

Middle Power Diplomacy in Human Security: The ASEAN Way in Addressing South China Sea Claims and Transboundary Haze Pollution

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Abstract:

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) nonviolent approach to conflict resolution, known as "the ASEAN Way," has been criticised for failing to produce noticeable results, notably in terms of regional security issues, due to various factors. As a regional organisation, ASEAN's role is crucial in strengthening human security among its member countries. Thus, this study aims to gain a deeper understanding of ASEAN's middle power diplomacy and its effectiveness in tackling critical human security issues in the region focusing on South China Sea territorial claims and transboundary haze pollution. This study employs a narrative review methodology to examine ASEAN's middle power diplomacy in addressing human security issues, particularly the South China Sea territorial claims and transboundary haze pollution. A systematic search of academic articles published from 2019 onwards was conducted using databases like Google Scholar and Scopus, focusing on keywords related to ASEAN and its diplomatic strategies. Selected literature was analysed to identify key themes and frameworks illustrating ASEAN's conflict resolution approaches and regional cooperation. The analysis reveals that while ASEAN has made strides in addressing human security challenges, significant obstacles remain, including external pressures and the need for enhanced collaborative frameworks. The study highlights the importance of adapting strategies to maintain unity and effectively respond to emerging challenges in the region.

Keywords:

Middle Power Diplomacy, Human Security, ASEAN, South China Sea, Transboundary Haze Pollution