

## ***Factors Influencing the Continuous Enhancement of the National Power of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Caspian Sea with Emphasis on National Security***

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### **Abstract**

**Background and Theoretical Foundations:** The Caspian Sea region underwent a fundamental geopolitical transformation following the collapse of the Soviet Union, leading to the emergence of new littoral states: Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan. This shift reconfigured the regional strategic landscape, presenting Iran with a complex mix of new opportunities and security challenges. The increased presence and competition of regional and extra-regional powers further underscored the necessity for Iran to consolidate and enhance its national power in this vital area. This research is grounded in the theoretical understanding that national power is a multifaceted construct, and its sustainable enhancement in a strategic region like the Caspian is essential for safeguarding national security interests.

**Methodology:** This study employed a descriptive-analytical approach. The research process began with an extensive review of theoretical literature and an environmental assessment of the Caspian Sea littoral states to identify relevant geopolitical factors. Subsequently, an analytical model was developed to frame the investigation. Data collection was conducted through a researcher-designed questionnaire, distributed comprehensively to a statistical population of 80

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experts and specialists in fields related to geopolitics, security, and Caspian Sea studies. The gathered data were then analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques and methods to process the expert opinions and evaluate the research questions systematically.

**Findings:** The analysis of the data revealed that the factors influencing the continuous enhancement of Iran's national power in the Caspian Sea, with a focus on national security, are comprehensive and span five key domains: Human, Military, Economic, Political, and Natural. From these broad domains, a total of 27 specific and impactful geopolitical indicators were identified and extracted. These indicators provide a detailed map of the critical elements, from human capital and military preparedness to economic integration, diplomatic leverage, and the utilization of natural resources, that collectively determine Iran's strategic position and security posture in the Caspian region.

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, the sustainable strengthening of Iran's national power in the Caspian Sea is not contingent upon a single factor but requires an integrated and balanced strategy across all five identified domains. The 27 geopolitical indicators serve as a crucial framework for policymakers. Addressing these indicators in a coherent manner is essential for formulating effective policies and strategies. Ultimately, a continuous and multidimensional enhancement of national power based on this framework is fundamental to promoting and ensuring the national security of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the strategically vital Caspian Sea region.

**Keywords:** Power, Geopolitics, Caspian Sea, National Security

## 1. Introduction:

The Caspian Sea is located in the Eurasia region. It is the largest lake in the world and a remnant of the vast Tethys Sea from the Mesozoic era, situated in Western Asia and in the north-central part of the Iranian plateau. The Republics of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation are located to the north and northwest, while the Republics of Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan are to the east, and the Republic of Azerbaijan is to the west of this sea.



The southern, southeastern, and southwestern coasts of the Caspian Sea are part of the geographical units of the provinces of Golestan, Mazandaran, and Gilan in the Islamic Republic of Iran

The Caspian Sea is a closed body of water for which the legal regime has not yet been determined. The 1982 Convention placed the establishment of the legal regime of enclosed seas in the hands of the coastal states, and the lack of consensus on how to delineate boundaries has turned the Caspian into one of the critical regions. The emergence and formation of the Caspian region on the political map of the world is considered one of the prominent consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Union, and it can be described as a geopolitical offspring.

Iran's national security is influenced by the country's geopolitical position in the region; in such a way that active geopolitical areas with extensive and diverse functions surround it, turning it into a center of diplomatic attraction. This position not only enables Iran to impact global and regional developments but also means that the dynamics of the surrounding areas can affect Iran's issues.

Iran's prominent geopolitical position, the presence of hostile countries in the Caspian region, the lack of access for Caspian Sea countries to open waters, and the desire of these countries to establish greater economic relations, along with the existence of fossil energy and other capabilities in this region, have created a concern for researchers. The main issue of the study is to clarify "what factors have continuously enhanced the national

power of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Caspian Sea, which in turn affects Iran's national security."

The main objectives of this research are to identify the dimensions and components that influence the continuous enhancement of national power in the Caspian Sea region and their impact on national security issues. The primary research question is: What are the most important dimensions and components affecting Iran's sustained national power in the Caspian Sea? In this study, the researcher aims to identify and explain the factors resulting from the enhancement of Iran's national power in the Caspian Sea on national security; thus, avoiding the formulation of hypotheses and limiting the research scope, the focus will remain on continuing the research based on the questions and objectives outlined. In this research, the factors contributing to the continuous enhancement of Iran's national power in the Caspian Sea are considered the independent variable, while national security is the dependent variable.

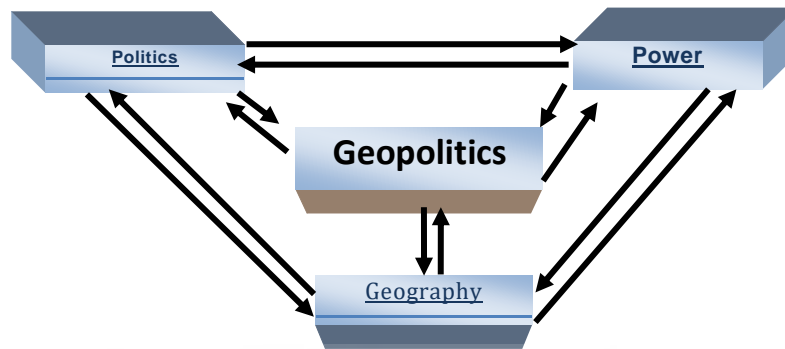
## **2. Theoretical Foundations:**

### **2.1. Geopolitics:**

Hafeznia believes that "geopolitics is the science of studying the interactions between geography, power, and politics, and the actions resulting from their combination."



Figure 1- Geopolitical model (Hafeznia: 2006, 37)



In this model, geography is considered in three areas: space, environment, and humans. In the area of space, spatial interactions, spheres of influence, systems, and spatial structures are taken into account. In the area of environment, the characteristics and factors of both natural and artificial environments, such as location, extent and distribution patterns of resources, climate, soil and water, economic and livelihood infrastructures, settlements, etc., are emphasized. In the area of humans, group characteristics and functions, demographic, cultural, social traits, ethics, etc., are considered. The element of politics is also addressed in three domains: ideology and political thought, structures and political systems such as governments, international organizations, and political behavior. The element of power, at any level and in any dimension—whether in terms of production, application, or distribution patterns and

classifications—has been influenced by other elements, namely geography and politics. (Same: ٣٨).

Researchers consider the definition of Hafez-Nia as a criterion for action and view their own definition of geopolitics as the science of the relationship between geography, power, and actors. In other words, geopolitics gains meaning through power, and power is understood in relation to political actors in the arena of international relations.

### **2.2. Geopolitical factors:**

Whenever the factors of a geographical unit come into contact with the components of power (political, economic, cultural-social and military), interactions created in the form of action and reaction will affect the policies, strategies and decision-making of a country, which will affect that factor. It is called geopolitics.

### **2.3. Geopolitical region:**

A part of the surface of the planet earth or neighboring countries and political-spatial units, whether it is land or water or combined, which based on the combination of specific political and geographical factors has a certain homogeneity and identity or a common function and is different from other neighboring regions and areas. be made (Hafeznia, ١٣٨٥: ١١١).

### **2.4. Security:**

The country's ability to ward off external threats against political or national life and the existence of conditions to maintain and establish measures to protect the country from enemy influence. (Bikbilandi, ٢٠١٥: ١٢١)

### **2.5. National Security:**

The country should be safe from the danger of military threats, etc. This means that in addition to having political, economic, scientific, and



technological capabilities, With strong leadership, the armed forces will also have the combat capability to respond to potential and actual threats; Achieving national security, acquiring and developing factors and components of superior military power in tangible, intangible and superior dimensions It is a vital necessity in relation to enemies and competitors, and achieving these factors can only be achieved in the shadow of the existence of a capable leader, a strong economy, Advanced technology, suitable land area, sufficient manpower, realistic and comprehensive planning and programming (Tohami, 2011: 90)

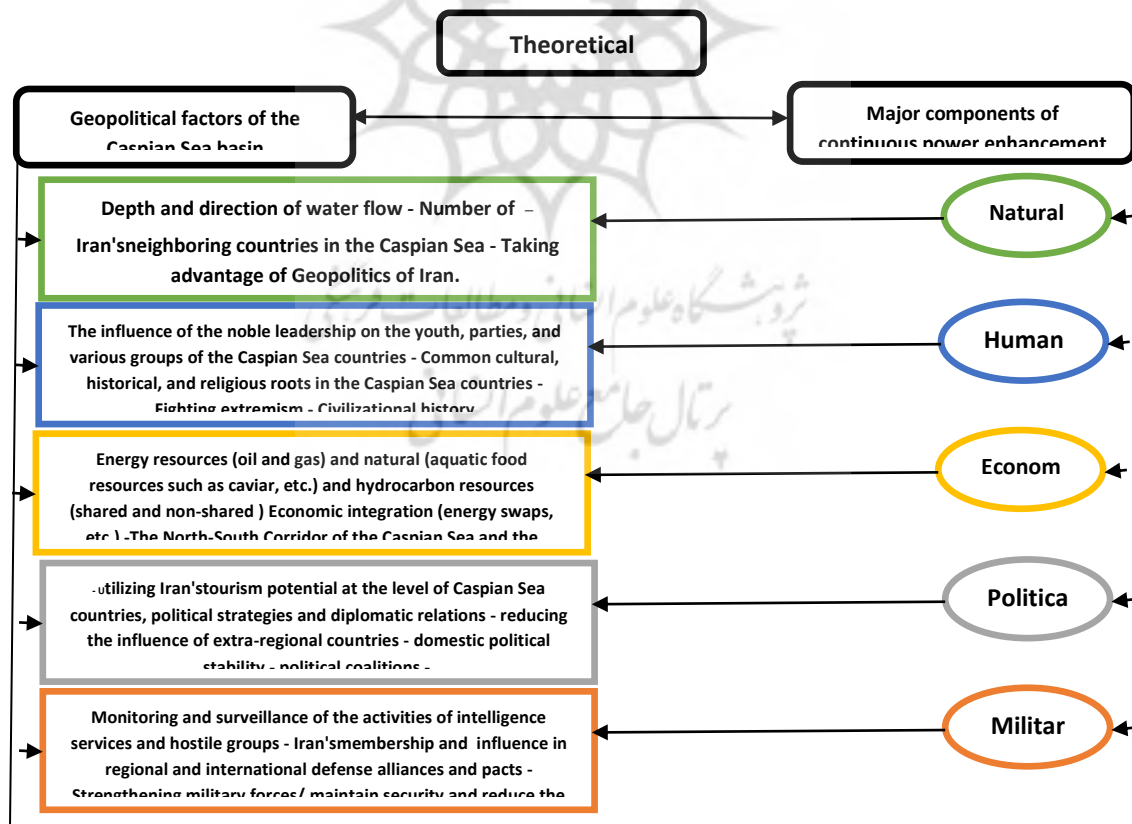
### **3. Theoretical Framework:**

Bikbilandi in the theoretical framework of the article "The influence of geopolitical factors in the Caspian Sea basin on the formulation of Iran's defense strategy" Awamatl

The geopolitical factor of the Gulf of Oman is discussed in terms of natural, human, economic, political, legal, regulatory and environmental factors. Fadlallah Nozari's theoretical framework of the thesis "Determining the geopolitical factors of the Gulf of Oman and their impact on Iran's defense and security strategy" is the geopolitical factor of the Gulf of Oman, political structure and system, partisanship and Political groups, national identity and historical background of the nation, social, cultural and political cohesion, religious minorities, and drugs. Reza Kamali has discussed in his essay "Geopolitical factors of border disputes and territorial claims, smuggling of goods Saudi Arabia considers Iran's defense strategy

as a political factor in the stability and effectiveness of international relations in its theoretical framework. and the international system, the role of international actors, organizations, and institutions, the geopolitical interests of regional actors and countries in the region. and transregional, membership and influence in regional and international political unions, political structure of the government, parties and institutions Political, national identity and historical continuity, social, cultural and political cohesion, ethnic and religious minorities, and He has discussed the inconsistencies, border and territorial disputes; therefore, by adapting the aforementioned research and taking into account the limited

The theoretical framework of the research is as follows.





The Caspian Sea is located between five countries: Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan, Caspi Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan. The Caspian Basin, before its collapse, The Soviet Union was not studied as a region. The Soviet Union as a single country, itself as a system It was recognized as a region and its subordinate republics were also considered a part of it. Iran was also not considered a region alone, but was recognized as a member of the Persian Gulf and Middle East region; but with the collapse of the Soviet Union The political geography of the transformed region and the Caspian Basin as a region with its own unique characteristics are studied. (Lotfian, 2011: 31).



**Figure No. 2: Around the Caspian Basin**

The Caspian Sea is the largest landlocked saline water body in the world, located in Eurasia. About 10 million years ago, it was connected to the

world's oceans through the Azov, Black, and Mediterranean Seas and is known as the Caspian Sea. The width of the sea and the length of the coastlines of the countries surrounding it are shown in Table 1 (Hafeznia and Mojtahedzadeh, 2019: 5-7).

**Table No. 1: Caspian Sea Coastal Strip**

Characteristic	Size (kilometers)	Characteristic	Size (kilometers)
Length of the sea	1204	refuge	550 to 220
Coasts of Iran	657	Caspian Sea Environment	6500
Azerbaijan coasts	820	Russian coasts	1476
Coasts of Turkmenistan	1476	Coasts of Kazakhstan	1900

<http://guilan-e-ma.ir/2017/09>

#### **4.1.1. Depth and direction of water flow:**

The area of each area in this level is different and the general slope is towards Iran. The largest area of the seabed is related to the depth and the largest volume of water is located at a depth of 100 to 600 meters. The sea water level in the year 1367 AH was about 2 meters below the level of the open seas and reached 1 meter in the summer of 1370 AH. The depth The water increases from north to south, the greatest depth is 80 meters in the northern part, 400 meters in the middle part, and 1000 meters in the southern part. It is not connected to the open waters by natural means and has access to the open sea through two channels:

**4.1.1.1.** The Volga-Baltic Canal supplies about 85% of the water and connects the Baltic Sea ports to Baku in It is the Caspian.



۴ ۱ ۱ The Volga-Don Canal, within Russia, is fed by the Don River. This canal is the result of Soviet efforts. To overcome the isolation of the Black Sea from the inland rivers of Russia to the Caspian, Black, Baltic and Arctic Oceans Connect the North with each other (Shafiee, ۲۰۱۹: ۱۹)

**4.1.2 Major parts of the Caspian Sea:**

4.1.2.1 Northern (shallow) Its depth is about 5 to 6 meters and it occupies 80,000 quare kilometers.

4.1.2.2. Middle (Medium Depth) Its depth is on average 190 meters and occupies about 140,000 square kilometers.It is.

4.1.2.3. Southern (deep) Its depth reaches 1025 meters and occupies about 170,000 square kilometers (Bikbilandi 19 :1398,)

**Table No. 2: General characteristics of the Caspian Sea regions**

Section	Depth (meters)		Available Percentage)	Volume (Percentage)
	Average	Maximum		
North	6/2	80	27/73	0/1
Middle	175/6	850	36/63	36/23
South	325	1025	35/6	63/67

<http://guilan-e-ma.ir/2017/09>

#### **4.1.3. The geopolitical importance of the Caspian Sea for Iran:**

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the three countries of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan, the Khazar Sea became a new regional entity. It was placed on the international map and its geopolitical importance was increased. This region, with its considerable size, a large population, and capabilities such as energy reserves and resources (uranium), transportation, etc., is of such importance that it deserves attention. It attracts countries outside the region. Today, the Caspian Sea is one of the important regions of interest to the international system and world powers. and has formed a new competition pattern. (Hafeznia et al., 2019: 5-7).

Geopolitically, Iran has a central position relative to neighboring countries and can be considered a beta-country. And in the future, regional organizations and activities A high geopolitical power has a presence in all the geopolitical spheres around it, plays an effective role in the geopolitical spheres and their functions, and shapes the political processes of these spheres. Spheres of also has similarities with all geopolitical areas. The geopolitics with which Iran is connected have differences and similarities, and Iran And it can be a connecting factor for all these areas and is in the direction of forming similarities, congruences, and common interests. These areas will play an effective role.

Iran is geopolitically (roughly) equilateral in geometric shape - its capital is 1000 km from the country's borders. It is convenient - a large number of vital centers are a good distance from the country's borders. (From the perspective of appropriate management)

This has contributed significantly to the country's defense system. (Bikbilandi, ۲۰۱۶: ۱۱۶).



#### **4.1.4. Strategic and geostrategic position of the Caspian Sea:**

strategy since the second half of the twentieth century, and today all systemic, political, The term geostrategy has been practically incorporated into military Economic and geopolitical are directly related to geostrategic considerations. In this, the role of fixed and variable geopolitical factors is greater than other determinants. Territories Because basically in this connection geopolitical territories within strategic Qatar has a lot of things. More precisely, we have to understand geostrategy and geopolitics. (Hafiznita and (2015:225, colleagues) After the collapse of the Soviet Union, a paradigm shift that had begun long ago and with the collapse of the Soviet Union, which was the turning point A paradigm shift in the international arena from the Cold War to globalization, due to which the countries of the former Soviet Union withdrew from the market. The separate states and satellites became newly established states in the international arena. Meanwhile, the Caspian Sea was in the market. It has become an influential international civilizational area. The independent states of this region include Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan, which belong to To the civilizational sphere of Central Asia, Azerbaijan belongs to the civilizational sphere of the Caucasus, Russia as the successor of the Turkic and the united A powerful political force influential in the international arena and ultimately Iran, which can be seen as a new heartland from a geopolitical perspective. They add to the geopolitical importance of this sea (Shafi'i:28:2019).

#### **4.1.5 .Topographical situation:**

##### **4.1.5.1. Caspian Sea coasts:**

The northern coast is wavy, and the middle and southern coasts of the Caspian are different from the northern coast. The middle coasts in the east of the Caspian Sea The beaches are wide and narrow, but the western coasts are made up of terraces that gradually become larger and are made up of fine sand and silt. ( . Sadeghinia: ۲۰۱۶:۶۳ )

caravan from three islands of Great, Medium, and Small Ashuradeh existed until 1929 and 1930. The sending of a these three islands have gradually become connected or connected to each other. On the one hand, and the lowering of the Caspian Sea water level on the other, To the west of Nowshahr, the mountains come closer to the shore, and near Tonekabon, Ramsar, and Roadster, the Kantare plains are narrow and The depth of the sea increases in these parts. Near Ramsar, and especially in Talesh, the mountains cling to the sea.

The southern shores of the Caspian Sea are enclosed in a strip between the Alborz mountain range and the Caspian Sea. This area has a small width and a length of It is located between 45 and 50 degrees east. This unique geographical location is between 40 and 41 degrees north and is very and The region, especially its location on the southern side of the Caspian Sea, is subject to the continuous movement of ridges and troughs of western waves over the region. The presence of high mountain ranges and the complex topography of this region have caused complications in its precipitation patterns and climate. (Sadeghinia: 1395:14).

##### **4.1.5.2. Rivers:**

More than 130 rivers flow into the Caspian Sea, with an annual discharge of about 300 cubic kilometers of water. The largest rivers are the Volga, Ural, Kura, Turk, Sefidrud, Suvalk, Samur, and Gorganrud. The total drainage basin of the Caspian Sea is 3.5 4% million square kilometers; only 8% of which is supplied from Iran. Volga River, 85% Ketura, 4% Ataturk and Setmur, The remaining rivers, Svalak, Sefidrud, and Aras, account for



about 4% of the total river discharge to the Caspian Sea. The Ural River accounts for 3% of the total water discharge, with water levels ranging from 6.12 to 5.13 (Aubrey, 2012; 88-91). Most of the rivers that flow into the Caspian Sea are mesmerized by The northern slopes of the "Alborz Mountains" originate and, since there is not much distance between Alborz and the sea, they are often short. The most important of these rivers are: "Aras", whose source is in the "Thousand Pond Mountains of Türkiye". Sefidrud or Qezlauan is from the mountains of The Chehel Cheshmeh originates in Kurdistan, and the Chalus, Hazar, Tajan, Neka, and Gorgan Rud rivers are also major rivers in this region. The Atrak River, which originates in the Hazar Masjid Mountains, flows into the Caspian Sea in the southeast. (Jatuzani, . 77 :1393)

#### **4.2. Human factors:**

##### **4.2.1. Population distribution:**

The Caspian littoral countries have a population of about 4.237 million and There are five coastal countries with different populations, ethnicities, races, religions, and structures that have special interests in the Caspian Sea. And they consider its division to be a cause of national disillusionment. The people of Russia and Iran consider themselves the original and traditional owners of the Caspian Sea. Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan have nationalist feelings attached to it (Hafeznia and Mojtahedzadeh, 2019: 8-9).

**Table No. 3: Population of Caspian littoral countries by coastal population**

Country	Replying to @serenity	Global revolution	Caspian Sea population (million people)	State-to-country ratio
Russia	۱۴۶.۵۴۴.۷۱۰	۹	۳.۵	۲.۴۶
Iran	۸۶.۰۲۲.۸۳۶	۱۷	۶.۳	۸.۰۲
Kazakhstan	۱۶.۶۰۶.۸۷۸	۶۴	۰.۸	۴.۸۱
Azerbaijan	۹.۵۱۴.۸۸۷	۹۰	۴.۱	۴۳.۰۹
Turkmenistan	۵.۲۴۰.۵۰۲	۱۱۶	۰.۴	۷.۵۴

www.worldometers.info

#### 4.2.2. Population composition:

The population of the Caspian Sea is very diverse in terms of composition. The total population of the Caspian littoral states is about ۲۵۰ million people, of which Azerbaijan has ۵۹ million, Kazakhstan ۱۷ million, Turkmenistan ۱۵ million, Russia ۱۴۴ million. (Astarkhan province ۱ million people, Dagestan ۱ million and Kalmykia half a million people) and Iran with ۸۶ million tons of oil (Astarkhan province Gilan with ۲۵ million people, Mazandaran with ۳ million people, and Golestan province with ۱۷ million people make up the population of this region. They give. (Hafeznia and Mojtahedzadeh, ۲۰۱۹: ۲۰-۲۳).

#### 4.2.3. Nationality and ethnic groups:

Caucasus region in particular have a rich history, with the Volga Etan Kashturs especially in the region. The Central Asian region in general and the Central Asia lacked a separate identity. Before the Russians came to power, the people generally lived in the Ital, Ashtar, and Qabila tribes, Batum, and Dar. Some things were introduced through religion.



**Table No. 4: Ethnic, religious and linguistic characteristics of the Caspian region (Rivandi; 2016: 235)**

Country	The dominant ethnic group	Dominant religion	Official language	Official line
Iran	Fars	Islam	Fars	Persian
Russia	Russia	Christian	Russia	Cyrillic
Turkmenistan	Turkmen	Islam	Turkmen	Altyn
Kazakhstan	Kazakh	Islam	Kazakh	Altyn
Azerbaijan	Azeri	Islam	Azeri	Altyn

### **4.3. olitical actors:**

#### **.4.3.1. Internal:**

Given that political factors are mostly related to the countries bordering the Caspian Sea, in this article we will first examine the political system of Iran and then focus only on some of the geopolitical factors that are generally present in the two regions of Central Asia and the Caucasus (in Both sides of this sea are related and other variables are explained in the environmental section of the countries.

#### **4.3.1.1 Iran'spolitical system:**

Iran in West Asia acts as a bridge connecting the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman. It has a diverse climate that is Comparing different parts of the country, this diversity can be clearly seen. Iran is made up of many ethnic groups, including the Metazani, Giltek, Tatalash, Azeri, Kurdish, Turkmen, Arab, Bakhtiari, Lak, Assyrian, Golani,

Tat, Georgian, Baluch, Sistani, Armenian, Jewish, and Daylami. It has 110 dialects. Currently, 89 percent of the Iranian population is Shia, 9 percent is Sunni, and two percent is Muslim. There are about 20 languages in Iran and There are Zoroastrians, Jews, Christians, and followers of other religions.

The prestige and importance of Iran gradually declined from the 19th century, in light of the developments in Europe, and in Qatar. After World War II, Iran as a base The twentieth century became one of the countries dependent on the global capitalist system. The United States region began to play a role and became the scene of long-term struggles for American cause in 1978. The Iranian Revolution, led by Imam Khomeini and based on Islamic teachings, overthrew the Pahlavi regime and established an Islamic republic. It was established. (Shafi'i,2019:57).

#### **4.3.1.2 National identity and historical background of the Caspian region:**

Except for Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, the other republics and countries of the Caspian Sea basin have experienced periods of There have been unrest. Three important factors have been influential in the nationalist politics of the Caspian littoral states.

- ✓ peoples of Russian nationality were excluded from soviet Union policies in which Russian culture and language prevailed and groups and They have a superior position compared to other groups, which means that current nationalist policies are, to some extent, It is framed in opposition to ethnic groups affiliated with Russia.
- ✓ Second, during the Soviet Union, certain territories were officially and formally allocated to nations that were established in The current republics were reflected, which means that past policies of forced demarcation of borders, The development of nationalist ideas has had a favorable social and administrative context. And you assigned
- ✓ either limited or not recognized at all. This made the respected ethnic groups hostile to the Kashtans. The contract that they dominated (Rivandi 2019:23).



### 4.3.1.3 Social, cultural and religious differences and similarities of the Caspian:

As a result of adopting Soviet policies, the Central Asian countries are faced with significant minorities. The descendants of the Russo-Slavs are about They constitute 30 percent of the population of Kazakhstan, and the same situation is observed in other countries in the region. Although the Central Asian countries have agreed to respect existing political borders, the current demographic composition of the countries in the region is a potential source of crisis and ethnic conflict, and if it escalates, it can lead to genocide. There is another one. (Ibid., 75).

Various ethnic groups with different languages live in the Caspian Sea basin. There are about 50 Qatumi tribes in this region. mainly belong to three language families. Also in this region are the Greeks, Moldavians, Stonhites, Catholihets and Nizhny Kurdets.They Despite the different languages in this region, they use Russian as a common language of communication.

**Table 5: Percentage and composition of Russians in the Caspian Sea countries**

Country name	Percentage of Russians		
	۱۹۹۱	2003	۲۰۲۳
Kazakhstan	۳۷	۳۰	۲۳/۷
Turkmenistan	۹/۸	۷/۸	۴

Azerbaijan	۵/۶	۳/۵	۱/۵
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The table above shows that the percentage of Russians will continue to decline until 2022, which is a matter of increasing insecurity and And the other is due to the dissatisfaction of the main ethnic groups of these countries with the presence of internal conflicts in these countries. It is the Russians (ibid.: 94-95).

**Table No. 6: Percentage of Muslims living in the Caspian littoral countries**

Russia	Kazakhstan	Turkmenistan	Azerbaijan	Iran
% ۶/۵	% ۷۰/۲	% ۹۰	% ۹۱/۶	% ۹۹/۴

A significant percentage of Muslims live in the countries bordering the Caspian Sea.

### **4.3.2 .International:**

#### **4.3.2.1 Regional collective cooperation:**

Due to the lack of common interests and the resulting lack of a sense of convergence among coastal countries, a regional union has not yet been formed. Cooperation between the five littoral countries has not been established, and this factor has intensified the presence of trans-regional countries in the Caspian. (Ahmadipour et al., 2014: 15);

#### **4.3.2.2 The issue of new borders:**

The secessionist countries face numerous border, ethnic, and territorial disputes, as well as conflicts between Russians and non-Russians, and indigenous and non-indigenous people. All of these differences have historical roots and are the product of the strategies and policies implemented by the Tsarist Russian government and its successors. The Soviet communist government has exercised control over ethnic nationalism in the two regions of Central Asia and the South Caucasus during Over the past twenty years, regardless of how the nation-building process has progressed and the natural and human geography of minorities has been arranged, Ethnicity would not have been possible during the past



centuries, especially during the Soviet era. If we look at ethnic issues from this perspective, Looking at these regions, the root of ethnic nationalism in the countries surrounding the Caspian Sea must be traced to the inconsistency of the borders. Political with ethnic, racial and religious boundaries.

Based on such thinking, new political borders in the Caspian region led to the formation of four republics: Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan. and Azerbaijan; but this division meant placing the entire population of an ethnic group within specific political borders. For example, only 60 percent of the population of Kazakhstan is Kazakh. The situation in the South Caucasus region is also This was the case. For example, a region covering 20 percent of the total territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, with more than 94 percent of its inhabitants being Armenians, was separated from Armenia and placed within the borders of the Muslim Republic of Azerbaijan, thus creating the seeds of the ethnic conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. Outside the borders of Azerbaijan, with Armenia in between, an autonomous Azerbaijani republic called Nakhchivan emerged. With such a turbulent legacy, eight republics of the two regions After the collapse of the authoritarian communist system, Central Asia and the South Caucasus entered a new stage of political and economic life. They became their own society, which was nothing but unwanted independence (Kozegar Kolej, 2012: 78).

#### **4.3.2.3 Legal regime:**

Any activity and movement in these seas depends on the goodwill and consent of the coastal and regional countries, and operations Third countries in closed seas should generally be within the sovereignty of that

country with the agreement of these countries, and any When the time was right, bordering countries should try to provide an incentive for superiority in their territory by inviting interested countries and international organizations (ibid.: 154).

Why does the Caspian Sea need an appropriate legal regime? In the Caspian Sea, an agreement on a legal regime in relation to To benefit as much as possible from the services it provides to coastal countries; in addition to the following reasons; referring to The facilities that the Caspian Sea provides to its coastal countries can be a suitable answer to the above question. and Caspian resources because the existence of an appropriate legal regime can facilitate the coastal countries'benefit from the facilities be more sustainable (Valimohammadi, 2011: 33).

- ✓ reserves Oil and gas
- ✓ Maritime transportation and development of trade relations
- ✓ Aquatic animals (400 species; including sturgeon, kilka, bony fish, etc.)
- ✓ Environmental protection The climate is critical

given that these aquatic animals, especially sturgeon, are migratory and dependent on the entire Caspian Sea ecosystem, their protection will not be possible without the continuous cooperation and effective participation of all coastal countries. (Ibid.: 34-35).

#### **4.3.2.4 he occupying regime'sgoals in expanding relations with the Caspian Sea countries:**

- ✓ Economic: Investment in the fields of oil, agriculture, industry, communications, and security systems.
- ✓ Political: Preventing Muslim countries in the region from joining Islamic organizations opposing the occupying regime in Jerusalem Preventing the transfer of nuclear technology and experts from the Caspian Basin (specifically Russia) to countries that are enemies of the occupying regime, putting pressure on Iran by being present



along the northern borders and carrying out espionage activities, encouraging and instigating and gaining regional the immigration of Jews from this region to the occupying regime, promoting Zionist ideas among Jews living in the region, and global legitimacy by establishing relations with the Caspian Basin countries (Shiroudi; 2011: 157).

#### **4.4. Economic factors:**

##### **.4.4.2. Energy:**

And the transfer of energy resources to global markets is a key element Exploration of energy diplomacy as a key factor in political and economic growth; and The foreign policies of the Caspian countries have enabled them to strengthen their sovereignty. The importance of energy in The international arena is so high that it is difficult to justify the necessary reasons for a country's foreign policy beyond its national borders. (Shafi'i:26:1398).

##### **4.4.2 Geo-economy of the Caspian Sea:**

Analysis of the economic strategies of a geographical area without considering short-term commercial profits, as determined by the government. In order to strengthen the national economy or its vital sectors and gain the keys to its control through the political structure, The economy has taken shape and it seems that politics It is called geoeconomics, which combines the three elements of geography, power, and It has been an important factor in geopolitics and has given way to economics. (Ezzati, 2011: 29) The goal of geoeconomics is not to control territories and achieve physical power, but to achieve technological and commercial

dominance. It ultimately creates a new form of hegemony in the form of economic power in the international arena. (Ibid., 106)

#### ۴ Caspian Sea energy reserves:

There has been much debate and disagreement about the Caspian oil reserves. If the Caspian Sea's oil resources have been depleted since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992, let us examine the increasing trend in energy statistics related to the Caspian Sea. This trend has been going on for 20 years. Until 1998, starting at 30 million barrels and reaching 200 billion. Clearly, there is an upward trend in the figures for the Khattar oil. We see the year 1998. (Shafi'i: 28: 1398).

**Table No. 7: Caspian oil and gas reserves according to the US Energy Information Administration report**

Country	Registered reserves	
	Oil (million barrels)	Gas (trillion cubic feet)
Turkmenistan	1 000	19
Russia	6 100	10.9
Azerbaijan	5 800	51
Kazakhstan	32 000	10.4
Iran	500	2

#### 4.5. Military factors:

##### 4.5.1. Iran:

Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, Iran lacked defense equipment in the Caspian Sea, and the Soviet Union seemed to be in a position of superiority. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1994, Tehran, under the influence of the oil boom, maintained its influence in this watery territory. The region upgraded its military capabilities and imported equipment to Anzali Port. In 2000, Tehran strengthened the University of



Marine Sciences Nowshahr and, in parallel, the development of coastal ports such as Nowshahr, Turkman, and Babolsar is an important step in the development of defense capabilities. In the wake of these efforts, Iran has so far managed to deploy 90 small military vessels in the Caspian Sea. And in the future, the most important of them will be missile ships, which were launched in the years 2003 to 2006. More of these types of ships will be deployed. A number of aircraft carriers have also been transferred from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea (Bikbilantdi, 125:1398).

#### **.4.5.2 Kazakhstan:**

After severing cooperation with Russia and seeking to create a national navy in the Caspian, Kazakhstan has focused its efforts on the creation of the Nitroi In 1997, five ships purchased from the Emirates and docked in Aktau were abandoned due to incapacity. The naval personnel drowned in the storm. In the 1990s, Kazakhstan had only one patrol boat and one border guard boat. In During the Russian exercise, Ivanov made a promise to Mukhtar Altibayev, the Kazakh Defense Minister, who was participating in the exercise as an observer. Russia announced that it would donate a ship to Kazakhstan, but it was not until 2003 that the country decided to benefit from the The Navy was determined. In 2003, Nazarbayev explicitly announced the use of advanced ships in the Caspian Sea by 2015, and four more ports are to be prepared. In 2004, Astana gave. The main bases of the forces are the ports of Aktau and Atyrau. Two types of patrol boats "Grif" and "Kalokan" were purchased from Ukraine, and several more ships were purchased from Turkey, the United States and Russia. At the end of the decade, two warships were commissioned to protect defense facilities. Astana also It plans to increase the number of its defense personnel. The country currently has 25 ships and frigates. In Eritrea A battalion of

marines is also stationed there. Kazakhstan is the second country in the Caspian Sea, after Russia, to have a naval ship. These facilities are located in Zenit and Gidropridor in the Uralsk region (Moqer Hasani, 2013: 7-72).

#### **4.5.3. Azerbaijan:**

Although this country inherited a quarter of the Soviet naval assets in the Caspian, these assets included ships and equipment. Therefore, Baku had to pay for the use of the navy. The Azerbaijani navy consisted of 3,200 civilians and it is maintained in sixteen units (two divisions, the Caspian Battalion and the Coast Guard). The navy has a total of ninety-one and rescue. The composition of the country's navy includes a battalion of marines and special forces, guard rescue, airborne and using small Triton-type submarines. The personnel of the country's navy receive training in Turkey and the United States. (Documents of the Second Directorate of the Navy, 2015); Until 2007, the main defense facilities of Azerbaijan were located in Baku, but in this year it was decided to relocate some defense equipment to ports such as Astara, Lankaran, Sangchal and Sumgait. They found that out of the 1,150 manpower, the submarine brigade consisted of several submarines and patrol ships, and... The major weakness of the Azerbaijani Navy is the lack of air support, although Baku has recently purchased Puma (Eurofighter) aircraft to cover this weakness. (Peyrouse & Laruelle, 2009: 27)

#### **4.5.4 Turkmenistan:**

Turkmenistan has the strongest naval fleet in the Caspian Sea after Russia. Unlike Azerbaijan, this country is a partner. It has a military with Israel and is in close coordination with Türkiye. Turkmenistan currently has a separate navy from the Pashtuns. It has its own coast and is equipped with Molniya-class ships purchased from Russia and close to 10 frontline frigates. The Khatud Maritime University has 8 speedboats. Turkmenistan has 2014 Nitroi Maritime and Class Tuval and it has officially opened; but Turkmenistan also used an outdated navy in the past that needed and to protect its maritime interests and islands, it would use an efficient navy. The talent of these units and (Muqor Hastani, 89 :1392)



### **5. Power-creating factors from the perspective of experts:**

In a face-to-face interview with researchers, experts named the factors that create Iran's power in the Caspian Sea as follows: Population, geography and natural resources - economic, political, cultural, informational, industrial (military equipment) components - sciences and Maritime infrastructure, territorial planning of military units on the Caspian Sea coast - the doctrine of balance of power. (Tahani; 2023)

Mathematical diplomacy (sending peace and friendship flotillas, naval competitions) - Intertwining economic interests - Maintaining peace and security - Intertwining geopolitics (corridors passing through the Caspian Sea region) Landlockedness of Asian countries Central - Geoculture and cultural proximity - Discourse on combating smuggling and security of the naval fleet. (Shafqat-roud-Sari; 2023)

Strengthening the repair centers of commercial ships in the Caspian Sea and the dependence of the Caspian Sea countries on the maintenance and repair industries .

Naval fleet equipment - making the Caspian countries dependent on training in all equipment, economic, and security fields (Hakimi, 2023) .

Military presence in the Caspian region - border disputes, terrorism and geopolitical competition, land acquisition efforts aimed at maintaining stability

Preserving national security interests, common oil and gas fields - geostrategic power-building factors (Pourdastan, 2023)

Oil terminal, tourism, fishing - Caspian public security - curtailing the influence of domination - hydrocarbon resources (joint and Non-joint) Transit, Fisheries - Energy Export (Ahmadi Bighash, 2023)

Identity-building factors and cultural and historical commonalities - geographical proximity and structural and functional relationships related to the water area Common ground in the Caspian - Effective political relations with the countries of the region - Easy access through the Caspian Sea to the open waters Southern - Islam (Iraqi, 2024) Economic superiority resulting from hydrocarbon resources (shared and non-shared in the region) - Cultural connection resulting from the religion of Islam.(Safavid 2023)

Region - Formation of a joint economic pact within Having good political relations - Good relations with the ruling systems Bed and underbed. (Romina, 2023)

Contribute more to the continuous enhancement of power - geographical proximity and related structural and functional relationships With the Caspian Sea - hegemony of power - having huge energy reserves in the Caspian Sea (oil and gas) (Bikbilandi, 2023)

### **6. Framework for Analytical Research:**

In the analytical framework of geopolitical factors in the Caspian Sea affecting the continuous promotion of the national power of the Republic of Iran, there are 11 indicators for Natural factor, 6 indicators for human factor, 9 indicators for economic factor, 6 indicators for A total of 11 indicators for the military factor have been calculated in the form of five major factors, as shown in Table (8) and Political and It is drawn.

**Table No. 8: Analytical Framework**

Factors	Index
Natural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Impact on the management of natural and environmental crises in the Caspian Basin</li> <li>✓ depth and flow direction in the Caspian Sea on the interests of Iran2. The impact of water</li> </ul>



Factors	Index
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Iran's dominance over the Caspian Sea waterway</li> <li>✓ Number of Iran's maritime neighbors and length of the Caspian Sea basin coastal borders</li> <li>✓ Taking advantage of the strategic position of the Republic of Iran to be active in the Caspian Sea region.</li> <li>✓ The defense-security impact of the southern Caspian highlands on Iran's national security</li> <li>✓ The length of the coasts of the Republic of Iran in the north</li> <li>✓ Iran's geopolitical advantages over other countries surrounding the Caspian Sea</li> <li>✓ Taking advantage of the transit advantages of communication between the two maritime territories of the North and South.</li> <li>✓ How to deal with water scarcity</li> </ul>
Human	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The influence of the noble leadership on the youth and parties of the Caspian Sea countries.</li> <li>✓ influence of human resources with common cultural, historical and religious identity-building roots in the Caspian Sea countries.</li> <li>✓ Iran's ability to combat extremism and terrorism, maintain stability and internal security, and affect the security of the Caspian Sea countries.</li> <li>✓ The extent to which the Republic of Iran benefits from its civilizational history with the Caspian Sea countries</li> <li>✓ The extent of the influence of a common language and the existence of cultural and religious myths, etc.</li> </ul>

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Factors	Index
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>The extent of use of ethnic capacities in the Caspian Sea countries</b></li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The level of exploitation of energy and natural resources (food sources such as caviar, etc.) and hydrocarbon resources (shared and non-common in the region (Caspian Basin))</li> <li>✓ Influenced by the interconnected economic interests of the Caspian Sea countries</li> <li>✓ <b>Dependence of Caspian countries on the North-South Corridor</b></li> <li>✓ How to use energy and mineral capacities to strengthen the economic power of the Republic of Iran</li> <li>✓ Strengthening the repair centers of commercial ships in the Caspian Sea and the dependence of the Caspian Sea basin countries on the maintenance and repair industries.</li> <li>✓ Marine fleet repair and equipment</li> <li>✓ The level of utilization of Iran's tourism capacity at the level of the Caspian Sea basin countries</li> </ul>
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The effectiveness of Iran's foreign policy and diplomacy strategies in the Caspian Sea countries in reducing the influence of these countries</li> <li>✓ Maintaining domestic political stability depends on Iran's role in resolving border and political disputes in the Caspian Sea.</li> <li>✓ Presence in political coalitions, increasing regional-global allies on balancing power against Caspian Sea rivals</li> <li>✓ The role of anti-arrogance, national-patriotic, and religious ideals on public opinion, especially the young generation of the Caspian Sea basin countries.</li> <li>✓ Exploiting Russia's competitive environment with Europe, NATO, and the United States to consolidate power in the Caspian Sea region</li> <li>✓ and the Caspian Sea countries Area 6. Flexibility of Iranian foreign policy in the face of international diplomacy governing</li> </ul>



Factors	Index
Military	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The extent of surveillance and monitoring of intelligence services and hostile groups in the Caspian Sea basin countries</li> <li>✓ The level of activity of defense-security diplomacy</li> <li>✓ Iran's membership and influence in regional and international defense alliances and pacts</li> <li>✓ Strengthening Iran's military/naval forces in the Caspian Sea basin in line with territorial planning</li> <li>✓ Improving the country's security and defense stability by strengthening the Iranian Navy in the Caspian Sea.</li> <li>✓ Holding joint exercises with Caspian Sea countries</li> <li>✓ Iran's weapons, military and intelligence partners with the Caspian Sea countries</li> <li>✓ Playing a role in managing the military and security conflicts of the Caspian Sea countries</li> <li>✓ <b>The level of development of the country's defense industry</b></li> <li>✓ <b>The extent of access to deterrent weapons of mass destruction</b></li> </ul>

### **7. Methodology:**

The researchers used a descriptive-analytical method to conduct the present study, which is of a fundamental type. Considering The specialization of the research topic, and the limited number of experts and experts related to geopolitical issues in the field in question, society Research among military

and civilian experts and geopolitical experts at the armed forces level who have the following characteristics:

The following were selected: 1) Have a history of service in strategic jobs or in the position of major general (at the national and military levels). 2) Have scientific works familiar with the environment under study. 3) Appropriate familiarity with strategic and geopolitical issues. 4) Minimum degree and research and Their educational level is a master's degree. 5) Served as an official in one of the countries bordering the Caspian Sea. Therefore, the statistical population of the study that has the mentioned characteristics is 80 people.

First, by taking notes from library studies, in-depth interviews, and brainstorming sessions with an expert panel, the needs were identified. interviews, and research literature were analyzed. Again, the overlap of security documents influenced by geopolitical factors was counted. Then, documents, Factors and indicators affecting the promotion of the geopolitical status of the Caspian Sea were analyzed and confirmed by experts and technical specialists. It was reached and analyzed using interpretive structural equations, with the correlation method, and finally using software. SPSS was launched.

## **7.1 How to conduct interviews and prepare questionnaires and their validity and reliability**

### **7.1.1 Interview:**

After consulting with professors and identifying experts, closed and open questions were designed and an attempt was made to involve experts in the field. Geopolitical, military and political factors, taking into account the characteristics of the society, for interviews regarding qualitative data to the point of saturation To increase the reliability of the interview, the interview questions were asked in different ways and at different times.

### **7.1.2. Questionnaire:**

- Face validity: Considering the research questions, first the questionnaire items taken from the research analytical model were prepared for the individuals. The expert presented the questionnaire and after considering



their opinions, it was revised and finally a questionnaire was prepared in the form of 31 closed questions and one The open-ended question design and distribution of the questionnaire questions in two rounds concluded with a high percentage of confidence that the questions This questionnaire has high face validity. A total of 28 questions were distributed among the statistical population and the validity was confirmed and Content validity: using the Regression Validity Coefficient (RVC) It was reviewed and analyzed.

## **7.2. Analysis of findings:**

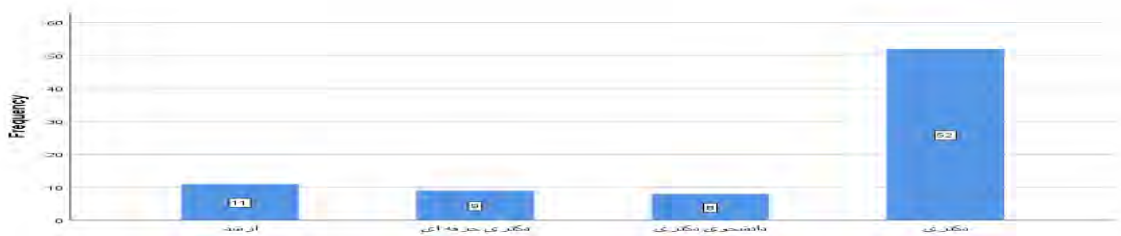
### **7.2.1 Demographic characteristics:**

#### **7.2.1.1 Education:**

**Table 9: Education level**

Master's degree	Abundance	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Professional	11	13.8	13.8	13.8
Doctorate	9	11.3	11.3	25.0
PhD student	8	10.0	10.0	35.0
PhD	52	65.0	65.0	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

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**Chart 1: Distribution of percentage frequency of education level**

13.8 percent of respondents in the statistical sample have a master's degree, 11.3 percent have a professional doctorate; 10 percent information 65 of percent PhD students have a and PhD degree. Therefore, a statistical sample of the level of understanding and They have enough knowledge about research.

**7.2.1.2. Introduction to the topic:**

**Table: 10 Frequency of familiarity with research**

	Abundance	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Master's degree				
Less	4	5.0	5.0	5.0
Medium	29	36.3	36.3	41.3
A lot	35	43.8	43.8	85.0
Too much	12	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

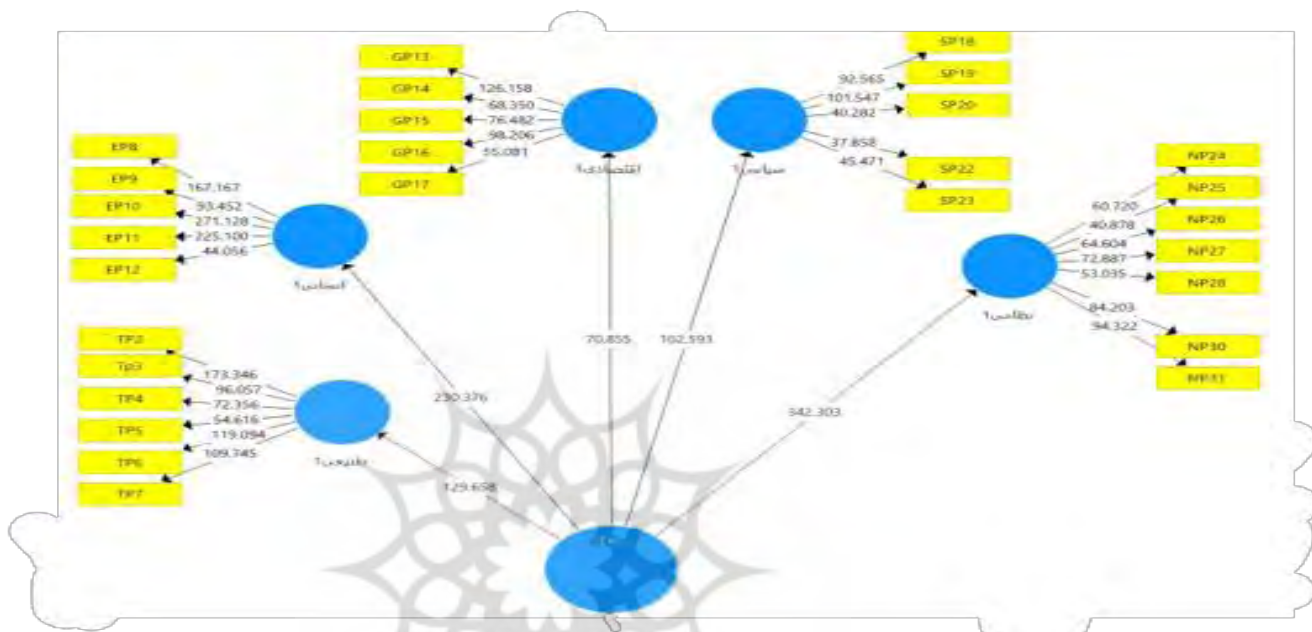


**Figure 2: Percentage distribution of familiarity with the topic**

The level of familiarity of the statistical sample with the research is 5% low; 36.3% medium; 43.8% high; 15% very high. Therefore, the statistical sample has sufficient familiarity and knowledge.

#### 7.2.2 Reflective measurement model test:

The homogeneity test was used for analysis. In other words, if the results of this test are not correct, the following tests must be used. Others also suffer from disorders, but what is meant by being homogeneous or being of the same sex is that the questions of a set are the same variable. It must be of the same type and around the same axis, so in variance-based software, a specific method is used based on factor loadings. and has a cut-off point for it. If the factor loadings are above 0.65, the questions of that variable are homogeneous and It is a gender, if a question does not have a certain value, it should be removed from the model. This process is called factor analysis. This is called verification. To ensure that the questions of a variable measure exactly the same variable and are identical to the same set The following 3 indicators had factor loading values less than 0.65 and were removed from the model.. We ran and The formula was re-written. 28 indicators were confirmed according to the chart below.



**Figure: 3 Modified reflective measurement model in coefficient estimation mode**

7.2.2.1 Model reliability tests: Based on the findings of the following three tests, the model reliability was confirmed.

**Table: 11 Cronbach's alpha coefficients, composite reliability, and shared reliability of research variables**

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
The impact of the continuous enhancement of the national power of the Republic of Iran on national security	0/968	0/978	0/972	0/558
Economic	0/908	0/909	0/932	0/732



	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Human	0/936	0/941	0/952	0/800
Political	0/877	0/884	0/911	0/671
Natura	0/943	0/948	0/955	0/778
military	0/923	0/928	0/939	0/687

Cronbach's alpha coefficients are greater than 0.7 - composite reliability is higher than 0.7 - shared reliability is greater than 0.5 and is confirmed.

7.2.2.2 Model validity test:

Mean variance extracted test: (The combined mean variance extracted test was greater than 0.5, indicating that the model We have construct validity).

**Table: 12 Average extracted variance**

	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
The impact of the continuous enhancement of the national power of the Republic of Iran on national security	0/972	0/558
Economic	0/932	0/732

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	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Human	0/952	0/800
Political	0/911	0/671
Natura	0/955	0/778
military	0/939	0/687

All com Cv values are greater than / 35 and the quality of the measurement model is very strong for all variables.

**Table: 13 Measurement model quality test**

	Cv com	Quality
The impact of the continuous enhancement of the national power of the Republic of Iran on national security	0/445	Strong
Economic	0/536	Strong
Human	0/502	Strong
Political	0/572	Strong
Natura	0/646	Strong
military	0/594	Strong

Structural model test: According to the table below, all relationships have been confirmed.



**Table: 14 Structural model test of variables**

	Path coefficients	Tea value	P.W	Result
Continuous promotion of the national power of the Republic of Iran - < Economic	<b>0/870</b>	<b>70/855</b>	0/000	<b>Confirmati on</b>
Continuous promotion of the national power of the Republic of Iran - < Humanity	<b>0/940</b>	<b>230/376</b>	<b>0/000</b>	<b>Confirmati on</b>
Continuous promotion of the national power of the Republic of Iran - < Political	<b>0/887</b>	<b>102/593</b>	<b>0/000</b>	<b>Confirma tion</b>
Continuous promotion of the national power of the Republic of Iran - < Natural	<b>0/905</b>	<b>129/658</b>	<b>0/000</b>	<b>Confirma tion</b>
Continuous promotion of the national power of the Republic of Iran - < Military	<b>0/955</b>	<b>342/303</b>	<b>0/000</b>	<b>Confirma tion</b>

۷ ۲ ۳. General test of the PLS model

good fit and the modelThe root mean square residual error test SRMR is less than ۰ ۸and the overall PLS model has a The desired one is compatible in society

Table: 15 PLS model tests

	Estimated Model
SRMR	0,002

## 8. Conclusion and suggestions:

### 8.1 Conclusion:

In reviewing the literature, documents, and interviews, as well as the results of the analysis of questionnaire data, it was determined that the most important geopolitical factors that meet the country's national security needs are in fact the foundation of the status and position of the Iranian Republic's national power in the Caspian Sea and are continuously promoting it; therefore, these factors are considered as dimensions and indicators effective in promoting Iran's geopolitical position in the Caspian Sea is considered in accordance with national security needs; which include: "Natural - Human - Economic - Political - Military"

(1). Natural factors: The statistical 0.99, is better after increasing power community believes that this component, with a path coefficient of 0.905 and a beta confidence of The continuous power of Iran is significant. It was measured and evaluated by 6 indicators was 0.835 and the factor load of each indicator is more than Therefore, each of the indicators has good explanatory power for the natural factors component and includes:

- ✓ depth and direction of its flow in the Caspian Sea on the interests of Iran
- ✓ The extent of the impact of water The number of countries neighboring Iran's waterways and the length of the coastal borders of the Caspian Sea basin
- ✓ The extent to which Iran's strategic position is utilized to act in the surrounding countries in the Caspian Sea basin.



- ✓ The extent of the defense-security impact of the southern Caspian highlands (Alborz highlands) on Iran's national security
- ✓ Iran's geopolitical advantages over other countries surrounding the Caspian Sea;
- ✓ Iran's degree of dominance over the waterways of the Caspian Sea basin

(۲) Human component: The statistical community believes that this component has a path coefficient of  $\cdot 99$  on the continuous and reliable power improvement dimension of  $\cdot 99$ . The power of the Iranian Republic has become significant and significant. It is explained by  $\Delta$  indicators, the factor load of each indicator is more than  $\cdot 98$ , which that there is a very good relationship and correlation between these indicators and the human component, and they are indicates:

- ✓ The extent of the influence of the noble leadership on the youth and various parties and groups of the Caspian Sea countries
- ✓ The level of influence of human resources with common cultural, historical and religious identity-building roots in the Caspian Basin
- ✓ The extent of Iran's ability to combat extremism and terrorism, maintain stability and internal security, and affect the security of the Caspian Sea countries
- ✓ The extent to which the Republic of Iran benefits from its civilizational history with the Caspian Sea countries

- ✓ The degree of influence of a common language and the existence of cultural myths such as Maulana Abu Ali Sina or religious myths such as Syed Jamal and....

(3) Economic component: The statistical community believes that this component, with a path coefficient of 0.87, has a continuous improvement in power and with 99% confidence National J.A.Iran. It is effective and meaningful. It is measured by 5 indicators, the factor load of each of the indicators is more than 0.7. Therefore, each of the indicators has good explanatory power for the economic component and It was and includes:

- ✓ The level of exploitation of energy resources (oil and gas) and natural resources (abundant aquatic food resources such as caviar, etc.)
- ✓ Hydrocarbon resources (shared and non-shared in the region) of the Caspian Basin
- ✓ The degree of influence from the interconnected economic interests of the Caspian Sea countries
- ✓ The degree of dependence of the Caspian Sea basin countries on the North and South Corridors, considering the geo-political and The landlockedness of Central Asian countries
- ✓ Strengthening the repair centers of commercial ships in the Caspian Sea and the dependence of the Caspian Sea-dwelling countries on the industry Maintenance and repair of naval fleet equipment.
- ✓ Utilizing Iran's tourism potential at the level of the Caspian Sea basin countries

(4) Political component: From a socio-statistical perspective, this component, with a path coefficient of 0.887, indicates the continuous improvement of national power and with 99% confidence. Iran. It has been a role-player. It is evaluated and measured by 5 indicators, where the factor load of any of the indicators is more than was 0.7 and Therefore, each of the indicators has good explanatory power for the domestic policy factors component and is:



- ✓ The effectiveness of Iran's foreign policy strategies and diplomatic relations in the Transregional countries Caspian Sea countries is better than oil extraction.
  - ✓ Maintaining domestic political stability depends on Iran's constructive role in resolving border and political disputes between Caspian Sea countries.
  - ✓ The level of participation in political coalitions, the increase in regional-global allies on the balance of power in the fight against competitors Present in the Caspian
  - ✓ Exploiting the favorable atmosphere of Russia's competition with Europe, NATO, and the United States to consolidate the power of the Caspian Sea region Region
  - ✓ The degree of flexibility of Iran's strategies and foreign policy in relation to the diplomatic and international system that governs it.
- (<sup>o</sup>) Military component: This component has a path coefficient of ۰,۹۰۰ and a confidence level of ٪۹۹ effective and meaningful in the continuous promotion of national power. Therefore, each of the indicators has a good correlation with  $\forall$  indicators, each of which has a factor loading of more than ۰,۸۱ $\xi$  And it consists of: They have a military component and can measure this component with high power.
- ✓ The extent of monitoring and surveillance of the activities of intelligence services and hostile groups in the Caspian Sea region
  - ✓ Iran's membership and influence in regional and international defense alliances and pacts

- ✓ Strengthening military/naval forces in the Caspian Sea in line with territorial planning ÿ Improving the country's security and defense stability by strengthening the Iranian Navy in the Caspian Sea
- ✓ Holding joint exercises with Caspian Sea countries
- ✓ The extent of the Islamic Republic of Iran's arms, military, and intelligence cooperation with Caspian Sea countries
- ✓ The extent of the role played in controlling and managing the scene of military and security conflicts in the Caspian Sea countries

**٨,٢. Suggestions:**

- 1) Resolve the legal regime of the Caspian Sea within the framework of international law with the participation of all littoral states, taking into account Issues such as shipping, the right of countries to use fishing, the use of natural resources, and environmental issues. Environmental, determination of sovereignty over the sea surface
- 2) Active diplomatic efforts of the Republic of Kazakhstan to prevent any bilateral or tripartite agreement between the Caspian Sea littoral states in Regarding the determination of sovereignty over the Caspian Sea
- 3) Applying policies to encourage the convergence of the countries around the Caspian Sea and the use of constructive diplomacy (in the form of An example of making the Caspian Sea Cooperation Organization more active is the use of sports cups of the Caspian Sea littoral countries. Caspian Cup competitions, Caspian Colleges Union, Caspian Governors Union, Caspian Youth Union, etc.)

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