

ANALYZING THE POLITICAL DYNAMICS AND REGIONAL CONFLICTS IN SOUTH ASIA

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Abstract

With its diverse cultures, economies, and political systems, South Asia has long been plagued by intricate political dynamics and protracted regional conflicts. An analytical summary of the complex political environment and the interconnected conflicts that are common in South Asia is given in this paper. First, the historical background that influenced the current political dynamics is examined. The complex web of power struggles and alliances in the region is a result of a combination of factors including geopolitical rivalries, nation-building initiatives undertaken after independence, and the legacy of colonialism. The paper also explores the internal political dynamics of major South Asian nations, such as Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka. It investigates the variables affecting electoral procedures, governance frameworks, and the influence of different political parties and interest groups on forming national policies. The study also looks into the widespread regional conflicts that have afflicted South Asia for many years. These conflicts take many different forms, from ethnic tensions like the Tamil-Sinhala divide in Sri Lanka to territorial disputes like the conflict in Kashmir between India and Pakistan. Furthermore, the stability of the region is seriously threatened by religious extremism and terrorism, with extremist factions in Pakistan and Bangladesh and organisations like the Taliban in Afghanistan escalating tensions. The impact of external players on political dynamics and efforts to resolve conflicts in South Asia is also assessed in this paper. These actors include major powers like the United States, China, and Russia as well as international organisations like the United Nations.

Keywords: South Asia, Conflict, Pakistan, India, Geo Political, International Organization, SAARC.

INTRODUCTION

South Asia, a region made up of eight separate nations, has not yet established a safe haven for humanity in the intrastate, interstate, and human areas. There are many basic reasons why half of the population in the region continues to live in high levels of insecurity, but weak states and weak active norms can be seen as the two main causes of insecurity when looked at from an intrinsic perspective. Therefore, the development of diverse national states with focused ethno-national majorities, or in addition, having a single ethnic group, can be analytically linked to the growth of conflict regions in South Asia. ¹These were the outcomes of the South African state's main conflict.

Examining the scenario of intrastate or internal conflicts in South Asia, the region is found to be suffering from various types of conflicts of serious insecurity nature. For example, it is found that the majority of the countries in the region are impacted by various forms of ethnic conflicts, terrorist attacks, separatist uprisings, class strife, and

lawlessness, as well encompassing civil wars and civil violence.

Interstate conflict Now, let's take a quick look at the conflict profiles of each South Asian nation, beginning with Afghanistan, which is a prime example of persistent internal violence. This is especially because of the Taliban's ascent at one extreme and outside infiltration at the other. Afghanistan's growing conflict is evidence of the absence or non-establishment of a strong state. Similarly, it was discovered that Sri Lanka experienced the bloodiest internal conflicts in the area³. It is determined that this dispute, which has persisted for almost thirty years, has a significant ethnopolitical foundation. Long-standing political violence, particularly in the form of the and conflict, has also occurred in Nepal.

There are an endless number of internal conflicts in Bangladesh as well. Bangladesh has continued to be the target of state-instigated political violence, with the army and political parties engaged in ongoing conflicts over authority of the state. Bangladesh's high rate of poverty causes many of its citizens to frequently migrate to India in search of a better life.

India is regarded as a soft state in terms of how it responds to different security-related issues, despite being a very powerful state. As a result, there have been several internal conflicts that have spread throughout the nation and have affected neighbouring states.³ India still faces a number of significant internal security issues of various kinds as a result. ⁴This primarily includes the Left-wing/Maoist movement in a greater percentage of Indian tribal-dominated territories, the insurgency movements in the northeast⁵ and in J & K. Significant issues with human security are also brought about by the internal conflicts in many of the South Asian nations.

Different issues are a common expression of inter-state conflict in the South Asian region. These disputes could take the shape of territorial disputes between India and Afghanistan and Pakistan together terrorism that crosses borders between India and Pakistan.

Natural resource-related conflict between Bangladesh and India and Pakistan dispute involving immigrants and refugees between India Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, and Bhutan. Both India and Pakistan have taken action locally through the years; India helped in the division of Pakistan in 1971, and Pakistan supported conflicts in Punjab and Kashmir. The Pakistani policy calls for violent, unequal interference in the internal affairs of both Afghanistan and India. since 1989, when the insurgency in Kashmir started.

The primary source of contention in the Indo-Pak conflicts has been Pakistan's active support for insurgents in Kashmir. Similar to this, though not as deeply, is the dispute between Bangladesh and India regarding unsettled borders. a lot of ethnic minorities who live on both sides of the border, experience problems with human security as a result of these interstate conflicts that also create internal security issues.

As the nature of terrorism gradually collects, South Asia's most serious intraregional and interstate conflicts that have an impact on the entire region come to light. ⁵South Asia is home to an advanced, complex, and transnational terrorist threat that crosses national boundaries.

The process of regional integration involves states coming to an agreement to strengthen regional cooperation by establishing regional institutions and regulations. The goals of the accord may encompass political, environmental, and economic aspects. In general, achieving greater sociopolitical and security.

Many historical elements appear to have affected the region's integration during the colonial era. Firstly, the British failed to establish a unified uniform system of governance. Secondly, the rule fostered divisive identities among the populace, creating a highly divided political structure. Despite India's stance, the other states in the region continue to be dragged into outside interference for the military control of India due to the subcontinent's fundamental geopolitical fault-line, where individual countries' state policies vary greatly. When the national security of any state in the region is in doubt, geopolitics takes primacy over other concerns, and all states in the region continue to be sensitive to geopolitical factors.

The political institutions of South Asian countries are not doing well, as shown by their lack of success in various areas. A major sign of these states' performance is their failure to stop acts of terrorism.⁶

According to the paper's above analysis, the majority of conflicts either have political roots or are driven by political goals. As a result, political solutions are mostly required to resolve these disputes.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The main objective of the research article Exploring the, and described how conflict play role to politics and how its positive impact and how it's the major conflict between all the south Asia country, and it impact of economy of all the country negatively. How conflict effect on policy making and public opinion. The research aims to comprehensively examine to how these conflicts resolved and how its controlled and these countries resolved the

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conflict issue, and how the political party use the conflict for their mandate to achieve their goal. What was the role behind the conflict of international organization and internationally involvement.

How the role of religion into politics and international actor how its influence and how its gain public opinion and how its impact on politics and economy and peace of south Asia country .

How can media play a role of religion in the politics of Pakistan and India and how its use and misuse of religion as a slogan and its make mandate of their own party.

- How these border issue can resolve between India and Pakistan and what sought of tool can use to eradicate and maintain peace and stability among these regions?
- What is the role sectarianism to develop and influence into the politics of India and Pakistan?
- How international platforms contribute to the shaping of public opinion in South Asia Countries?
- What is the impact of religion on the politics of economy of south Asia countries?

LITERATURE REVIEW

During review of literature, a lot of information on regional conflict of south Asia it aim to working on it main conflict on the based on that it's the problem created situation that conflict remain behind consistent in these region why these problem are not resolved still pending and factor of that leading the conflict of that created issue.

PADMALOCHAN DASH Ph. D student Centre for Security Studies School of International Studies Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar India EUROPEAN ACADEMIC RESEARCH Vol. II, Issue 3/ June 2014.⁷ according the writer that how the conflict remaining behind same its is and to the highly volatile and ever-changing global security situation continues to affect the South Asian Region. The weak state capacity that exists in nearly every South Asian nation has left them open to rising security risks. The security situation has become complex and unstable due to a lack of regional integration and ongoing intrastate and interstate conflicts.⁸

Zahid Shahab AHMED* - "Stuti BHATNAGAR**"Interstate Conflicts and Regionalism in South Asia: Prospects and Challenges" In this article that the writer discusses that why after regional organization failed to maintain peace between these countries here are many advantages to regional cooperation, including increased economic integration, more frequent and simple relationships, and long-term peace and development in the region. Regional connection In the Asian region.

Dr. Muhammad Ayaz and Muhammad Idrees (M.Phil Scholar) Hazara University Mansehra, Pakistan Accepted 12 October 2015 "Peace and conflicts in South Asia: A Case Study of Pakistan and India," in this article that writer view point about that the theme of regional conflict integration are increased and economic and social and political instability are remain same and its many organization works on it but they were still failed to maintain peace and stability but still to date this efforts is seen a failure.

RESEASRCH METHODOLOGY

The research study that is being suggested would be secondary in character and qualitative and quantitative Primarily secondary sources of information will be used in this. Books, journals, papers, letters, reports, etc. would therefore be quite important in this study project. During the study, an analytical and descriptive method was used. on the Analysing the Political Dynamic and Regional Conflicts in South Asia. And define the major issue and conflict that were still pending and not resolved. The study is mainly based on national and international books, newspapers and magazines and articles on various aspects of the subject. Similarly, the Internet has been used extensively and generously to identify the perspectives of people with different backgrounds on various sources and documents on the subject.

DATA COLLECTION SOURCE

- Asian Survey
- Journal of South Asian Development
- Journal of Asian Studies
- Journal of Conflict Resolution
- Journal of Peace Research
- Books
- Internet
- Interview
- News paper

COLONIAL LEGACY

Colonialism, particularly British rule, had a major effect on South Asia. By the end of the 19th century, British colonial rule had been established over the Indian subcontinent thanks to the British East India Company's steady growth of its dominance. The social, economic, and political structures of the area were significantly impacted by the colonial era. As a result, resources were exploited, administrative structures were imposed, and novel concepts and innovations were introduced.

BRITISH INDIA

The 1947 divide of British India was one of the most significant events in South Asian history. As a result, two distinct countries – Pakistan for Muslims and India for Hindus – were founded on different religious divides.⁹ There is still resentment and mistrust between the two countries as a result of the partition, resulting in common communal violence, expulsions, and deaths.

POST-COLONIAL NATION-BUILDING

After their liberation from colonial rule, South Asian nations started the process of constructing their nations. India embraced diversity and plurality in its democratic constitution and political system. Due to conflicts over identity, language, and governance, Pakistan – which at first consisted of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and West Pakistan (now Pakistan) – saw the division of Bangladesh in 1971.

LEGACY OF CONFLICT

South Asia's political environment has been permanently shaped by the division of British India and the conflicts that followed, including the wars in Kashmir and Indo-Pakistan.¹⁰ The region's interstate relations, security strategies, and national identities have all been influenced by these conflicts.

COLD WAR DYNAMICS

The United States and the Soviet Union engaged in geopolitical competition in South Asia during the Cold War. Pakistan sided with the United States, while India adopted a non-alignment strategy. This alignment exacerbated tensions between India and Pakistan and further complicated regional dynamics.

LEGACY OF COLONIAL BORDERS

Tension and conflict persist throughout South Asia as a result of the borders established by colonial powers. There have been military clashes and diplomatic impasses as a result of border disputes between China and India as well as between China and Pakistan.¹¹

INDIA

As the biggest nation in South Asia, India is crucial to the geopolitics of the area. It frequently sees itself as a born leader and tries to establish and uphold dominance in the area. India's strategic goals include strengthening regional connectivity, encouraging economic development, and combating terrorism. Additionally, it has made an effort to maintain a balance in its ties with powerful nations like China, Russia, and the US.

PAKISTAN

Pakistan's rivalry with India is closely linked to its geopolitical interests. It aims to maintain the region's security and balance out India's influence. Pakistan has always depended on strategic alliances to strengthen its military might and diplomatic influence, especially with the US and China. Pakistan's foreign policy continues to be centred on the Kashmir conflict, which fuels its rivalry with India.

UNITED STATES

Because of its strategic interests in counterterrorism, maintaining regional stability, and containing China's rise, the United States has been involved in South Asia's geopolitics for a long time. In addition to cultivating deeper relations with India as a strategic partner, the United States has given military assistance and diplomatic support to nations like Pakistan and Afghanistan. Nonetheless, its regional policies have frequently been intricate, striking a balance between divergent interests and tackling issues related to regional security.

RUSSIA

Russia has historical connections to many South Asian nations, most notably India. Even though its power is less than it was during the Cold War, Russia still collaborates on defence projects and provides India with military hardware.¹² In order to further its geopolitical goals in the region, Russia has also attempted to deepen its diplomatic ties with Pakistan and Afghanistan as well as other South Asian nations.

KASHMIR DISPUTE

The conflict that exists between India and Pakistan concerning the territory of Jammu and Kashmir has

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been going on for a long time. Although they control different portions of the region, both nations assert full sovereignty over Kashmir. Beginning with the 1947 division of British India, the conflict has resulted in numerous wars and skirmishes between the two neighbours who possess nuclear weapons. The parts of Kashmir administered by Pakistan and India are divided by the Line of Control (LoC), but tensions are still high and there are often violations of human rights as well as cross-border violence.

INDIA-CHINA BORDER DISPUTE

The Line of Actual Control (LAC), which stretches along the Himalayas, is a shared but contentious border between India and China. Many territorial disputes and military standoffs have occurred along the border, most notably the Sino-Indian War of 1962. Disagreements continue to exist regarding the boundary's alignment in a number of sectors, especially in the western and eastern sectors, despite diplomatic efforts to make the boundary more clear. Tensions and border incursions continue to happen on a regular basis, which feeds mistrust between the two nations.

SIACHEN GLACIER CONFLICT (INDIA-PAKISTAN)

India and Pakistan have been at odds over the Siachen Glacier, which is situated in the northern portion of the disputed region of Kashmir. Being one of the world's highest battlefields, both nations retain a military presence there.¹³ Many people have died as a result of the Siachen dispute because of severe weather and illnesses associated with altitude.

ETHNIC DIVERSITY

South Asia is home to a multitude of ethnic groups, each with its own distinct language, culture, and identity. In countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, various ethnic communities coexist, often with historical grievances or disparities in political representation and socio-economic opportunities¹⁴. Examples include the Punjabis, Sindhis, Pashtuns, Balochs, Bengalis, Tamils, and various indigenous groups across the region.

LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

With hundreds of languages spoken throughout the region, South Asia has a notable linguistic diversity. Language has always been an important indicator of identity and has influenced political movements and disputes greatly. For example, language-based movements for the recognition of Tamil in Sri Lanka and Bengali in East Pakistan (which resulted in the creation of Bangladesh) have had significant political ramifications.

RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

Major world religions, including Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism, Islam, and Hinduism, are practiced in South Asia. Religious diversity has frequently contributed to conflict as well as cultural richness. Periodically, there have been conflicts and acts of violence between religious communities; these have mostly involved Muslims and Buddhists in Myanmar, Muslims and Hindus in India, and Buddhists and Muslims in Sri Lanka.

POLITICAL EXPLOITATION

To their own benefit, political players in South Asia have frequently taken advantage of ethnic and religious identities, escalating tensions and divisions.¹⁵ There have been occasions when identity politics, communalism, and religious extremism have eclipsed more general concerns about social justice, development, and governance.

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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

While the aftermath of the colonial era is the root of both conflicts, the dynamics are unique. Whereas the Rohingya crisis is centred around ethnic persecution and statelessness, the Kashmir issue is one of the territorial disputes between India and Pakistan.

Different countries respond differently to these conflicts. Only India, Pakistan, and the UN paid much attention to the Kashmir conflict; seeks at bilateral exchange have often been blocked by geopolitical unrest. On the other hand, the Rohingya issue has prompted strong critique worldwide along with demands for responsibility and relief efforts. The aforementioned conflicts underscore the difficulties in resolving past grievances, ethnic conflicts, and conflicting national interests within the South Asian region.

GEOPOLITICAL DYNAMICS

The dynamics of regional conflicts in South Asia are heavily influenced by the geopolitical interests of external powers. In order to navigate difficult geopolitical challenges and advance peace and stability in the region, policymakers must have a thorough understanding of these interests and their implications. Resolution of disputes and the promotion of regional cooperation in South Asia can be achieved by striking a balance between conflicting interests and promoting positive engagement with outside powers¹⁶. "India, Pakistan, and the Bomb: Debating Nuclear Stability in South Asia" by Sumit Ganguly and S. Paul Kapur.

<u>Country</u>	<u>Population (2021)</u>	<u>GDP (nominal) [US\$ million¹⁷ 2023][120]</u>	<u>GDP (PPP) [US\$ million, 2022]</u>	<u>GDP per capita (Nominal)</u>	<u>DP per capita [PPP £]</u>	<u>DP growth rate 2022</u>	<u>Exports (US\$ million, 2022)</u>
<u>Afghanistan</u>	40,099,462	18,734	76,486	499	2,070	.30%	784
<u>Bangladesh</u>	169,356,251	420,516	1,360,000	2,621	8,679	.20%	52,000
<u>Bhutan</u>	777,486	2,683	8,195	3,423	9,876	.40%	580
<u>India</u>	1,407,563,842	3,736,882	10,510,290	2,601	9,048	.40%	303,400
<u>Maldives</u>	521,457	7,004	8,667	15,563	23,312	.90%	256
<u>Nepal</u>	0,034,989 ³	42,097	94,414	1,115	3,585	.20%	819

<u>Pakistan</u>	231,402,117	376,493	1,076,258	1,357	5,230	.30%	21,940
<u>Sri Lanka</u>	21,773,441	75,296	304,826	3,698	13,114	.00%	10,930

CONCULSION

Aid in a better comprehension of the socioeconomic causes, historical context, and geopolitical dynamics influencing conflicts in South Asia. Researchers can also influence practice and policy targeted at advancing stability, cooperation, and reconciliation in the region by identifying viable paths for peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

To guarantee that research insights become concrete actions and initiatives, researchers must engage with policymakers, practitioners, and the general public in addition to widely disseminating their findings. Researchers can assist in initiatives to address the underlying issues, promote discourse, and create enduring peace in South Asia by collaborating and exchanging knowledge.

In the end, researching political dynamics and regional conflicts in South Asia is important for the millions of people impacted by the region's violence, in addition to being an academic endeavour. Researchers can make a significant contribution to peace, stability, and prosperity in South Asia and beyond through diligent study and well-informed action.

RECOMANDATON AND SUGGESTION

- Consider using an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates knowledge from political science, international relations, history, sociology, geography, and other pertinent fields, given the complexity of political dynamics and conflicts in South Asia. This will offer a more thorough comprehension of the complex problems at hand.
- Even though regional patterns are significant, it's critical to examine the unique dynamics of each South Asian nation. Every nation has a distinct political structure, history, socioeconomic landscape, and conflict dynamics. Localised analysis will offer detailed understandings of the causes of disputes and possible paths to settlement.
- In South Asia, political dynamics and conflicts frequently have long-standing historical roots and change over time. Thus, it is imperative to take a longitudinal approach that charts the course of conflicts and looks at how they have evolved or endured over decades or even centuries. The political landscape of the area can be examined through a longitudinal lens to identify trends, cycles, and turning points.
- To increase the robustness of your analysis and to triangulate findings, combine quantitative and qualitative methods. While qualitative techniques like content analysis and case studies can offer rich contextual understanding and insights into causal mechanisms, quantitative techniques like regression analysis can statistically demonstrate correlations between variables.
- Be aware of ethical issues when doing research on touchy subjects like conflicts. These include protecting research subjects' privacy and safety, getting their informed consent, and preventing abuse or exploitation. Respect the moral standards and guidelines established by professional associations and educational institutions.
- Take into account how your research's conclusions and suggestions may affect policy. In what ways can your knowledge support efforts in South Asia to prevent, resolve, and build peace.



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