

Security Dilemma in South Asia

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Abstract

India and Pakistan are situated on the fault zone within South Asia. They have inherited all the traits that can contribute in security turmoil. Their domestic conflicts and historical differences paved the way for continuous security threats in the region. Their adverse relations and tense environment have been analyzed through the established theoretical approaches in order to understand the hostile relational attitude of both states. The study is providing a theoretical framework to comprehend the rationale and motivations behind their undesirable relations since their independence.

Key words: Security, India, Pakistan, region, threat, power

Introduction

Security is the only concept through which the national security problem can be approached. Although it is one of main concerns of the contemporary world but due to its complexity and seamlessness the concept remained neglected. The notion of security is conceptually weak or undefined that needs the support of other approaches as Realism and Idealism. Security is a difficult concept as compare to other concepts of social sciences as power, justice, peace, equality and freedom due to its ambiguity. It has to be defined under an area of concern rather than a precise condition. The element of security has been defined by W.B. Gallia as an 'essentially contested concept' due to its relational attitude with other factors and un-rationality of meaning and application. "Security is a relational phenomenon. It involves not only the capabilities, desires and fears of individual states, but also the capabilities, desires and fears of the other state with which they interact." (Buzan & Rizvi, 1986, p.5) Therefore, we have to understand the whole system of international security patterns to relate the concept of security within the incumbent structure.

In International affairs the terms of power and peace belong to the classical established theories of Realism and Idealism. These two approaches dominate thinking about the national security concern. Barry Buzan relates both theories to the derived concept of security, he emphasizes "We shall argue that security is more usefully viewed as a companion to, rather than a derivative of power and that it is more usefully viewed as a prior condition of peace than a consequence of it." (Buzan, 1983, p. 2) He argues that only the Realists give the maximum conceptual framework of security as compare to

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other school of thoughts. He relates the concept of power to security. He never considers them synonyms but he argues that both concepts are equally shared and have mutual effect on each other. Explaining it he relates the World War I and II, and the game of power led to the emergence of security purposes that made the security subordinate to power. But he also emphasizes that security can be brought next to power in the broader perspective of security dilemma. The term of security dilemma is first coined by John Herz in 1950. He defines the security dilemma as “a problem encountered by humans in a social constellation,” rather a biological trait. While Jervis (1978) defines the security dilemma as “the result of the two states’ interaction in which the gain of one is the loss of the other leading to uncertainty between the two states”. He only explains that the whole dilemma is built around perceptions and misperceptions among the states. The defense capabilities have perceived as a threat by the other state resulting in an anarchic environment and security dilemma. The security dilemma revolves around three basic assumptions; 1) an anarchic environment leads to uncertainty, 2) a lack of trust that exists among states, 3) a misperception of each other’s motives or intentions.

While he explains according to Idealists that security is the prior condition of peace rather than its consequence. The Liberalists argue for peace through institutions. Therefore, it can be analyzed that security is the common element between the two established schools of thought, which are the basis of international Relations. Realists argue for power to attain security and Idealists aspire security for ultimate peace.

Theoretical Understanding behind India and Pakistan Rivalry

The Neo-realists approach is confined within the domain of power and material having a state-centric attitude. In the post-World War II scenario, the world indulged in the game of power and armaments in order to sustain the territorial sovereignty after decolonization. Here we can relate with the political scenario of the subcontinent and emergence of Pakistan out of Great India in 1947.

“According to the neo-realist perspective, the security situation between India and Pakistan is usually defined as volatile due to differentiation in material capabilities of the two states as well as the structure of the South Asian security which is greatly tilted in favour of India. India because of its size and economy tends to want to dominate and act as a hegemonic power in its relations with Pakistan, while Pakistan

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has the tendency to counteract every Indian move as the only plausible solution for its own survival. There is nothing more to offer from a neo-realist angle apart from these materialistic considerations.” (Pervez, 2012, P.14)

The states within the anarchic environment focus on the material capabilities to survive in the competitive world. In the contemporary arena, most of the states follow the Neo-realist basic options of security as 1) to arm themselves 2) to form alliance with other countries 3) to negotiate for arm control and disarmaments. The first option deals with the global arm race and the nuclear proliferation that increased the security threats of the unequipped states although many Neo-realists and Neo-liberalists perceive that arms limitation is a way of stabilizing the balance of power. Secondly, the newly adopted standpoint of alliance that ensures the security agreements among two or more than two states as consequence to face a common threat. “As nature abhors a vacuum, so international politics abhors unbalanced power, faced by unbalanced power. Therefore States try to increase their own strength or they ally with others to bring the international distribution of power into balance.” (A statement by a neorealist Kenneth N. Waltz, 2004) The Neo-realists have emphasized on certain period of alliance because they were convinced that the element of change is certain, which can occur within the broader perspective of national interests. While the Liberalists proclaimed, “as President Woodrow Wilson proposed that ‘all nations avoid entangling alliances which would draw them intoa net of intrigue and selfish rivalry.’ As a substitute for alliance and counter alliances, Wilson advocated the idea of collective security.”(Kegley, 2007, p.505) Alignments often were made in order to attain balance of power among the hegemonic, well-militarized states and considerably weak and militarily unequipped states.

Nonetheless, the equilibrating process of power in the subcontinent pushed Pakistan to seek military capabilities and alliances to encounter the Indian hegemony, and to balance the regional security measures. Pakistan as new and weak state was compiled with fear of absorption due to the anarchical and mistrust climate of the region. It is observed in the classical ‘Balance of Power’ theory that the fear of third party would encourage alignments but in case of South Asia the alignments have been perceived due to neighboring hostile threat. Therefore, the balance of power in the subcontinent has attained through military solution rather political institutional security mechanism.

The Neo-liberalists who are the advocates of peace with effective institutional mechanism and economic development, they argue that the conflict can be resolved under the statue of 1) International law, 2) organization, 3)

integration, 4) and democratization. They believe on the Neo-liberal institutionalism to resolve the security upheavals. The international law is important within the righteous domain although people do question about its validity and implanting power. An Israeli Ambassador has said, "international law is that law which the wicked do not obey and the righteous do not enforce." The Realists believe that the international law is based on assumptions, not practical to implement with the global anarchy. The International law provides certain grounds for several conflict resolution procedures through the laws of negotiations as mediation, good offices, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication. The international organizational structure as 'United Nation' considered as the second path to peace and security. It advocates about equal rights and self-determination, multilateral cooperation and collective security. The process of organization differs from the concept of integration. The political integration refers towards the creation of political communities and supranational institutions among the states. As in South Asia, SAARC is a regional economic cooperating organization, which was formed under the concept of regional integration. SAARC never fulfilled the obligations of peace in the subcontinent due to the anarchical atmosphere between India and Pakistan, which can be related to the Realist rationale. The last aspect of the Neo-liberalists emphasize on the process of democratization that ensures political autonomy and freedom.

While both theories have some common aspects, as it has been mentioned by Pervez (2012) that Neo-liberalism accepts three core assumptions of Neo-realism, it adopts the 1) state-centric approach, 2) the belief that the order of modern day politics is systematic anarchy, and 3) the belief that the interstate of a state has tied to its material capabilities. Nonetheless, three of them are relevant to the contemporary structure. He further explains that Neo-liberalism only differs from the Neo-realist perspective in that it views institutional norms or 'regimes' acting as constraints on states' behaviour thereby leading them to cooperate.

Lastly, the Social Constructivist theory will provide the social and cultural aspects behind the India-Pakistan rivalry. The social aspect will be explained to comprehend the root cause of the adverse scenario in the subcontinent that led to the security dilemma in the region. Constructivism is based on the behaviour of the state. The behavior of the state is defined through the identities and interests that are structured by the norms, values, rules and institutions within the state. Constructivists argue that the state identities and interests have been constructed through the prevailing culture and norms and it has emphasized that the state has no fix interests. They also claim that the material interest of the state is developed within the social environment of the state. "It is not only material considerations [state capabilities, power structure,

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systematic constraints], but also equally important cultural aspects [social norms, identities] which are primarily responsible for creating shared or inter-subjective understanding among states.”(Pervez, 2012, p.21) While Barry Buzan defines that the state oriented threats are due to its own vulnerabilities, he emphasizes that by reducing social vulnerabilities we can lessen security threats. Our vulnerabilities are evolving from our own social fabric.

The Structure of Regional Security Complex (RSC) in South Asia

States emerged with need of security after the process of decolonization and during the game power in the Cold War era. While the bipolarity of the world paved the way for global actors to intervene in the international politics creating separate spheres of global and regional politics. Since then regions matter more in the current era and the security threats emerged as one of the contemporary issues. “Decolonization opened the space for regional military-political dynamics, and the ending of the Cold War enabled these dynamics to operate with much more freedom from high level of rival superpower intrusion.” (Buzan & Weaver, 2003, p. 19) The global politics eventually contributed in fears of small states and their need to form the regional security complexes.

The security analysis normally circled within the national level and global level security, while the regional security level placed at junction of the global and national security levels. The regional security purposes can be explained when a number of states or units have linked closely that their shared security purposes cannot separated from each other. These constituent units drive their security purposes or the regional security complexes from their domestic features and fractures, (for example the India-Pakistan communal and religious differences). These states or units share their aspiration at the regional level, where the global powers also interact with the system or national levels. The regional security dynamics is the result of the security aspirations of the national level and the interest oriented global intervention in the region.

Barry Buzan in 1983 defined the territorial regional security complexes as “a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot reasonably be considered apart from one another.” This definition was formulated with the focus on military and state-centric dominated attitude. Later in 1998, many other social perspectives were also inculcated in the new definition of the regional security complexes as “a set of units whose major processes of securitization, de securitization, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed apart from one another.” However, Buzan cannot

ignore the common and dominate centric mode of states that is why the regional security complexes have an interrelated focus of securitization implications and the state-centric attitude. "Securitization theory has been an incredibly fruitful approach for the study of security. Having disaggregated 'state security' into several sectors (military, political, societal, economic, and ecological), Buzan argues that 'the question of when a threat becomes a national security issue depends not just on what type of threat it is, and how much the recipient state perceives it, but also on the intensity with which the threat operates.'"(Salter, 2008)

The Regional Security Complex in the subcontinent has been affected by many Neo-realist and Constructivist factors. The anarchic state between India and Pakistan and process of militarization and nuclear proliferation proves the grounds of the Neo-realism. We can connect the roots of hostile relationship with the web of social norms and values, as the historical long-standing enmity due to the religious difference between the Muslims and Hindus, the cultural unbalance, and security risk from the territorial adjacency to next neighbor and its threat eningvulnera bilities. On the other hand, we can observe the Neo-liberalist's weak security mechanism through regional institutional structure, as SAARC is pragmatically stagnant. It has never provided any grounds for collective security nor economic development.

The Security Community and South Asia

The concept of security community is a step towards peace, it has been derived from the Liberalist school of thought; it is characterized by the absence of war and military. The political communities are the other type, which advocate war for their survival. The people of a security community are bound by the "sense of community", mutual sympathy, trust, common interests and cooperation. Karl Deutsch in 1957 related peace to the concept of security community. He defines it as "a group of people" believing "that they have come to agreement on at least this one, point: that common social problems must and can be resolved by processes of 'peaceful change'". The process of peaceful change has been further explained as the process of resolution by institutional mechanism, without entering into conventional and unconventional warfare.

After the end of the Cold War, the concept of security community has been adapted by the social constructivist scholars. They redefined the security community by social perspective of shared identities, values, and meanings. Several regions of the world have studied in the security community framework since then, most notably the European Union, the American-Canadian, and ASEAN. Adler and Barnett describe the typical evolution of a

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security community from nascent to ascendant to mature. A nascent security community meets the basic expectations of peaceful change, while a mature security community is characterized by some collective security mechanisms and supranational or transnational elements. Adler and Barnett further divide the mature security communities into “tightly” and “loosely coupled”, depending on the level of their integration.

The security community can further be divided into two types, 1) the amalgamated and 2) the pluralistic ones. The amalgamated security communities are quite rare in history. They are created when two or more states that are independent renounce their formal sovereignty to a higher authority in order to join against a common threat. An example of the amalgamated security community is the United States after the original thirteen colonies ceded much of their governing powers to the federal government. Amalgamation is not always successful and can overturn, as the failed Union between Sweden and Norway exemplify. The second possibility is integration that leads to a pluralistic security community, in which states retain their formal sovereignty, and agree on the abandonment of war potentials and join peaceful resolutions for their disputes. Karl Deutsch defines integration as the “attainment of a sense of community, accompanied by formal or informal institutions and practices, sufficiently strong and widespread to assure peaceful change.” (Mahmood,1987) The United States with Canada is an example of a pluralistic security community. Both countries are politically independent, but they do not expect to have future military confrontations, in spite of having had some in the past. Deutsch argues that the pluralistic security communities are easier to establish and maintain than their amalgamated counterparts. However the security community in South Asia is, threaten by the offensive and defensive capabilities of India and Pakistan. The process of nuclearization indulged both states in a security dilemma leading to nuclear holocaust. The concept of security community can only be implemented in South Asia, if these two states find peaceful solutions for their disputes. “South Asia security could be enhanced by way of making the countries of the region more interdependent and less ‘clausewitzian’, people to people contacts and the SAARC could still be the best hope for the socio-economic development and eventually for security.” (Javaid, 2006, p.6)

SAARC, the regional integration in South Asia is one of the phenomenon that have adopted very late as compared to the other regions in the world. It is hard to measure the prospects of the organization due to its political cleavages and regional conflicts. Although, the region historically was never united under one power but now all the concern is about the Indian hegemony. The supremacy of the regional power is due to its enormous size, stable economy, strong military and nuclear power; its dominance has created

many questions among the small poor countries about their state integrity, identity, security issues and sovereignty. The strategic location also empowers India, as it is lying in the center and the rest in the periphery, as it is controlling the trade routes, irrigation water, trade and transit, and communications within the region.

Security Structure of South Asia

The security aspect of subcontinent will be analyzed through four levels: the sub-system level to the regional, super-regional and the global level. The sub-system level or the domestic level that has encircled within the India-Pakistan rivalry that is considered as the base for security concerns in the region. India and Pakistan locked into the geographical proximity and their security purposes are linked with each other. While other factors as the social, political and economic are considered very important in process of security analysis at the domestic level. However, the core analysis of the study will focus only on the political and social analysis. It will also consider that how they relate their domestic concerns to the global world, and how the global actors intervene in the region due to the hostile atmosphere between India and Pakistan.

Domestic Level

'Pakistan is simply India-centric' (Ahmed, 2006), the historic rival is the main reason for Pakistan's fear concerns about India. Pakistan's post-independence policies are determined under threat of re-absorption by India. Since 1947, Pakistan is mapping battles to gain Kashmir from many times stronger opponent. It built its nationalism based on two-nation doctrine; it designed its syllabi to encounter re-absorption. It let the army to govern and use two third of its budget on defense purposes leading to an arm race between the two countries for endurance. The India-Pakistan rivalry, detached the truth and cause of Pakistan's creation from its soul, it reshaped the nation with anti-Indian sentiments that will never accept any regional security coordination (Kamal, 2013). President Musharraf said in a press conference, "We are like two elephants in South Asia, trampling the grass in our fight...Look where it has taken us. South Asia is one of the poorest regions and our economy refuses to take off because of our preoccupation with this dispute".

"These two countries were born locked into a complicated rivalry that defined the central security problem for each of them. They easily overawed the smaller states, which were geographically entangled within their sphere, and so fell naturally into a power

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rivalry with each other. Afghanistan and Burma provided buffer zones at either sides of the complex, insulating it from the neighbouring local security complexes in the Gulf and Southeast Asia.”(Buzan & Rizvi, 1986, p. 14)

India and Pakistan considered on the zero-sum position that gain of one is the loss of other. Their antagonistic approach has undermined the domestic security in the subcontinent. The interstate conflict between them appeared as the core issue of the regional security complex. The India-Pakistan rivalry continued to burn around three long standing issues, 1) Kashmir, 2) Communal and religious issues, and 3) Military rivalry, escalated by the increasing nuclear weapon and missile capabilities of both sides. Pakistan feared the Indian hegemonic design. However, Pakistan’s internal strength and stability are key to security. Pakistan’s own weaknesses are due to political instability, lack of visionary leadership, fragile economy, unfair autonomy of army and agencies, religious and identity issues, the excessive autonomy of army and agencies, low degree of stateness (empirical sovereignty), and lack of socio-political cohesion in the society. Although, Pakistan acquired the status of nuclear power in 1998 and gained the status of bipolarity in the region. The internal faults and disunity often exploited by external threats as United States, Soviets and India. While India is possessing five essential elements through which she sustains, are the rich traditions and history, viable democracy, supporting economic factors, the secular federative lines for the pluralist nature of society, and Nehru’s charismatic leadership. Nehru has a profound shadow on the Indian policies; he has been followed as the father of the Nation. He emphasized that, “The basic factor in defense is the industrial growth of the economy, and all the armies in the world without an industrial background cannot function”(Sharma, 2002). And that is what they proved. They emphasized on the technical and industrial growth. By 1977 India acquired both economic and military self-sufficiency; India became the world’s third largest standing army, fifth largest air force, eight largest navy with the status of the first nuclear power in the region. Although, India possesses some internal separative factors due to its multiethnic diversity, nevertheless, its process of democratization is supporting the structure.

Regional Level

The Indian hegemonic disregard and insecurity have been felt by the small states in the South Asian region. Therefore, all the small states claimed for their separate identity to detach themselves from the Indian diversified culture. As I.P. Khosla wrote in his article that “there are more Muslims in India than in Pakistan which was created as the homeland of the Muslims of South Asia,

half as many Bengali speakers as in Bangladesh which was created so that the people could speak their own language, and more Hindus than in Nepal, more Buddhists than in Bhutan.” (Khosla, 2006) Many regional disputes could not cater to pave the way for sound security purposes, because of the sustained bi-lateral issues that included India as the second party, such as Kashmir dispute with Pakistan, water dispute with Bangladesh, Tamil issue with Sri Lanka, trade and transit between India and Nepal, and Maldives, stance as no acceptances for Sikkim as a part of the Indian Union. India possesses paranoiac hegemony over the small states in South Asia, all the disputes centered within the anti-Indian sentiments among the member countries; although, India has claimed many times that it is not a predatory country but it never succeeded in building up the trust and security confidence among the SAARC countries. The late phenomenon of SAARC was a response to the actual adverse political scenario in the region, Bangladesh desired SAARC as security guarantee against India and many more perspectives were added for the economic advancement of the poor region due to the internal insecurity and ethnic issues, seeking inter-regional relations and synchronization. (Kamal, 2013)

The Super-regional Level

The Super-regional level comprises on the relation patterns between China, India and Pakistan. South Asia proved to be the battlefield for the bipolar super rivalry between the Soviet Union and United States in the Cold War era. Pakistan as new state aspired for the Muslim countries backing in order to encounter India and for the resolution of Kashmir dispute. Pakistan’s aspirations could not meet with the Muslim world; therefore, in 1949 they opened all the options for the US alliance. Pakistan entered into mutual defense treaties with US in 1954 SEATO and in 1959 CENTO. “American officials now saw Pakistan, whose regional hostility towards India had prompted her search for allies against possible Indian aggression, as an anti-Communist power, anxious for support against the Soviets and a willing and able partner in the Middle East.” (Buzan & Rizvi, 1986, p.211) India perceived the US-Pakistan defense alliance as a hard step to weaken India and stepped towards Indo-Soviet ties. The US-Pakistan alliance was not helpful to Pakistan as to India; India received twice-economic aid as Pakistan received for military alliance. John F. Kennedy said that India is very important to encounter the growing economic hegemony of China in South Asia and in East Asia, he considered India as ‘the hinge of fate in Asia’. The Sino-Indian war in 1962 verified the declination of Indo-China relationship. India was backed by the US military aid in the 1962 Sino-Indian war while Pakistan was totally aloof from any aid or assistance in the 1965 India-Pakistan war.

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In the post-Cold War era, China was not seen as an immediate threat to India, and neither as a future threat. China emerged as superpower challenging United States after the disintegration of Soviet Union in 1991, while, Pakistan has been mentioned as an irritant to India rather than a threat because of its political and economic disorders. All the three states are posing security threat for each other and causing the escalation of arm race in the region. China is supporting Pakistan against the Indian hegemonic designs, while India is distorted by Pakistan's strategy that diverts India's attention from China. India is also seeking help and support from Israel against Pakistan and China's intentions. "China continued to back Pakistan's attempt to match India's achievement in nuclear and missile technology, and India continued to cite the threat from China, more than Pakistan, as the justification for its nuclear and missile program." (Buzan & Weave, 2003, p. 110) China's recent concerns are very serious about the radicalization of Pakistan's Muslims while their relations with India are more towards the conflict freezing strategy. Since 1980, China and India have maintained cool liaison. Afghanistan will remain to continue as an insulator state due to its chaotic and weak central government trying to balance among the warriors and external powers.

The Global Level

The global level can well gage in the Cold War era, in which South Asia proved to be the battlefield between the two super powers. The global powers intervene through the process of penetration. In South Asia, the penetration process occurred when outside powers made security alignments with states within a regional security complex, as Pakistan security alignment with United States and the Soviet support to the India. After the disappearance of Soviet threat in Afghanistan, the relations between Pakistan and United States deteriorated. United States posed military and economic sanctions on Pakistan due to its nuclear program and ended in warm relations with India. The indigenous regional rivalry as between India and Pakistan provides opportunities for the great powers to penetrate the region and pursue their interests. "A handful of states at the top of the power league play a truly global game, treating each other as a special class, and projecting their power into far-flung regions. But for the great majority of states, the main game of security is defined by their near neighbours." (Buzzan & Weaver, 2003, p. 14)

In the post-Cold War era, United States played the role of global power in the subcontinent. The relations with India depreciated after the military support of Russia to India and in 1990's the United States positive concerns turned to Pakistan. Later the overwhelming weight of rhetorical concerns in India was on United States as the main threat to India. United States appeared as the main peril to India's security especially during the supporting alliance with

Pakistan. The overall relations of United States and India remained cool and sensitive while Pakistan's relation with United States kept on passing through bumpy rides. United States intervened in the region and supported one of the states according to its own interest. As post '9/11', United States intruded in the region and forced Pakistan's contribution in War on Terror.

In the post '9/11' scenario, the region indulged with the curse of terrorism. It involved Pakistan again against its western border with Afghanistan. The War on Terror has earned a bad name for Pakistan and left serious internal alarming apprehensions that brought Pakistan on the verge of sinking. India also claimed the cross-border terrorism, and indulged with Pakistan in the blame game. India many times has claimed that Pakistan is the global nursery of terrorism or the epicenter of terrorism. The factor of terrorism between India and Pakistan is considered as the shift in the regional security paradigm. The initial conflicts between India and Pakistan are based on the inherited direct consequences of partition as Kashmir, water disputes and the division of the assets but terrorism appeared as a new area of concern. The eastern border tension between India and Pakistan has exaggerated among the western community. They feared that the chronic contention could affect the War on Terror on the western borders with Afghanistan.

Conclusion

The theoretical background proves the India-Pakistan conflict and its severe impact on the security issue within South Asia. The Neo-realists define the state of anarchy between India and Pakistan that are aspiring nuclear proliferations and armaments for survival. While the Neo-liberalists who also believe in the state-centric attitude and understand the state of anarchy between India and Pakistan but they argue for the institutional security mechanism and cooperation. Both theories emphasize on the materialistic approach, while the Constructivists argue that the material factor emerges from the social environment. The material capabilities and the social aspects of India and Pakistan shape the identities and their interests, which are reflected through their behaviour.

The subcontinent inherited all hazards and perils that contributed in the regional security threats. The regional security complex has been undermined by the India Pakistan antagonism. Both states contributed in a hostile environment in the region. The concept of security community can only be implemented in region, if these two states find peaceful solutions for their disputes and work with mutual trust.

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