

Bandwagoning, Balancing, and Small States: A Case of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

This article reviews two popular foreign policy orientations of small states: bandwagoning and balancing. The policies show how small countries can effectively engage in addressing great power politics. The paper explores two critical foreign policy decisions made by Sri Lanka after its independence in 1948: the signing of the Defense agreement and External Affairs agreement with the British government in 1948 and proposing, as a collective decision of Non-aligned members, to make the Indian Ocean a peace zone in 1971. The first decision reflected the way Sri Lanka bandwagoned with a threatening great power: Britain. The second incident referred to its desire to balance itself against threatening powers during the Cold War. This article accepts that Sri Lanka's choice of either aligning with powerful countries or aligning with small powers in the Non-aligned movement offset disadvantages traditionally associated with Sri Lanka. The overall findings of the study suggest that both bandwagoning and balancing policies helped Sri Lanka to derive specific advantages and ensure its national interests.

Keywords: small states, bandwagoning, balancing, Cold War, foreign policy

1. Role of Small States in International Relations

Contrary to the assertion that small states should be a topic of great systemic attention in international relations studies due to their rapid proliferation in the international system, many scholars of international relations write about world politics simply by examining great powers. Understanding that “the fates of all the states and of all the firms in a system are affected much more by the acts and interactions of the major ones than of the minor ones”, and “a general theory of international politics is necessarily based on the great powers” (Waltz, 1986, p. 73), it is essential to illustrate the point more generally that the “concern with international politics as a system requires concentration on the states that make the most difference” (Waltz, 1986, p. 73). In this article, however, I suggest that small states, although not making the most difference, deal with the nations at the international level in a different way from that of great powers.

By understanding this idea, this article proceeds in four sections: first it explores the concept of “small power” in regard to small states' basic characteristics. It then describes two occasions when Sri Lanka as a small state acted strategically to preserve its security. Third, the study suggests ways that small countries manage external threats—bandwagoning and balancing. Most important, the third section relies on two hypotheses: bandwagoning serves smaller states by securing their interests at the expense of great powers; and second, Sri Lanka balances against great powers within the multinational cooperation of newly decolonized and developing states. To conclude, the paper asks whether bandwagoning and balancing are viable strategies against external threats for Sri Lanka.

Hence it is worthwhile to address some of the central questions largely recognized in the international relations literature about small states: Why, in many cases, are small states more likely to prefer bandwagoning than balancing against powerful states? What explains small states' balancing behavior against great powers? How does bandwagoning or balancing effect the relative power position of small states? Many theoretical models and different criteria could be used to describe the nature of small states, but there remains ambiguity and debate among scholars over these arbitrary categorizations.

How is “small” state defined? The absolute or relative nature of a state is usually is relevant for analysis of small nations (Mosser, 2001). All too often, the two concepts are explained with reference to “power”. Hey (2003) notes that small states are those with small populations, land area, production levels, wealth, and military

capabilities. Absolute power is measured by factors such as population size (15 million or less), geographical area and GDP/GNP per capita. However, by convention, the term *small state* is used to describe a state with a population of one million or less (Thapliyal, 1998).

The fungible nature of power is used in the definition of small states' relative power position in the international system. Key variables such as state size, self-image and the factor of influence are taken into account when comparing and contrasting the power of states in the international system (Rapaport, Muteba, & Therattil, 1971). According to Molis (2006), "the most important criteria determining the power position of a state is its comparative power and geopolitical position". In small states' literature, the former concept deals with attributes such as political, economic, and social power, and the latter concept evaluates the definite geopolitical context of a state. States with limited capacity to protect their interests and establish geopolitical subjectivity are also considered small (Kao, 2011). Small states are particularly vulnerable due to lack of power and independence (Antola, 2002). Rapaport, Muteba, & Therattil (1971) also emphasize that due to their weak position, small states are unable to train their own security forces. As such, small states are more vulnerable to foreign intervention because outside powers could take advantage of domestic strife to advance their economic and ideological interests (Rapaport et al., 1971). In other words, small states are weak because they cannot defend themselves by their own efforts against any of the great powers (Handel, 1981). Since they are unlikely to obtain security using their own resources, Roshstein (1968, p. 29) states that small states "must rely fundamentally on the aid of other states, institutions, processes, or developments to do so; the small power's belief in its inability to rely on its own means must also be recognized by the other states involved in international politics."

At a time when many scholars question the key criteria for small states, Barston's (1973) explanation of smallness has four approaches: objective elements, population size, relative influence and characteristics and hypotheses to differentiate small states from others. Despite minimal participation in international affairs and leverage, small states can influence the system. Keohane (1969, p. 310) says, "if Lilliputians can tie up Gulliver, or make him do their fighting for them, they must be studied as carefully as the giant."

How can we explain the behavior of small states in the midst of uncertainties or threats? How do different theories of international relations explore the variation in small states' behavior? Given the frequent link between small states and their minimal role (or influence) in international relations, it is important to look at what strategies small states use in order to survive. Overall, however, many scholars have looked to distinct small state strategies to provide an empirical base that can be used to examine the conditions under which small states' behavior is determined. According to Espindola (1987), small developing countries have three alternative courses of action in international relations: neutrality and non-alignment, regional security arrangements and Finlandization (relying on larger powers to protect the smaller states). Domingo (2014) states that the limited scope of interest and the minimal influence the small states can make on the system reflect four broad categories of strategies. First, small states tend to support international organizations because all states have to place negotiations and disagreements within an organizational framework. According to Rothstein (1968), using international organizations is a clear alternative to the formal promise of equality because such mechanisms provide collective security and a meaningful way to restrain great powers. Second, small states manage to cooperate with powerful states using the strategy of self-reliance. In other words, small states resist great powers' influence by using different resistance strategies that increase the extent to which small countries are able to secure their national interests. One such strategy is using diplomatic means. Likewise, small powers can use economic, ideological, diplomatic and military measures to resist great powers' demands. Another important example of self-reliance is neutrality in which states choose to depend merely on their domestic capabilities "without seeking any potential allies" (Rothstein, 1968). Third, small states choose either balancing or bandwagoning. Balancing refers to "allying with others against prevailing threat" while "bandwagoning" refers to aligning with the source of danger" (Walt, 1987, p. 17).

2. Foreign Policy of Small States: A Case of Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's geographical location has, traditionally, represented a strategically significant point in the Indian Ocean region. Located at the southern tip of India, it lies at the crossroads of all maritime routes in the region. It has maritime borders with India to the northwest and the Maldives to the southwest. The location of the island gave it great strategic importance from the time of the ancient Silk Road to the Second World War (Devendra, 1990). After more than two thousand years of rule by local kings, parts of Sri Lanka were colonized by Portugal (1619-1663) and the Netherlands (1658-1796), before the control of the entire country was ceded to the British Empire in 1815 (Rajagopalan, 2005). A nationalist movement arose in the early 20th century with the aim of obtaining political independence. Dominion status was granted by the British after peaceful negotiations in 1948 (Gajaneragedara, 1985).

A comprehensive review of Sri Lanka as a small state results in several questions: Had Sri Lanka, as a small state, become subject to manipulation and exploitation, a situation that most Third World countries face? Did Sri Lanka secure its national interests soon after its independence and during the Cold War? What are the factors that determined Sri Lanka's choice of security policies against the backdrop of external insecurities?. Finally, have Sri Lanka's strategies been successful in ensuring its national interest?. The most revealing aspect of Sri Lanka's discussion in the post-independence era is to analyze its potential strategies seeking to ensure its survival. The two main concerns of the study are how Sri Lanka, as a small state, has defended and enhanced its national interest by both signing the Agreement of Defense and Agreement of External Affairs in 1948 and by bringing a proposal to the United Nations (UN) calling the Indian Ocean a Zone of Peace (IOZOP) in the early 1970s. The two cases are explored in detail in the following two sections.

2.1 Case Study 1: Defense and External Affairs Agreements between Britain and Sri Lanka

The end of the Second World War in 1945 brought remarkable changes to the world. First and most significantly, scholars have started to interpret international relations focusing on the relations between the USA and USSR. Second, the Russian spring offensive of 1944 set the USSR on the way to military dominance and political authority in Europe (Calvocoressi, 2000), while the USA became the sole competitor of the USSR. Third, the beginning of the Cold War marked the deterioration of the power projection ability of some hitherto-powerful states, such as Britain, in the international system. According to Calvocoressi (2000), Britain's effort of recovery from the war was strong and swift but was not sustained for long: after the Second World War, Britain had a series of drawbacks including the challenge to restore war-damaged industries and the public welfare system. Calvocoressi (2000, p. 174) states that

Taxes remained high but interest rates low; unemployment was low and wages were under control; economic growth averaged 4 per cent a year. Prewar production, the prewar value of foreign assets and the prewar level of personal incomes were all recovered by the end of the decade. Simultaneously, education was expanded and a comprehensive social security system was introduced. But Britain did not recover as much of its prewar position as an independent Great Power as it assumed it had.

Britain also experienced a rapid decolonization movement in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean in mid-1945 and it systematically reduced its overseas commitments. However, the relationship between the British and the Ceylon governments after 1948 show a significant difference than those in the same region. First, unlike many colonial countries, the process of transfer of power to local government was not violent. Secondly, the power had been transferred through democratic and constitutional electoral process. Third, after the independence, the relationship between Britain and Sri Lanka was based on mutual gains "on the understanding that there would be agreements relating to defense, external affairs and public affairs" (Jeffries, 1962). Sri Lanka has chosen to remain in the Commonwealth of Nations as a matter of deliberate choice (Jayawardena, 2004).

Britain's effort in establishing naval and air bases in Sri Lanka at Trincomalee and Katunayaka (Keerawella, 1998) through the agreements of Defense and External Affairs was signed on 4 February 1948 between Henry Moore on behalf of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and D. S. Senanayake, on behalf of the Government of Ceylon. The agreements guaranteed mutual military assistance for the security of their territories, for defense against external aggression and for the protection of essential communications as it may be in their mutual interest to provide (Keerawella, 1991). The United Kingdom could base such naval and air forces and maintain land forces in Ceylon. According to the Defense agreement, Ceylon had agreed to let the Government of the United Kingdom use naval and air bases, ports, military establishments, telecommunication facilities, and the right of service courts and authorities to exercise such control and jurisdiction over members of the said forces as they exercise at present (Defense Agreement, 1947).

The paper perceives two different viewpoints regarding why Sri Lanka concluded the agreements with the United Kingdom. First, one viewpoint suggests that the agreement was concluded in response to the threat perceived by the expansionist policy of India and thus the defense pact was primarily to guard against threats from India to Sri Lanka's independence. The government maintained that "the country's defense and security could be threatened by a possible danger emanating from its geopolitical vulnerability to a potential threat from India, which dominated its immediate geo-strategic environment." Second, it is assumed that Sri Lanka signed the agreement against because of the perceived threat from the communist countries. In response to growing communist pressure, the pact strengthened Sri Lanka's role as a bastion of anti-communism in Asia, providing the necessary military security to the British government in case of an overt communist threat. The orientation of Ceylon's traditional left parties and their leaning towards the Soviet government tended to solidify the government's alignment with the British. Third, the attempt made by both governments ensured a mutually

agreed administrative machinery because they may agree to be desirable for the purpose of cooperation in regard to defense matters, and to co-ordinate and determine the defense requirements of both governments. The agreement which assisted Sri Lanka with the training and development of Ceylonese armed forces when necessary and the presence of foreign troops was a source of strength for the government in power against “civil strife.”

2.2 Case Study 2: Proposal to Make the Indian Ocean a Peace Zone

At various points in its post-independence foreign policies, Sri Lanka has acted the role of a strong global player despite its small size and lack of experience in international affairs. More significantly, this has been mainly reflected through the Non-Aligned policy. The broader implication of its membership in the Non-aligned Movement (NAM) not only made Sri Lanka suggest neutrality but made it support the IOZOP. Moreover Mrs. Bandaranaike called on the external assistance of strong NAM members i.e., Yugoslavia and China. The agreement was mostly concerned about the desire to keep the Indian Ocean free of power politics. Furthermore, the proposal upheld the need of settling political, economic and social issues peacefully. It is also aimed at preserving the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Indian Ocean littoral states.

The sequence of events with the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) brought Sri Lanka into prominence for notable reasons. First, Sri Lanka was an active and influential member of the NAM, and vigorously involved in all its summits since its inception in 1961. Second, it played an active part in resolving conflict, particularly between NAM countries such as Kampuchea and Vietnam, and established that intra-NAM disputes were an issue that the Movement should address. Among other reforms, Sri Lanka, in its tenure as the chair of NAM was exceptionally fair-minded and efficient producing documents and papers at the UN and keeping members informed (Singham & Hune, 1986). As a result, the idea of making the Indian Ocean a peace zone revolved around Sri Lanka's pioneer role and initiative in the NAM and stemmed from the Lusaka summit of NAM countries in September 1970. Since its beginning in 1962, the NAM attempted to create an independent path in world politics that reflected the policy of non-involvement and that avoided its members becoming pawns in the struggles between the major powers. In the midst of this tension between the USA and the USSR and growing insecurity concerns in the world, a broader Indian Ocean-wide effort towards peace was undertaken in the 1970s by declaring the Indian Ocean a “Zone of Peace”. The proposal was unanimously adopted by the UN General Assembly on 16 December, 1971 (Cooray, 1995). Under the UN Resolution 2832 (XXVI), the General Assembly declared the Indian Ocean “within limits to be determined, together with the air space above and the ocean floor subjacent thereto,” to be designated for all time as a Zone of Peace (Kumar, 2000). In the midst of Sri Lanka's successful campaign in the NAM movement, it was able to bring a resolution to the UN General Assembly's First Committee on Disarmament and International Security Issues, which was supported by the 113 NAM countries. But most of the West abstained with the USA, Britain and France strongly opposed.

This notable achievement of Mrs. Bandaranaike made the ocean a “nuclear-weapon-free zone”. However, Mrs. Bandaranaike preferred the more ambitious concept of a Zone of Peace- in order to insulate the Indian Ocean from great power rivalries and she proposed that no armament of any kind would be installed on or in the sea, on the seabed, or on adjacent land areas (Dhanapala, n. d.). The plan also prohibited all warship maneuvering, naval intelligence operations, weapons tests and it limited great power expansion in the Ocean. The proposal has required the great powers to immediately consult the littoral states of the Indian Ocean on any ocean- related matter. In short, a restriction was imposed against further escalation and expansion of the great power presence in the Indian Ocean region.

3. Bandwagoning or Balancing: A Theoretical Explanation

A broadly agreed idea in international relations states that the distribution of resources and power among states is a key to determining security policies. Does this reflect that small states do not have the appropriate resources and power to craft influential foreign policy in international relations? Is this what Walt explained when he said that “small states prefer bandwagoning with threatening great powers than to balance them?” Supporting this argument, Walt (1987, p. 25) states:

The weaker the state, the more likely it is to bandwagon. Balancing may seem unwise because one's allies may not be able to provide assistance quickly enough. . . . States that are close to a country with large offensive capabilities (and that are far from potential allies) may be forced to bandwagon because balancing alliances are simply not viable.

Keeping this in mind, both occasions central to the study have put much weight on estimating mutual interests and benefits that small countries could reap by either aligning with small states or strong states. To answer the question of how Sri Lanka as a small state managed foreign influence in the light of its independence and in the

middle of the Cold War, this study looks at two different aspects of managing external threats, introduced by Kenneth Waltz (1979): bandwagoning and balancing.

3.1 Bandwagoning

According to the “neo-realist” school, the distribution of resources and power among states is a key to determine security policies, because it critically diminishes the freedom of action (Waltz, 1979). However IR theories offer little help in understanding the strategies that small states employ in order to avoid both external and internal threats to their security. According to Elman, domestic-level factors are helpful in addressing foreign policies of small powers, rather than examining them using structural/systemic factors (Elman, 1995). According to Schroeder (cited in Elman, 1995), unitary state actors react to their strategic situation, respond to the perceived intentions and capabilities of other states, chose strategies consistent with their position in the global power structure, and pursue policies that are likely to provide them greater benefits than costs. In other words, the concept of bandwagoning also states that aligning with a powerful coalition will help the aligned country to appease and attain some measure of security.

A large proportion of states in the international system are small. Despite their lack of potential, they are much more likely to explore more avenues that will enable them to take part in the global activities in different ways. The key role of small states which know they lack the resources and capacity to influence the international system is likely to be one of bandwagoning rather than balancing with powerful countries by the desire for gain (Waltz, 1979). Drawing on the idea of bandwagoning in small states literature, they suggest that many small states are willing to pursue “strategies of accommodation” with bigger states. Did Sri Lanka’s choice of signing an agreement with a comparatively powerful country, Britain, reflects the strategy of bandwagoning?

On this matter, aligning with Britain who had once acted the role of the colonial master explains Sri Lanka’s vulnerability in the international system as a small (size), weak (unable to ensure its own security) and vulnerable after 113 of British rule. In De Silva’s words (1999, p. 362):

The island was vital as a link in a chain of defense arrangements which included the Indian Ocean and the southern dominions of the British Commonwealth, Australia and New Zealand. This arrangement offered the country a free ride in defense and external security in the crucially important early years of independence. Sri Lanka had no credible defense capacity at independence: no army, no navy and no air force. All these were built from scratch and under British supervision over the next few years.

This strategy helped Sri Lanka to ally with a hitherto aggressive country, Britain, rather than to fall into the hands of great powers in the wake of the Cold War tension. The reason why Sri Lanka adopted this strategy underlines the natural fear it had of unfamiliar powerful states. This is the situation in which Sri Lanka’s engagement with Britain coined the idea that states, in particular weaker states chose the strategy of aligning with a great power. As such, Sri Lanka’s choice is sufficient to explain the bandwagoning behavior of small states. The manner in which Sri Lanka handled external threats reflected its ability to react strategically to external conditions. Its roles could be reflected through Walt’s (1987) explanation that small states are more likely to bandwagon with an aggressive great power than balance against it. According to Snyder (1991), the international level provides the most appropriate level of analysis whereas the leaders and their ideas are inconsequential. This suggests that the external environment that prevailed at the end of the 1940s’ was more constraining for Sri Lanka.

The study also hypothesizes that when capabilities are not equally distributed among states, the states that possess limited power opt to maximize their security in a way opposite to self-help. For Schroeder, the opposite of self-help is other-help such as hiding, transcending or bandwagoning. Sri Lanka’s agreement with Britain showed that Sri Lanka’s security was only guaranteed as long as the security of Britain was secured. In other words, the belief that Sri Lanka’s security was tied to the security and wellbeing of Britain gave Sri Lanka a sense of protection. Sri Lanka could not balance the threats due to its own inherent weaknesses, and the strategies it chose were always meant to reflect its identity as a small, weak and vulnerable state in the post independence period. To ensure survival, Sri Lanka chose external means, rather than developing internal efforts such as increasing economic or military strength. By looking at the capabilities of small states, it is apparent that the relative power of states plays a crucial role in engagement with other states (Ross, 1999).

The policy of bandwagoning can also be supported by the important element in the Waltz theory which is the distribution of capabilities across units. The theory defines capabilities as power and assumes that capabilities vary significantly between states. Although the states are functionally undifferentiated, they are different according to how much power they possess. According to neorealists, states are ranked depending on the power and are evaluated in terms of relative capabilities. These capabilities can be used to determine Sri Lanka’s

position as a small state. According to Mearsheimer (2001), states prefer alignment with a powerful country. He concedes that strong states that become partners of weak states disproportionately gain in the spoils they conquer together.

So, what made Sri Lanka choose Britain to bandwagon? According to Waltz (1979), bandwagoning occurs only under certain identifiable conditions. The first factor that affects the propensity for states to bandwagon is the weaker the state, the more likely it is to bandwagon rather than balance. Under the control of the British in 1815, Sri Lanka could neither build strong foreign relations with other countries nor establish a portfolio for external affairs until after independence. The confidence Sri Lanka had in Britain encouraged it to “free-ride”: Sri Lanka expected Britain to provide security. According to Waltz (1979, p. 115), “because they will be the first victims of expansion, because they lack capacities to stand alone, and because a defensive alliance may operate too slowly to do them much good, accommodating a threatening great power may be tempting.”

Second, “states will have little choice but to bandwagon when would-be allies are limited in number or unavailable altogether”. Or in Walt’s (1987) words, states will be tempted to bandwagon when allies are unavailable. At the time of its independence in 1948, Sri Lanka found no other state in the international system that it could trust for defense or external affairs matters. As a newly independent country, rather than seeking support from untested state partners, Sri Lanka consistently emphasized creating strategically important relations with the British with the hope that it would mobilize resources on behalf of Sri Lanka. Levy (1989, p.60) says, “great powers balance against potential hegemon, whereas weaker states in the proximity of stronger states do what is necessary to survive, which often involves bandwagoning with the strong instead of balancing against them.” Walt’s (1990) idea is that if weak states see no possibility of outside assistance, they may be forced to accommodate the most imminent threat.

Third, it is assumed that bandwagoning occurs in exchange for mutual benefits between the weaker and stronger states. The empirical evidence of mutual trust over providing security to Sri Lanka in exchange for base facilities to the British highlights this principle. The exchange for facilities between the weak and strong is usually represented by the exchange of mutual benefits such as territorial gains, security and protection or agreements. Both parties profit; however, the small state gains more profits in the short and the long term. Sri Lanka was more likely to do so as it was confident that British assistance would be available. As Schweller (1994, pp. 92-93) stated “in the language of systems theory, bandwagoning is a form of positive feedback”.

3.2 *Balancing*

Did Sri Lanka’s sponsored proposal to the UN in 1971 to make the Indian Ocean a threat free zone reflect the idea of balancing against the prevailing threats? Did the alliance of NAM constitute a strong effort to balance against the threats? What did NAM do in the collective security formation? Unlike Waltz, Walt explicitly states what constitutes an alliance. Walt (1987, p. 12) defines it as a “formal or informal relationship of security cooperation, which assumes some level of commitment and exchange of benefits”. In such a definition, the NAM movement of developing countries representing the Middle East, the Caribbean region, Asia, Africa and Latin America could be defined as an alliance.

The small states form alliances against strong powers, and they do so to protect themselves from coalitions who have superior resources. Mearsheimer offers two reasons why states balance power: the first reason is that states place their survival at risk if they fail to curb a potential hegemon before it becomes too strong, so they ally with the weaker side. The second important motivation is the belief that by joining the weaker side, new members are more likely to influence the alliance. Contrary to the policy of bandwagoning, balance of power policy let states ally against prevailing threats. It also helps weak states to escape avoid joining the greater powers because aligning with the strong side makes the small states vulnerable to the whims of its partners. Therefore aligning with the weaker side rather than aligning with coalitions of powerful states is the better method for small states to secure their interests.

There are several possible hypotheses regarding “why Sri Lanka chose to balance?” In a balancing world, states prefer “alignment with the weaker side.” In a balancing world, states preferring alignment with the weaker side shows that the missing point of Waltz’s definition of the traditional balance of power concept is that states do not balance merely against power, but they balance against threat. The two notions- small states balancing against power and small states balancing against threat- help to clarify the major question of “why Sri Lanka chose balancing in the 1970s?”. Without emphasizing the motivation for building such an alliance, the answers for the above questions cannot be unraveled.

The NAM movement has been opposed to any development of military alliance and major powers’ efforts of compartmentalizing the world into spheres of influence. According to Singham and Hune (1986, p. 15):

After the Second World War and the onset of the nuclear age and the Cold War, the Movement feared that the creation of military pacts would result in the division of the world into opposing camps, denying other nations, especially new states, the opportunity to make independent policy decisions about world problems. Consequently, the movement adopted non-involvement in military pacts as one of its criteria for membership.

As such, forming alliances is a key policy for small countries. Admittedly, weak states form alliances for two important reasons: first, preventing the great power domination of a particular region or continent is a viable strategy. The approach of balancing by Sri Lanka as a NAM member shows that this was a response designed to minimize the power expansion of India, America and Russia in the Indian Ocean reflecting it as a common goal of NAM members. Sri Lanka was able to convince that it was an urgent need that it had fulfilled on behalf of all small powers in the NAM. In Mrs. Bandaranaike's words (Jayawardane, 2004, p. 197):

Ceylon is a small country. It has a population of 10 million people and an area of 25,000 sq. miles, but notwithstanding our small size and the lack of military might, we are conscious of our responsibilities in international affairs. We feel that every nation regardless of its size, has a right as well as a moral duty to concern itself with problems which affect mankind as a whole.

Second, small states balance against powerful countries as a mean of protection from external threats. For Sri Lanka, the decision to align with developing countries demonstrates its desire to win the collective demands in the midst of power rivalry in the international system. Collectivism is defined as a way that allows small states to stand up against a threat. This type of notion highlights the importance of providing more stability in an unregulated and self-help system. In a collective system, states are expected to abide by certain rules and norms that facilitate stability, and when necessary, combine to stand against aggressive countries and their deeds (Kupchan & Kupchan, 1995).

Walt (1990) has recognized the third reason: the more aggressive a state's perceived intentions, the more likely others are to align against that state. The most revealing aspect of the proposal was driven by Sri Lanka's effort in curtailing growing interests of major powers in the Indian Ocean region. It was not "so much about peace and tranquility in the Indian Ocean region, as it was about circumscribing the presence of Western powers in the region" (Singh, 2015). The strategic culture in the Indian Ocean changed significantly since the Second World War. The shift in ocean domination from Britain and France to the new entrants to the Indian Ocean, the USA and the USSR, altered the power balance. Accordingly, "traditional grounds for contest like transit and trade apart, great power presence in the Indian Ocean came to be seen in military terms within a global framework" (Bukarambe, 1985). According to Singh (2015), the option of Sri Lanka was:

driven not only by the fear of extra regional military presence but also by a perceived uneasiness about growing Indian naval power particularly in the aftermath of the 1971 war when the Indian Navy had launched an audacious attack on Karachi. In some ways, the IOZOP was an attempt by Sri Lanka to buy some insurance against any possible Indian designs on Sri Lanka.

The proposal was also seen as a direct response to the expulsion of the people inhabiting British-owned Diego Garcia and the conversion of the Indian Ocean island into a U.S. base. It caused Sri Lanka to appeal to other NAM members to implement the resolution and avoid the future escalation of naval power in the Indian Ocean. Much of the impetus behind the proposal has been the conviction that small states do refer extensively to the external strategic circumstances and conditions. By referring Southwest Asian states, Walt (1988, p. 279) says "when faced with a clear external threat, these states almost always sought to counter the threat through some combination of external alignment and internal efforts."

4. Conclusion

An important aspect of balancing and bandwagoning is that they share the same hypothetical base on which the decisions of bandwagoning and balancing are taken. One important precondition that makes states decide whether to bandwagon or balance is based on the dimension of threats. The bandwagoning response is more likely to occur when small states recognize that they can do nothing or little to influence the international system. Second, the availability of material support from the great powers, in particular defense and military capability, guarantees that most small states choose to bandwagon with them. A key criterion in determining small states' decision to bandwagon, therefore, is how far military and defense capabilities of a great power can assure the protection of a small power. On the other hand, if a great power can mobilize resources on behalf of a small country, the small power, then, would be happy to pursue policies that please the great power. Third small states' growing concern about the international environment and the security issues in it decide its decision to bandwagon or balance. Aspects are the dimensions of threat, the availability of allies, and the security climate

(Walt, 2003).

Where balancing and bandwagoning really differ, however, is in their assumption about benefits that small states can expect? In the light of security issues, in the 1940s and 1970s, Sri Lanka sought to address the power disparity through a dependent and non-self-reliant approach. Sri Lanka's continued dependence on Britain portrays three significant expectations: it didn't have a credible defense force at independence; therefore, bandwagoning with Britain assured the island's safety. Signing the 1948 agreement was based on reciprocity. Second, Britain was the only trusted ally at independence. Third, Sri Lanka was concerned that the international structure in 1940s was threatening. Therefore, Sri Lanka moved itself to a less threatening position in the international system making it an ally of west.

There are no guarantees in international politics that small states are secure. Hence, it may be likely that the small countries prefer alliance formation in order to face collective security responses such as the superpower competition in the Indian Ocean during the Cold War. As part of the emerging uncertainties, Sri Lanka chose the strategy of balancing through NAM based on two reasons. First, security of Sri Lanka was guaranteed by its own actions as a NAM member. It is significant that a collective demand against expansionist policies of great powers had two fold advantages: it protected Sri Lanka from external influence and it made the Indian Ocean a safe region free from militarization. Second, the development of uneasy relations between great powers in the Indian Ocean was predicated on the collectivism of NAM countries.

In conclusion, to say that bandwagoning and balancing are the most common strategies used by small states is no guarantee that they are the best strategies against threats. This means that small states like Sri Lanka should keep their policy options open without committing to any single strategy. Sri Lanka's choice to bandwagon or balance reflects this idea.

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