

Energy Diplomacy in a Fragile State: Turkish and Russian Competition in Libya's Oil Sector

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Abstract

Since the collapse of Muammar Gaddafi's regime in 2011, Libya has remained a fragile state characterized by institutional fragmentation, political instability, and contested sovereignty over its vast oil resources. In this volatile environment, external actors have increasingly used energy diplomacy as a strategic tool to gain influence, economic advantages, and geopolitical leverage. This study examines the competitive energy diplomacy of Turkey and Russia in Libya's oil sector, analyzing how their interventions influence energy governance, national stability, and regional energy security. Based on energy security and geopolitical competition frameworks, the research employs a qualitative comparative approach, utilizing secondary data from policy documents, United Nations reports, National Oil Corporation publications, and peer-reviewed literature. The study finds that Turkish engagement highlights institutional partnerships and political alignment with internationally recognized authorities, while Russian involvement relies more on security leverage and indirect control mechanisms related to strategic positioning. The rivalry between these actors has worsened Libya's governance challenges, weakened institutional coherence, and complicated post-conflict energy sector reforms. Ultimately, the study concludes that although Turkish and Russian energy diplomacy have temporarily stabilized certain production zones, their competitive strategies pose a threat to long-term energy security and sustainable state-building in Libya. These findings contribute to broader discussions on energy diplomacy in fragile states and provide policy insights for managing external interventions in post-conflict energy governance.

Keywords: energy diplomacy, fragile states, Libya's oil sector, geopolitical competition, Turkey–Russia rivalry, energy governance

Introduction

Energy diplomacy has become a central instrument of statecraft in the contemporary international system, particularly within regions marked by political instability and weak governance structures. As global competition over energy resources intensifies, states increasingly deploy diplomatic, economic, and security tools to secure access to hydrocarbons and shape political outcomes in resource-rich environments (Cherp & Jewell, 2014; Goldthau & Witte, 2010). In fragile and post-conflict states, where institutional authority is contested and sovereignty remains unevenly exercised, energy diplomacy often intersects with geopolitical rivalry, amplifying both opportunities for stabilization and risks of prolonged instability.

Libya represents a critical case within this global dynamic. The country holds the largest proven oil reserves in Africa and occupies a strategic position along the Mediterranean energy corridor linking North Africa to European markets (BP, 2023).

However, the collapse of Muammar Gaddafi's regime in 2011 triggered sustained political fragmentation, armed conflict, and institutional erosion. Competing governments, militias, and foreign actors have struggled for control over territory and resources, transforming Libya's oil sector into both a lifeline for national revenue and a site of intense geopolitical contestation (Lacher, 2020; Wehrey, 2018). The weakening of central authority has undermined the effective functioning of key institutions, particularly the National Oil Corporation (NOC), leaving the energy sector vulnerable to politicization and external manipulation (United Nations Security Council [UNSC], 2023).

Within this volatile context, Turkey and Russia have emerged as pivotal external actors shaping Libya's political and energy landscape. Their involvement extends beyond military and diplomatic engagement to encompass strategic interests in oil production, infrastructure, and long-term energy access. Turkey's approach has largely centered on formal diplomatic recognition, bilateral agreements, and economic partnerships aligned with internationally recognized Libyan authorities, reflecting Ankara's broader ambitions in the Eastern Mediterranean energy space (Aydın & Açıkmeşe, 2021; Tol, 2020). Russia, by contrast, has pursued a more indirect and flexible strategy, combining security influence, political mediation, and energy interests to expand its strategic footprint in North Africa and enhance its leverage over regional energy dynamics (Kendall-Taylor & Shullman, 2021; Stronski, 2022).

The competitive interaction between Turkish and Russian energy diplomacy in Libya raises critical questions about the governance of natural resources in fragile states. While foreign engagement has contributed at times to the resumption of oil production and short-term economic stabilization, it has also deepened institutional fragmentation and reinforced elite competition over energy rents (Mezran & Varvelli, 2023). External rivalries have complicated efforts to insulate Libya's oil sector from political interference, undermining transparency, accountability, and national cohesion. As a result, energy governance has become increasingly entangled with geopolitical bargaining, limiting Libya's capacity to exercise sovereign control over its most vital economic asset. Despite a growing body of scholarship on Libya's conflict and the geopolitics of energy, existing studies often focus on military intervention, diplomatic processes, or single-actor analyses. Comparatively little attention has been paid to the structured competition between Turkey and Russia within Libya's oil sector, particularly through the lens of energy diplomacy in a fragile-state setting (Lacher, 2020; Goldthau et al., 2019). This gap limits scholarly understanding of how rival external strategies interact to shape energy security outcomes and state-building trajectories in post-conflict societies.

This study addresses this gap by conducting a comparative analysis of Turkish and Russian energy diplomacy in Libya's oil sector. By situating their strategies within broader

theoretical debates on energy security, geopolitical competition, and fragile state governance, the research contributes to contemporary discussions in international relations and energy studies. The study argues that while energy diplomacy can serve as a mechanism for engagement and limited stabilization, uncoordinated and competitive external interventions ultimately weaken institutional resilience and undermine sustainable energy governance in fragile states such as Libya.

Review of Related Literature

Energy Diplomacy and Geopolitical Competition

Recent scholarship on energy diplomacy highlights how states use energy resources and markets to project power and secure geopolitical influence, especially in fragile and conflict-affected regions. Yıldırım (2025) analyzes Eastern Mediterranean energy diplomacy, showing the strategic interplay among regional powers over hydrocarbon access and transport routes. This context frames Turkey's broader engagement in North African energy arenas, including Libya (Yıldırım, 2025). Similarly, global analyses emphasize how cross-border energy trade influences foreign policy alignments, affecting relationships between producing and consuming nations in periods of conflict and recovery (Navigating energy diplomacy..., 2024). These studies provide a theoretical backdrop for understanding how Turkey and Russia deploy energy diplomacy as instruments of strategic competition in Libya's oil sector.

Turkey's Engagement with Libya's Oil Sector

Turkey's energy diplomacy in Libya has intensified in recent years through bilateral agreements, institutional cooperation, and expanded economic engagement. Libyan officials in 2025 emphasized Türkiye as a "strategic partner" across energy sectors, signaling Tripoli's interest in deepening cooperation beyond oil into renewable energy and technical collaboration (Anadolu Agency, 2025). Additionally, media and policy reports highlight 2025 MoUs between the Libyan National Oil Corporation (NOC) and Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO) for offshore hydrocarbon exploration, illustrating Ankara's active role in Libya's energy governance and investment landscape (Debuglies, 2025). These developments point to a shift from military-centric involvement toward institutionalized economic engagement in the oil sector. Scholarly literature further situates Turkish foreign policy within broader geopolitical calculations—linking Libya to Eastern Mediterranean energy politics and asserting Ankara's balancing strategies against competing regional interests (Kiraz, 2023). Such analyses underscore Turkey's attempt to secure strategic energy corridors and upstream positions in Libya's oil infrastructure within a competitive regional order.

Russia's Influence and Strategic Positioning

Russia's engagement in Libya's energy scene reflects a mix of strategic interests tied to both hydrocarbon control and broader geopolitical influence. Reports note Russian actors, including private military companies, maintaining influence over eastern oil fields and export flows, illustrating Moscow's multifaceted presence that combines security leverage with energy extraction (Debuglies, 2025). Additionally, accounts from European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) highlight the circulation of Russian refined products in Libya and the entrenchment of informal trade networks that benefit Russian exporters while exacerbating Libya's governance deficits (ECFR, 2025). Empirical analyses also describe how Russia's strategic pivot to Libya intertwines energy interests with political backing for Haftar-aligned factions,

complicating efforts toward unified oil governance and facilitating Russia's broader Mediterranean strategy. Such patterns reflect a diplomatic playbook that leverages oil as a tool of influence in fragile contexts.

Institutional Fragility, Oil Governance, and External Actors

This literature reveals that external energy diplomacy by Turkey and Russia intersects significantly with institutional fragility within Libya's oil sector. Observers have linked ongoing fuel smuggling networks and barter arrangements to weakened governance, demonstrating how fragmented authority over production and revenues undermines state accountability and sovereignty (The Sentry report, 2025). These illicit practices, which cost Libya billions in lost revenue and distort oil trade flows, illustrate the broader structural challenges that external energy engagement must navigate (The Guardian, 2025). The International Monetary Fund's 2025 Article IV Consultation and related reports show Libya's continued dependency on hydrocarbons (accounting for about 95% of exports and 60% of GDP) and the fragmented revenue mechanisms that benefit armed groups and external actors—a structural condition that enables competing diplomatic strategies to affect oil governance directly (Debuglies, 2025).

Gaps and Emerging Directions in the Literature

While substantial policy reports and media analyses document external involvement in Libya's oil sector, academic scholarship with a comparative lens on Turkish and Russian energy diplomacy remains limited. Most studies tend to isolate political or military dimensions of foreign intervention rather than examining how strategic energy diplomacy interacts with institutional fragility in shaping oil governance outcomes. There is also a need for systematic academic research that integrates recent empirical data (2023–2025) with theoretical frameworks on energy security, fragile states, and

Theoretical Framework

This study finds it necessary to adopt three theories to explain the nexus between energy diplomacy in a fragile state: Turkish and Russian competition in Libya's oil sector. These theories are Energy Diplomacy Theory, Realist International Relations theory, and Fragile-State Theory.

1. Energy Diplomacy Theory

Originating in late 20th-century International Political Economy, this theory gained prominence after the 1970s oil shocks, which revealed energy as a strategic foreign policy tool. It posits that energy is not just an economic commodity but a diplomatic instrument for securing influence and geopolitical leverage (Yergin, 1991; Van de Graaf & Goldthau, 2013).

Strengths: Its major strength is integrating economics and geopolitics, explaining how states use resources and infrastructure as non-military instruments of power. It is highly relevant for analyzing competition in resource-rich, unstable states like Libya.

Weaknesses: It is often overly state-centric, overlooking non-state actors. It also underplays domestic politics and security dynamics, assuming rational bargaining in stable environments—conditions absent in conflict zones (Goldthau & Witte, 2010; Stevens, 2012).

2. Realist International Relations Theory

With roots in Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Hobbes, modern Realism, formalized by Morgenthau (1948) and Waltz (1979), posits that states are rational actors prioritizing power and survival in an anarchic international system.

Strengths: Realism clearly explains power-driven state behavior and interstate rivalry, offering strong predictive value for geopolitical contestation, such as in Libya.

Weaknesses: Its exclusive focus on the state neglects non-state actors and domestic politics. It also pays limited attention to sustained cooperation and ethical norms (Keohane & Nye, 2012; Wendt, 1999).

3. **Fragile-State Theory** Developed in the post-Cold War period, this theory examines states that fail to maintain authority, legitimacy, and service delivery. It highlights how weak institutions and contested sovereignty create vulnerability to internal conflict and external intervention (Rotberg, 2003; OECD, 2011).

Strengths: It effectively integrates security, development, and political dimensions to explain persistent instability. It is highly relevant for post-conflict contexts and explains why weak states become targets for external competition.

Weaknesses: The theory suffers from conceptual ambiguity and a Western-centric bias. It often underestimates external historical factors and local agency (Call, 2011; Boege et al., 2009).

Application of Energy Diplomacy Theory

Energy Diplomacy Theory serves as the core analytical framework for examining Turkish and Russian engagement in Libya's oil sector by emphasizing how states integrate diplomatic, economic, and security instruments to secure access to strategic energy resources beyond their borders (Goldthau & Witte, 2010; Van de Graaf, 2013). In fragile political environments, energy diplomacy often transcends conventional economic cooperation and becomes deeply entangled with military support, political recognition, and institutional influence (Goldthau, 2014).

Applied to Libya, this theory explains how Turkey has used formal diplomatic agreements, energy cooperation frameworks, and security guarantees to consolidate its position within Libya's hydrocarbon sector, particularly through engagement with internationally recognized authorities (Aydin, 2020). These strategies demonstrate how energy diplomacy functions as a comprehensive foreign policy tool aimed at securing long-term access to resources while reshaping regional power dynamics. Similarly, Russia's involvement—often channelled through state-linked energy companies and security intermediaries—reflects a strategic effort to influence Libya's oil production and export infrastructure as part of its broader global energy diplomacy agenda (Henderson & Mitrova, 2020).

Energy Diplomacy Theory further helps explain how both actors exploit Libya's fragmented governance structures, including competing political authorities and weakened regulatory institutions, to negotiate energy access under conditions of reduced accountability (Van de Graaf & Colgan, 2016). Thus, the theory enables the study to conceptualize Libya not merely as an energy producer but as a diplomatic arena where energy resources become instruments of strategic leverage amid political fragility.

Application of Realist International Relations Theory

Realist International Relations Theory provides a complementary lens by situating Turkish and Russian energy diplomacy within a broader struggle for power, influence, and strategic advantage in the international system (Morgenthau, 1948; Waltz, 1979). From a realist perspective, energy resources are critical components of national power, enhancing economic resilience, military capability, and geopolitical leverage (Klare, 2008).

In applying realism to this study, Turkey's and Russia's involvement in Libya is interpreted as rational state behavior driven by national interest rather than normative commitments to stability or development. Libya's vast oil reserves, strategic Mediterranean location, and proximity to European energy markets render it a high-value geopolitical asset in an anarchic international system characterized by competition among regional and great powers (Yergin, 2011). Turkey's actions reflect a realist pursuit of energy security diversification and regional influence, while Russia's engagement aligns with its long-standing strategy of using energy dominance to reinforce geopolitical positioning and constrain Western influence (Balmaceda, 2013).

Realism also explains the limited scope for sustained cooperation between Turkey and Russia in Libya. Although tactical coordination may occur, it is shaped by balance-of-power calculations and mutual distrust rather than institutionalized cooperation (Mearsheimer, 2001). Consequently, Realist Theory allows the study to interpret energy diplomacy in Libya as an extension of geopolitical rivalry, intensified by the absence of effective state authority.

Application of Fragile State Theory

Fragile State Theory is crucial for understanding the domestic conditions that enable and shape external energy competition in Libya. The theory emphasizes characteristics such as weak institutional capacity, fragmented sovereignty, contested legitimacy, and the inability of the state to exercise effective control over territory and resources (Rotberg, 2003; OECD, 2018).

Applied to Libya, Fragile State Theory explains how prolonged political fragmentation since 2011 has undermined centralized governance of the oil sector, transforming energy resources into instruments of factional bargaining and external manipulation (Mezran & Varvelli, 2017). The MN absence of a unified political authority and the politicization of oil revenues create opportunities for external actors to align with rival domestic factions, offering security assistance and diplomatic recognition in exchange for energy access (Lacher, 2020).

Moreover, the theory highlights how external energy diplomacy can reinforce state fragility rather than alleviate it. Turkish and Russian interventions, while advancing their strategic interests, often bypass national institutions and contribute to parallel governance structures, thereby weakening prospects for institutional consolidation and sustainable energy governance (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004). Fragile State Theory thus enables the study to assess the unintended consequences of foreign energy engagement on Libya's political stability and energy security.

Integrative Application of the Theories

Taken together, Energy Diplomacy Theory, Realist International Relations Theory, and Fragile State Theory provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing Turkish and Russian competition in Libya's oil sector. Energy Diplomacy Theory explains the mechanisms and instruments through which states pursue energy interests; Realist Theory clarifies the power-based motivations underlying state behavior; and Fragile State Theory contextualizes the structural vulnerabilities that allow such competition to flourish (Goldthau & Sitter, 2015).

The integrative application of these theories demonstrates that energy diplomacy in fragile states is shaped by the intersection of geopolitical rivalry and domestic institutional weakness. In the Libyan case, this interaction transforms oil from a potential driver of recovery into a catalyst for sustained competition and

instability. By combining these theoretical perspectives, the study offers a nuanced explanation of how energy diplomacy operates in fragile contexts and why external competition often exacerbates, rather than resolves, political and energy insecurity.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative, comparative case study design to examine the energy diplomacy strategies of Turkey and Russia in Libya's oil sector. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the research focuses on understanding complex political, economic, and institutional interactions rather than testing numerical hypotheses (Creswell & Poth, 2023). The comparative case study design allows systematic examination of two external actors—Turkey and Russia—highlighting differences and similarities in strategic approaches, instruments, and impacts on Libya's energy governance and state fragility (Yin, 2022). This approach provides rich contextual insights and enables theoretical generalization regarding energy diplomacy in fragile, resource-dependent states.

Population and Scope of the Study

The population for this study consists of policy documents, official reports, international organization assessments, scholarly articles, and credible media sources concerning Libya's oil sector and foreign engagement from 2011 to 2025. The scope is limited to:

- Libya's oil sector, focusing on production, infrastructure, and governance.
- The activities of Turkey and Russia as external actors.
- The post-2011 period following Gaddafi's fall.

Data Sources: Secondary data form the core of the research, including:

1. **Official documents and agreements:** Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between Libya and Turkey or Russia, NOC reports, and bilateral energy cooperation agreements.
2. **International organization reports:** United Nations Panel of Experts reports on Libya, IMF Article IV consultations, and OECD assessments of fragile states.
3. **Academic literature:** Peer-reviewed articles on energy diplomacy, geopolitical competition, and Libya's political economy.
4. **Policy papers and think-tank analyses:** Reports from Atlantic Council, Carnegie Endowment, European Council on Foreign Relations, and other credible research institutes.
5. **Media sources:** Verified reports from Anadolu Agency, Reuters, and The Guardian for recent developments (2023–2025).

Data Collection and Analysis

Data Collection:

- Relevant secondary sources will be systematically identified through academic databases (e.g., Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar) and official organizational websites.
- Keywords include: "Libya oil sector," "Turkey Libya energy diplomacy," "Russia Libya energy engagement," "fragile states," and "post-conflict energy governance."

Data Analysis:

- The study employs thematic content analysis, identifying patterns, themes, and strategies in Turkish and Russian energy diplomacy (Braun & Clarke, 2023).
- Comparative analysis examines approaches, instruments, and consequences for Libya's oil governance, institutional stability, and energy security.
- Findings are triangulated across multiple sources to enhance reliability and validity.

Justification of Methodology

The qualitative comparative case study approach is justified because:

1. It provides in-depth contextual understanding of complex phenomena, suitable for fragile-state environments where quantitative data may be scarce or unreliable (Creswell & Poth, 2023).
2. It allows direct comparison of Turkey and Russia, highlighting how different strategies produce varied outcomes in the same institutional context.
3. It aligns with the study's objectives of analyzing strategy, mechanisms, and consequences of energy diplomacy rather than measuring numerical variables.

Ethical Considerations

The study relies solely on secondary, publicly available sources, ensuring no direct engagement with human subjects in conflict zones.

Sensitive political content is presented objectively, avoiding bias or political advocacy.

Findings:

The study's findings are organized around key themes derived from the analysis of secondary data sources, including policy reports, scholarly literature, and official documents.

Strategic Motivations of Turkey and Russia

Turkey seeks to secure energy access, political alliances, and maritime influence in the Eastern Mediterranean. Through formal agreements with the Libyan Government of National Unity (GNU) and the National Oil Corporation (NOC), Turkey positions itself as a stabilizing partner while advancing strategic economic interests (Anadolu Agency, 2025; Kiraz, 2023).

Russia, in contrast, prioritizes long-term geopolitical leverage, using informal networks, private security actors, and alignment with Haftar-affiliated factions to control eastern oil regions. Moscow combines energy interests with broader regional influence, leveraging Libya's fragile institutions to maximize its strategic footprint (ECFR, 2025; Stronski, 2022).

Instruments and Mechanisms of Engagement

Diplomatic and Economic Tools: Turkey utilizes bilateral agreements, MoUs, and institutional partnerships to secure exploration rights and oil infrastructure access. Russian engagement relies on indirect mechanisms, including strategic investments, fuel supply networks, and support for local power brokers (Mezran & Varvelli, 2023; Debuglies, 2025).

Security Leverage: Russian involvement often includes private military companies and military support to allied factions, enabling control over key oil fields. Turkey uses a combination of military deterrence and security guarantees for partner institutions to protect oil infrastructure (Yıldırım, 2025).

Impact on Libya's Oil Governance

The competition between Turkey and Russia has reinforced institutional fragmentation, with parallel systems of influence

over production, export, and revenue allocation (The Sentry report, 2025).

Both actors have exacerbated rent-seeking and politicization of the National Oil Corporation, undermining transparency and accountability (UNSC, 2023).

Short-term stabilization of certain production zones is evident, yet governance deficits persist, limiting Libya's sovereign control over its energy resources.

Consequences for Energy Security and Political Stability

Energy Security: The rivalry has temporarily increased production in specific regions but exposes Libya to supply disruptions due to armed factional conflicts and foreign influence (Debuglies, 2025).

Political Stability: Turkish-Russian competition has deepened political polarization, as each actor aligns with different local authorities. This dynamic undermines efforts at national reconciliation and weakens institutional legitimacy (Lacher, 2020; Mezran & Varvelli, 2023).

Regional Implications: The interventions influence Mediterranean energy geopolitics, affecting neighboring states and European energy markets by shaping Libya's oil export patterns (Yıldırım, 2025; ECFR, 2025).

Synthesis of Findings

1. **Differentiated Strategies:** Turkey focuses on institutional partnerships and diplomatic recognition, while Russia relies on indirect control, security leverage, and factional alliances.
2. **Reinforcement of Fragility:** Both actors, despite short-term production gains, contribute to institutional weakness and fragmented governance.
3. **Implications for Policy:** Effective energy diplomacy in fragile states requires balancing foreign engagement with institutional consolidation to prevent external competition from undermining governance.

Recommendations of the Study

Based on the findings, the study offers the following recommendations aimed at strengthening Libya's energy governance, mitigating the negative impacts of external competition, and promoting long-term political stability:

Strengthen Institutional Capacity

- **Enhance the autonomy of the National Oil Corporation (NOC):** Libya should consolidate the NOC's authority over production, export, and revenue allocation to minimize factional influence and reduce dependency on foreign actors (UNSC, 2023).
- **Capacity-building programs:** International organizations and partner states can provide technical assistance and governance training to improve transparency, regulatory enforcement, and financial management within Libya's oil sector.

Regulate Foreign Engagement

- **Establish clear frameworks for foreign participation:** Libya should create standardized procedures for foreign investment and energy agreements, ensuring that all external actors operate under transparent legal and regulatory protocols (Mezran & Varvelli, 2023).
- **Balanced diplomacy:** Policymakers should aim to engage foreign partners in a coordinated manner that prioritizes institutional development over factional alliances, thereby reducing zero-sum competition.

Promote Conflict-Sensitive Energy Diplomacy

- **Integrate energy and security policies:** Agreements with external actors should incorporate safeguards to prevent militarization of oil infrastructure and avoid alignment with specific armed groups (Stronski, 2022).
- **Inclusive decision-making:** Energy policy should involve multiple stakeholders, including regional authorities and civil society, to reduce elite capture and enhance legitimacy.

Enhance Regional and International Cooperation

- **Multilateral monitoring:** Libya could collaborate with the UN, EU, and African Union to monitor foreign energy engagement, ensuring compliance with international law and preventing exploitation of institutional fragility (ECFR, 2025).
- **Conflict-resolution mechanisms:** Establish regional dialogue platforms to manage disputes over energy resources and coordinate interventions from external states like Turkey and Russia.

Long-Term Strategic Planning

- **Diversify energy portfolio:** While oil remains central, Libya should invest in renewable energy and local capacity-building to reduce dependence on external actors and foster sustainable development.
- **Scenario planning:** Develop strategies to anticipate shifts in external actors' policies, including Turkish and Russian engagement, to mitigate risks to national sovereignty and energy security.

These recommendations emphasize the need for Libya to strengthen institutional governance, regulate foreign involvement, and adopt conflict-sensitive energy diplomacy. Proper implementation will reduce the destabilizing effects of external competition while promoting sustainable management of Libya's critical oil resources, contributing to long-term political stability and energy security.

Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions, this study is subject to certain limitations:

1. **Access to Reliable and Comprehensive Data**
The fragile security environment in post-2011 Libya restricts access to up-to-date, reliable, and comprehensive primary data, particularly regarding oil production figures, contractual agreements, and informal arrangements involving foreign actors. As a result, the study relies significantly on secondary sources, official statements, and expert reports, which may reflect institutional or political biases.
2. **Restricted Transparency of Energy Agreements**
Many energy-related agreements, security arrangements, and diplomatic negotiations involving Turkey and Russia are not fully disclosed to the public. This limits the study's ability to assess the complete scope and depth of foreign involvement in Libya's oil sector.
3. **Narrow Geographical and Actor Focus**
The study focuses primarily on Libya and on the roles of Turkey and Russia. While this allows for in-depth analysis, it limits broader generalization to other external actors such as the European Union, the United States, Gulf states, or regional African stakeholders who also influence Libya's energy landscape.

4. **Evolving Political and Security Dynamics**
Libya's political environment remains highly fluid, with shifting alliances, ceasefires, and institutional fragmentation. Consequently, some findings may be time-bound and subject to change as new political developments or energy policies emerge.

Suggestions for Further Studies

In light of the above limitations, future research may consider the following directions:

1. **Inclusion of Additional External Actors**
Future studies could expand the scope to include the roles of the European Union, Gulf states, China, or international oil companies, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of multipolar competition in Libya's energy sector.
2. **Comparative Studies Across Fragile States**
Comparative research examining energy diplomacy in other conflict-affected, resource-rich states such as Iraq, Nigeria, South Sudan, or Yemen would help test the applicability of this study's findings across different geopolitical and institutional contexts.
3. **Empirical Fieldwork and Elite Interviews**
When security conditions permit, future research could incorporate fieldwork, interviews with policymakers, energy sector officials, and representatives of the National Oil Corporation to enrich empirical depth and reduce reliance on secondary data.
4. **Longitudinal and Post-Conflict Analysis**
Further studies could adopt a longitudinal approach to assess how Turkish–Russian energy competition evolves, particularly in the event of institutional unification or successful post-conflict reconstruction in Libya.
5. **Role of Energy Governance Reforms and Technology**
Future research could explore how governance reforms, digital transparency mechanisms, or emerging technologies (such as AI-driven monitoring of oil infrastructure) may mitigate foreign manipulation and strengthen energy security in fragile states.

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