the Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelensky. And both leaders reached the conclusion that approximately, 30% of the Ukrainian energy infrastructure got affected because of the aerial bombardments. Simsons was of the view after the assessing the damage that it was a deliberate attempt of the Russians just before the winter season to make people of the Ukraine as well as that of the EU suffer because of the energy crisis [89].

While there are talks of diversification of energy supplies from different sources within the EU to reduce dependence. However, as discussed in many places in this chapter, the infrastructure to these plans is non-existent. Thus, what the EU is left with is to seek help from the trusted partners in the energy trade. One such partner is Norway, that has covered the 20% needs of the EU's gas supplies [90].

In this connection, the Norwegian Energy and Petroleum Minister, Andreas Bjelland Eriksen recently made revealing statements. According to Erikson, the Russian aggression has totally changed the dynamics of the energy trade in the EU. And things have shifted from the traditional energy landscape, which would remain so in the long run as well. It is significant to remember that post Russo-Ukraine war, Norway gas companies have proved to be a lifeline for the EU's energy needs. Thereby, increasing the annual production of gas by 8% more than traditionally it was producing. In the changed geopolitical dynamics, Erikson was of the view that the EU had no other options but to ramp up its energy trade with Norway [90].

It is also interesting to note that the gas revenues for Norway are also expected to increase to 90 billion Euros this year compared to 62 billion Euros the previous year. This revenue is good for the Norwegian government, however, at the same time it also put pressure on the EU's consumers, who are being helped by the EU by provision of social safety packages. The EU has requested the Norwegian government to keep the prices of gas less, and if possible, introduce the price caping so that in times of distress, the gas is purchased on low prices than the market rates [90].

However, there is a problem for Norway in this regard. Erikson states that since the energy companies in Norway are private entities thereby, profit is a key for them – even if it is minimal. In the event of selling gas below the market price, there is a high possibility that gas could be bought by the outside entities. This would take the EU to a similar situation which caused the price hike in the first place, because there is not enough energy in the system. Erikson also stated that there would be another problem in reducing the prices, and that is related to high consumption of the energy products because it would be available in cheap rates. Thereby, rather than eradicating the problem, the price cap would sustain the crisis, which is not in the interest of the EU. This fact was also propounded by the Norwegian Prime Minister, Jonas Gahr Støre in early September 2022, who stated that price caping would only worsen the situation of energy crisis in the EU. Given these circumstances, Erikson advised that the EU needed long term planning rather than short term fixes. And for that matter, Norway was ready to play its constructive role so as to appear a trustworthy partner of the EU, that it is [90].

4.5.5 Division Within The EU On Energy Crisis After Russo-Ukraine War

This energy crisis in the EU is a test of patience of the EU leaders as well as the populace. Furthermore, it is also a test of traditional European solidarity. Russian occupation of Ukraine has resulted in a cataclysmic challenge for the EU. This challenge is also the test of the European unity and response mechanism. In response it is not about only responding to Russian President Putin, but also responding to the consequences of energy crisis. Which has impacted every minor or major economy throughout the EU. Germany in fact has even started to look out for storage facilities of natural gas. France on the other hand has conveyed to their population to reduce usage of natural gas by 10%. Similarly, Italy too has planned to cut the usage by 7%. On this energy crisis, the economic commissioner of the EU, Polo Gentiloni stated that, “we have never experienced such a challenging experience. I’m calling for European action, European solidarity, because the experience we had in the previous crisis…was that acting together, responding together, you are not only able to avoid divisions among European countries but you have a strong, strong reaction,” commented Gentiloni while comparing the crisis with that of the COVID-19 and the EU’s response in the vaccination drive [91].

There is evident discord between the EU member states on the issue of European Energy crisis brewing after the war in Ukraine. The countries like Belgium, Greece, Poland, and Italy are advocating for a “price corridor” throughout the EU in order to fight the inflation. Thus, as per the proposal given by these above-mentioned countries, the “price corridor,” must “act as a circuit breaker and disincentive to speculation. It is not meant to suppress prices at an artificially low level.” Contrary to these countries, other group of states led by

Germany are against such a plan. They cite it would have adverse effects on the energy security of the EU. These discussions started in early October of 2022, however, still no final decision has been taken place. Germany in the meanwhile, has prepared itself for the coming winter. As the government has announced a package of 200 billion Euros as a subsidy for domestic consumers of energy as well as the small medium enterprises [91].

To find a sustainable solution to these divisions mentioned above, the EU leaders met in Brussels in October 2022. The meeting was extensive and leaders from all of the EU deliberated for hours to reach a conclusion. Nonetheless, they could not agree on the outcome. Thus, the mechanism of price cap could not be initiated to counter the Russian gas monopoly in the EU. Diplomats from different member states were also sceptical of any positive outcome. Because according to them, the proposals were not well researched and needed more deliberations to properly analyse the dynamics of energy trade between the EU and Russia. On the occasion, the Prime Minister of Belgium argued that "there is a lot of work ahead. We are pushing ourselves into unchartered territory, where we don't have experience yet" [14].

The European Commission while ensuring the stability of the gas supplies in the EU vis-à-vis price, is making arrangements to stop the economies of the individual states from further shrinking. Thereby, it advises pool buying. In this connection, the Commission is asking member states to formulate a mechanism where the LNG can be indexed, thereby making it easy to keep a check on the outflow and inflow. Notwithstanding, these proposals are yet proposals, because the member states have so far not agreed to the advice. The major objection to the capping of prices came from the Hungarian head of state, Viktor Orban, who commented that he cannot support the mechanism, because doing so he risks the exporters turning away from the trade. He stated that "gas price cap is like going to a bar and telling the bartender you want to pay half price for your beer. Not going to happen." More interestingly, two major economies of the EU, Germans and the French were not on terms with each other on the issue. While France wants capping to be introduced, the Germans on the other hand are reluctant about any such decision [14].

The President of France, Macron argued that he was working with Olaf Scholz, the German Chancellor bilaterally to resolve the issue. Macron stated that it was the responsibility of France to make an enabling environment, where all stake holders in the EU can reach a unanimous decision. Meanwhile, the German Chancellor was of the opinion that Germany had issues with the methods rather than objectives. He stated that, “prices for gas, for oil, for coal, must sink; electricity prices must sink, and this is something that calls for a joint effort by all of us in Europe.” Similarly, The Netherlands also had issues with the introduction of price cap. Its Prime Minister, Mark Rutte was of the view that if the EU kept prices too low, the trade would simply stop. Rutte commented that, “everyone wants the gas price to come down, but you want to make sure that gas imports keep coming” [14], [76].

5. CONCLUSION

To sum up this dissertation, it has been found in this study that the energy has been used as a tool or weapon of Russian foreign policy against the EU since the last two decades. The Russian Federation consider its energy resources as a potent tool, which can enhance the stature of its state, provide enough money to modernize its military, and develop its state to give modern day amenities to its population. This research addressed the significant question that, why Russia used energy as weapon against the EU and what specific geopolitical, geostrategic and geoeconomic leverage it gained? And how the EU responded to the Russian policy?

So, to answer the above question, this dissertation found that energy security for Russia is to diversify its energy supply routes and never depend on a single transit state. Along with this, Russia also secures its energy resources by trying to reach out to multiple markets in the EU. And for that purpose, it does not depend on EU as a single market but rather utilises its bilateral engagements with individual states of the EU. Meanwhile, the EU on the other hand has also securitized energy trade. For the EU, energy as a commodity is quite expensive because it does have to be imported – therefore, the EU makes sure that this commodity is not used for geopolitical purposes against its interests.

Given the huge resources of hydrocarbons within Russia and their potential to act as Russia's significant commodity, the state has made energy security a key component of national security. Thereby, energy security also acts as a key variable of Russian foreign policy. However, before it can play a decisive role in foreign policy, the Russian state has taken control of all major energy companies like Gazprom. Consequently, it serves the interests of Russian geopolitics. While using energy as a weapon of its foreign policy, Russia takes into account the securitization of energy within the EU as well. Russian foreign policy experts time and again have raised reservations about the EU's energy security designs. Which according to Russian Gazprom company is to deny it space in the EU market. The key aspects in this regard are market liberalisation and talks of introducing price cap - which directly hurts the Russian Gazprom's interests. Because it signs deals bilaterally.

Russia takes this as a geopolitical challenge. Hence, it too has started geopolitical manoeuvres within the EU to gain market leverage. Why Russia does it? Because for Russia, the geopolitical competition in the energy domain means national security competition for Russia - as energy exports make almost 50% of the total Russian budget. Therefore, Russia not only secures its status of "energy superpower" in the EU market - but also look to diversify its supply routes so as not to come under blackmail of the buyers. Rather it is Russia that has acquired the status of an energy blackmailer by diversifying its trade routes. Currently, among many Russia supply routes, the key ones consist of Nord Stream 1 and 2. TurkStream, Yamal Stream, Blue Stream and Ukraine Stream. Russia has the capability to supply from any routes of them and disrupt supplies from the other. Thereby forcing the recipients and transit states to agree to its terms.

The geopolitical and geostrategic significance of energy security for Russia can be gauged by the fact that when Ukraine decided to merge its energy interests with that of the EU by signing Energy Commission proposals and becoming part of the ENTSO-E - Russia started gas wars with Ukraine starting in 2014 with annexation of energy rich Crimean region. However, when Russia realised that Ukraine was not deterred to abandon Europeanization of its energy mix with tactics like increase of prices and disruptions of supply to EU from Ukraine, it finally invaded it in February 2022 to dismantle its energy infrastructure. And also keep control of the supply routes. Post the war in Ukraine, every form of supply from the Ukrainian territory is under the control of Russia. Post Ukraine war, the Russians have also started Turk Stream to supply gas to the EU. And have disrupted gas supplies from Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 on the other hand is not operationalized yet. It is also interesting to note that since the start of war in Ukraine, Russia is able to earn more than 100 billion US dollars in gas revenues. Thus, forcing pundits to state that the EU in fact is funding the Russian war in Ukraine.

With the EU, the geopolitical gimmicks of Russia have resulted in mix responses. The CIS countries have succumbed to the Russian tactics and thus accept its proposals for acquiring cheap gas. Meanwhile, in the North-eastern states like Lithuania and Latvia, and Eastern states like Poland and Georgia this strategy of Russia has failed. As the consumers want energy separated from politics. Interestingly, to balance off this quagmire, Russia on the model of the EU has also envisioned EAEU - which is also dubbed as a geopolitical tool. Some have argued that EAEU is a neo imperialist design of Russia. While others consider it as a counterbalance to the EU. Russia consider EAEU as a single market space where Russia and likeminded states would have a feasibility of doing business and its people would have no need of visa to travel across member states.

This is significant to state that while politically the above-mentioned designs of Russia have paid dividends in the short term and Russia was able to dictate its terms. Notwithstanding, for the long run, Russia has created a trust deficit in the EU. Western Europe as a whole has started treating Russia as an unreliable trade partner that wants to pursue only strategic interests, and thus is using energy as a weapon against their economic interests.

Similarly, the eastern European states, that were earlier under the Soviet sphere consider Russian designs to be continuation of hegemonic designs of the Soviet Union. They think Russia wants these states to depend on it and thus be reduced in a status of political clients, who do not have self-interests of their own. Because of this political dependence, they have economic dependence as well. Thus, when Russia offers them reduced prices of oil and gas, they succumb. This consequently limit their ability to independent decision making.

Geoeconomically, the advantage of the EAEU is the new energy zone where member states enjoy trade in Roubles and have not to accept pressure of the Western capitals. Other than EAEU, Russia also plans to sell more gas and oil to China. And in fact, it has also started developing routes like NSR for that purpose. As well as also started exploitation of new hydrocarbons in Arctic. Furthermore, Russia has also started Yamal LNG project to cover the needs of China. Geoeconomically, it is also significant to mention here that no matter how dire the situation seems between the EU and Russia. Nonetheless, the relationship between the two is of the interdependence. The EU still acts as a major marketspace for Russia. And Russia on the other hand provides cheap gas to the EU. So, therefore, this mutual interdependence is of relative gains as propounded by the neoclassical realism theory. There is no doubt about element of competition, but it is still likely that trade between the two regions would continue in future.

Currently, for Russians geoeconomics plays a vital role in its foreign policy. This is because Russia has devised its entire internal and external security policies around the energy trade. And energy acting as a major variable of its budget make the energy security phenomenon significant in Russian geoeconomic designs. This geo economy basically influences the Russian policy makers to gain leverage in the EU market - which they gain by offering deferential rates to different states in the EU. These geoeconomic policies of Russia also helped them in geopolitics as well. As it invaded Ukraine and most of the EU states only provided lip service in favour of Ukraine rather than coming to its aid openly. Because in that case, Russia would have totally stopped gas supplies. Currently, the arguments by many Western media outlets that the EU have totally stopped imports from Russia are unfounded. Because Russia is still supplying gas to the EU from Ukraine, Yamal, Turk Stream, and Blue Stream. Only Nord Stream pipelines are not properly functioning as of October 2022.

As a geoeconomic response, the EU only slapped Russia with sanctions post war in Ukraine. In fact, the European Commission even recommended abandoning of energy trade with the Russian Federation. And it plans to completely finish the monopoly of Russia in the EU by diversifying its market and allow other players like Qatar, Azerbaijan, and Algeria. However, the supply channels are not elaborately defined. The rates are not decided and neither the consumers are informed about the decisions. Thus, these are theoretical proposals, which are yet to be implemented. More significantly, there is also divide among the EU leadership on total halt of energy imports from Russia and price cap. The politics of sanctions have not yielded any positive results for the EU. As the Russian Federation have gone unaffected with these sanctions. Its gas sales have been constant. It is earning good amount of revenue from those and interestingly have even diversified its market to include China and India in it as well. And more interestingly, many other Asian states are also ready to buy the Russian gas and oil on cheap prices.

The EU has introduced liberalisation and regulations to check on the fluctuations in the energy market in the EU. The regulations are introduced to keep an eye on Gazprom's monopolising activities in the energy trade. The EU was successful too in these regulations as the Gazprom had to follow them in establishing new pipelines. It is probably because of these regulations that not only in 2014, but also in 2022 when the Russian military is engaged in gas wars in Ukraine there is not complete halt in gas supplies to the EU. Even if there is political rhetoric of abandoning the energy trade between the two. These regulations also make the relationship between the EU and Russian of interdependence. As far as the diversification of energy mix is concerned, it too has yielded some positive results in price mechanism for the EU. As because of the competition the Gazprom had to reduce prices in some of the EU countries. Moreover, the investment in LNG has also proved fruitful for the

EU and the Gazprom had to compete in that sector as well. Thus, further taking down the prices.

More interestingly, the overtures of establishing an Energy Union in the EU have also fractured the monopolising potential of the Gazprom, even if not rupturing it completely. However, after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the geopolitical ambitions of the EU are greatly hurt. For instance, the EU was eying for a significant energy hub in shape of Ukraine. And for that matter they had signed deals like EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, which was aimed at integration of Ukrainian energy with that of the EU. But after the war, this objective seems to be in doldrums. As far as transition to renewables is concerned, it is still evolving and not even 5% of the EU energy has shifted to renewables. More importantly, with severe energy crisis, it is not expected to gain a significant improvement in this regard. Geopolitically, the EU wants to limit the Russian hegemony in the EU. For that matter, it is introducing price caping and EU's economic reach to the Eastern European states. However, it invites even further geopolitical competition between the two. It was witnessed in the economic sanctions against Russia post Ukraine war too. Nonetheless without any significant impact on Russia.

At the end of this conclusion, it is also significant to briefly highlight if the EU-Russia relationship reflects any pursuance of the neoclassical realism theory or not? Neoclassical realism posits to find opportunities and mitigating limitations in the foreign policy. Domestic variables and leadership role in policy issues is also significant. Meanwhile, liberalism prefers market-oriented policy. However, is it the case in Europe? Are they following liberalism in the current energy crisis, especially after the war in Ukraine? The evidence states that it does not follow liberalism. In the wake of Ukraine war, the EU leaders too have started geopolitical competition. Significantly, there is also an aspect of public support in this regard as well, advocating their governments to sanction Russia and compete with it.

As far as the Russians are concerned, scholars have traditionally alleged that Russians are following classical realism in foreign policy. With regard to Ukraine, Russia may have followed classical realism, however, with regard to the EU they are still focusing on neoclassical realism, by cooperating and competing at the same time for relative gains. Moreover, the modern-day challenges of ideology, identity crisis, climate change, and globalization also force Russia to employ neoclassical realism. In fact, Russian leadership under President Putin has played its part as well in Russia in mobilizing the public in favour of its war mission in Ukraine, an intervening variable in the theory of neoclassical realism. Thus, exploiting "power in the international system," which is also an independent variable in neoclassical realism. Both these variables impact the dependent variable, i.e., foreign policy outcomes. This dissertation has revealed that both the EU and Russia have used these three variables to their advantage in the energy relationship.

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