



JERVIS –PERCEPTIONS AND MISPERCEPTIONS IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS (I)

Cognitive consistency itself generally refers to how people view the world and themselves; they like to view their world, the players in it, and their own personal actions as consistent, and biases influence these perceptions of consistency.

Rational Consistency: People interpret evidence in a manner that is rational; that is, they make inferences about the evidence that aren't really biased.

Irrational Consistency: Subconscious biases impact how people view the world and their decisions; were they aware of these subconscious biases, people would reject them.

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- Basically, decision-makers seek **familiar frameworks** to understand new and challenging situations. **Historical analogies**, particularly those with related policy decisions or crises are used by decision-makers **to make sense out of new and challenging situations** (whether or not there is actual linkage between the two becomes irrelevant). As a result, decision-makers may be subconsciously forcing the proverbial square peg into a round hole and, as such, tend to lean towards certain policy options (those used previously typically) and away from others.
- **Poor Learning; Poor Analysis; Poor Policy; Poor Outcome**