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ASSESSING THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN RESOLVING THE KASHMIR CONFLICT: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF INDIAN AND PAKISTANI INTERACTING STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

This study critically examines the role of leadership in resolving the Kashmir conflict, focusing on the complex and enduring tensions between India and Pakistan. Despite decades of hostilities and territorial disputes, limited research has comprehensively assessed the impact of leadership strategies in conflict resolution. Addressing this gap, the study investigates political declarations, diplomatic efforts, and policy decisions made by Indian and Pakistani leaders to evaluate their effectiveness in fostering sustainable peace. Employing a qualitative research approach, the study analyzes historical contexts, regional geopolitical dynamics, and evolving socio-political factors to uncover patterns in leadership styles and strategic approaches that have either facilitated or hindered the peace process. Findings reveal that while certain leadership tactics have promoted dialogue and temporary stability, others have exacerbated tensions due to rigid policies and mistrust. The research contributes to the fields of international relations, conflict resolution, and leadership studies by offering actionable insights for policymakers and diplomats working towards peace in South Asia. By identifying effective conflict resolution strategies, this study provides a foundation for developing innovative diplomatic frameworks to address one of the most protracted disputes globally. The findings are expected to guide future diplomatic efforts and enhance the discourse on sustainable peacebuilding in the India-Pakistan context.

Keywords: Leadership strategies, Conflict resolution, India and Pakistan, Kashmir issue, Sustainable peace

INTRODUCTION

Since 1947, when India and Pakistan gained independence from British colonial control, there has been a dispute over Kashmir. In addition to four wars, there were intervals of combat in between engagements throughout this fight. The issue was that the approximately 650 princely realms were governed by various individuals. During partition of sub-continent in 1947, Hindu Raja ruled over Kashmir despite the region's mostly Muslim population. At the time, the British made a strong recommendation to all 650 independent princely nations to either stay neutral or join either Pakistan or India.

Kashmir borders China and is situated between Pakistan and India. Pakistan is located to the west, India is to the east and south, and China is to the north. Parts of the Kashmir Valley are governed by China, India, and Pakistan. Ladakh, the Kashmir Valley, and Jammu are under Indian administration. Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Kashmir are governed by Pakistan, however. The Trans Karakoram Tract and Aksai Chin are administered by China.

The political elites in Pakistan and India have made the situation in Kashmir worse. Since 1947, there have been four wars between India and Pakistan, all of which have been sparked by the Kashmir dispute. In 1962, a battle broke out between China and India over the Kashmir area. Hundreds of unarmed men, women, and children have died at the hands of Indian military forces throughout the protracted Kashmir issue, which has not been resolved despite many attempts at independence.

BACKGROUND

Every issue that exists between Pakistan and India stems from the conflict over Kashmir. The conflicts have escalated since 1947, when their separate nations earned independence from the British. The conflict in the sub-continent began when British divided India in 1947, with territories with a majority of Muslims going to Pakistan and those with a majority of Hindus going to India Cheema, (2015). There were 650 distinct princely realms created as a result of the division. These tiny, independent nations were offered the choice to remain independent or to join Pakistan or India.

According to Burke (1975), the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir became a part of India in 1948 when Maharaja Hari Singh, the state's leader and freedom fighter, agreed to keep the state independent in all domains but foreign policy, defence, and coinage. Muslims in Kashmir protested in the streets, believing this to be an unacceptable option.

According to Indian officials, in October 1947, tribes from the Pushtun invaded Kashmir, Burke (1975). The tribes rushed for the help of the Muslim community in Kashmir after learning that the Maharajah was thinking of annexing to newly born

India. But Kashmiris with the collaboration of local tribes rose up against Maharaja Hari Singh and made their way to the capital city of Srinagar.

INTERNAL FACTORS IN KASHMIR ISSUE

A. STEREOTYPING

Burke (2015) posits that stereotyping is the primary internal element behind the Kashmir dispute. Stereotyping creates a worldview that pits India and Pakistan against each other, making a solution unlikely. He further claims that by adopting biased tactics to provide a pretext for the uprising—such as influencing the Amarnath Yatra to boost religious tourism—Hindu extremists are furthering their cause. Still, it was a land-acquisition and nationalist strategy.

B. The demonization of Muslims and Pakistanis

Lamb (2002) elucidates that the demonization of Muslims and Pakistanis by political organisations such as the Shiv Sena is an additional pivotal element that contributes significantly to the persistent tensions between India and Pakistan. Due to this, substantive dialogues and consistent interactions among Indians, Pakistanis, and Kashmiris are hindered across conflict lines.

C. Exclusive negotiation and mediation approach

The Indo-Pakistani diplomatic negotiations, aimed at reaching a resolution on the Kashmir issue, exhibit a certain degree of representational limitations due to the exclusion of Kashmiris from the negotiation process. However, they are the focal point of the dispute and are seen to have a pivotal role in it. Lamb asserts that the proposed solution would not lead to a genuine peace process since it neglects to tackle the pressing issue of antagonistic security forces inside the Kashmiri population, who persist in perpetrating flagrant human rights transgressions. (Lamb,2002)

FOREIGN DOMINATION IN KASHMIR ISSUE

A. The core driver for Islamists

The dispute has emerged as a central concern for Islamists, transcending the interests of India, Pakistan, and Kashmir itself. Ganguly (2007) asserts that Islamic extremists are engaged in a global struggle to propagate Islamism. Presently, the vast majority of terrorists and insurgents in Kashmir are Islamists hailing from nations other than Pakistan and India. As per Ganguly (2007), the conflict became more violent and intense as a result of the insurgents' aggressive ideologies and attitudes.

B. Chinese Domination

In every issue, the external influence may be good or bad. As for as, china's involvment in Kashmir issue is concerned, it is clear that the country exploits the Indo-Pakistani hostility. Habibullah (2004) writes, China is assisting Pakistan with military capabilities as a strategic bid to exert pressure on India.

C. American Domination

The American domination in resolving the core issue of Kashmir is considerably less than that of China. Habibullah (2004) argues that the United States lacks commitment in this matter due to its preoccupation with nuclear nonproliferation, desire to diminish the influence of the Taliban, and support for peace negotiations between India and Pakistan. Due to the significant military and commercial partnerships between Pakistan and India, the United States has refrained from engaging in a resolution process concerning the Kashmir dispute.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Constructivism theory

According to Koithara (2004), the theoretical framework of constructivism, which places emphasis on the importance of thought, recognition, and fundamental might be very valuable in comprehending and examining the interconnections between India and Pakistan.

Kothari (2004) argues that rationalist theories treat states as similar units together with the alleged lack of hierarchical order in the international system, are inadequate in providing a comprehensive explanation for the disagreement. He also asserts that the purported anarchic character of the international system is inadequate.

Although constructivism may not be the prevailing paradigm used to delineate the connections between Pakistan and India, it may still be employed to foster robust relationships, particularly at the societal dynamics. However, the political and military tensions can enhance their interpersonal harmony via the cultivation of standardised norms, concepts, and values. According to Ali (2011), it will enhance interpersonal relationships and facilitate the creation of peace in the South Asian area.

2. Neo-Realism theory

According to Ali (2011), the theory of international relations known as neo-realism or structural realism was first established by Kenneth Waltz (1979) in his publication titled "Theory of International Politics." Realists often see power as a crucial determinant in the realm of international politics. The Kashmir conflict may be elucidated by considering the many causes and factors that contribute to the war, as shown by the constructivism theory.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Kashmir sub-conflict has claimed the lives of over 24,000 individuals (Johnson, 2005). Both Pakistan and India have dedicated significant resources, including capital, human lives, and labour. Both nations engaged in brutal conflicts in 1999, 1967–1948, 1965, and 1971, against all obstacles. Throughout history, no nation has managed to attain a sustained advantage in any of the decisive conflicts. Late in March 2003, a group of twenty-four Hindu cultivators residing in Kashmir was brutally murdered by

psychopaths suspected of affiliation with Pakistan-backed Islamic factions. This conduct evoked memories of the December 2001 suicide attempt on the Indian Parliament in New Delhi, which was carried out by Muslim psychological perpetrators. The aforementioned events heighten the probability of a conflict between Pakistan and India. Due to the fact that both parties in South Asia possess nuclear weapons, this region is considered by many analysts to be the most unstable. Ever since the airing of the programme in 1947, Kashmir has been a source of contention between Pakistan and India. Both nations compete there frequently. India was on the verge of invading Pakistan from January to June 2002 due to psychological insurgent military operations against Indian forces in Kashmir. (Subbiah, 2004)

Moreover, religious liberty in both countries has resulted in a political atmosphere that is virtually doomed to be disastrous. Historically, Islamic forces have benefited from legislative decisions taken in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border regions. Furthermore, certain Pakistani military intelligence agents continue to advocate for repressive measures in Kashmir on the basis of dread. Experts assert that President Musharraf possesses limited jurisdiction over this behaviour. The ruling party of India is adopting the Hind-prone ideology, which asserts that India is not a modern, pluralistic nation but rather the venerated seat of Hindu authority, as the 2004 racing season approaches. As any scholar of religion and law can attest, when one of the disputing parties in a political or ethnic dispute invokes God or other supernatural beings, the probability of actual war casualties nearly doubles (Sumit, 1999).

Furthermore, the proliferation of religious liberties in both nations has engendered a disconcerting political climate. The most recent parliamentary elections in the Afghan border regions of Pakistan were won by Islamic groups. Furthermore, out of apprehension, certain facets of Pakistani military intelligence persist in endorsing repressive policies in the region of Kashmir. According to Pakistani experts, President Musharraf has limited authority to oversee this operation. The BJP, the governing party in India, is rapidly embracing the Hindutva ideology in preparation for the 2004 elections. The ideology asserts that India is a sacred seat of Hindu authority and not a pluralistic, mainstream state. It is widely recognized that when either party in an ethnic or political confrontation appeals to God or divine authority to bolster its stance, the probability of actual casualties in combat markedly climbs. (Sumit, 1999).

Since the mid-1930s, when a discernibly Kashmiri identity began to emerge, the region of Kashmir has been preoccupied with the inquiry into whether conventional politicians, Muslims, or Hindus ought to assume leadership. However, Kashmir became entangled in the subcontinent's general miseries due to the manner in which the package was managed in 1947. The escalation of the India-Pakistan conflict entangled Kashmiri national ambitions, which subsequently gave rise to local discontent. Despite

the United Nations' advocacy, the Kashmiris' aspirations regarding their political status were never taken into account. In the 1980s, as a more informed generation entered power, there was a surge in demands for Kashmiri assurance. However, in their response, the Indian military and police maintained an exceptionally clandestine stance (Noorani, 1992).

Despite the fact that recent events in Jammu and Kashmir have been less destructive, they have still claimed a number of lives. Dissident movements in Jammu and Kashmir have been vocal since 1989 regarding Kashmiris' grievances and frustrations with the Indian government, specifically the military. The 2008 judgements were deemed most acceptable by the United Nations Substantive Commissioner for Refugees, in contrast to the demands for a blacklist put forth by separatist groups. The decision resulted in the formation of the India-Jamai Kashmir National Conference, which subsequently had an effect on the state's legislature. To increase the ferocity, numerous children stormed government vehicles and train stations, pelted security personnel with pebbles, set government structures on fire, and smouldered structures (Jha, 2003).

In October 1947, a contingent of Pushtun Afridi tribal members made an assault on Kashmir, as reported by Indian troops. Clan members set out in support of their Kashmiri compatriots, who were in danger of having the Maharajah of Kashmir exiled to India. Maharaja Hari Singh's request was granted by Mountbatten, the final British representative and Governor-General of India, during the height of the conflict in Kashmir; however, this concession was contingent on the Kashmiris being granted the authority to determine their own fate. Jawahir Lal Nehru, the then prime minister of India, deployed military forces in the region (Johnson, 2005).

It precipitated a brief military conflict between Pakistan and India in 1948. The issue was brought before the United Nations Security Council by India. On January 1, 1948, P. P. Pillai, the Indian representative to the United Nations Security Council, apprised the head of the Council of the matter at hand. Pakistan was the subject of a complaint, which petitioned the United Nations Security Council to prohibit the country's incursion into Kashmir. India argued that the legitimacy of the Maharaja's connections to India formed the foundation of its position (Lamb, 1992).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze leadership styles of key figures in India and Pakistan for Kashmir resolution in their enduring relationship.
2. To assess the impact and effectiveness of policy decisions, especially regarding the Kashmir issue, made by leaders from India and Pakistan in conflict resolution.

3. To scrutinize diplomatic efforts by leaders from both countries in resolving conflicts, emphasizing strategies and outcomes that either facilitate or hinder the peace process.
4. To Identify Discernible Patterns: Explore and identify discernible behavior patterns in the leadership engagement between India and Pakistan, assessing their impact on progress in conflict resolution.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How do leaders from India and Pakistan exhibit distinct or similar leadership styles in resolving conflicts in their enduring relationship?
2. What is the impact and effectiveness of policy decisions, especially those concerning the Kashmir issue, made by leaders from India and Pakistan in contributing to sustainable solutions in conflict resolution?
3. How have diplomatic endeavors by leaders from India and Pakistan influenced the resolution of conflicts between the two nations, considering strategies employed and their outcomes?
4. Are there discernible patterns of behavior in the leadership engagement between India and Pakistan, and how do these patterns contribute to or impede progress in conflict resolution over time?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employed a qualitative methodology and drew upon secondary sources, such as internet sources, academic literature, and novels. Furthermore, theoretical analysis and a framework for the case study are incorporated into the research methodology. The data gathered from peers and acquaintances significantly enhanced the quality of this investigation.

RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to adequately tackle the challenges encountered in research, the research design serves as the strategic framework for systematically and logically incorporating the many components of the study. This study has used qualitative research methods to get a deeper understanding of human nature and the underlying motivations that influence individuals' actions. The researchers has investigated the mechanisms and rationales of decision-making. Additionally, this study has evaluated the ideas, standards, and methodologies used in the delineation and comprehension of the research issue. This study has also examined the information provided by the method and the secondary web sources that support that knowledge.

The Kashmir dispute is encompassed by several factors, particularly those related to the leadership obligations of Pakistan and India. This research is crucial for the identification of these elements. In order to fully understand the causes of the Kashmir conflict and potential strategies for its resolution, it is necessary to possess a

comprehensive understanding of the leadership roles held in both nations. The objective of the study is to understand various point of view of Indian and Pakistani politicians over Kashmir.

DATA ACQUISITION

Kombo (2006) define it as the systematic accumulation of information with the purpose of substantiating or responding to a range of circumstances and conditions concerning particular events and occurrences. Data can be collected through a multitude of methodologies, including but not limited to questionnaire completion, interview participation, empirical observation, model and theory modification in pursuit of answer generation, and more. The fundamental differentiation lies in the fact that different disciplines of academic research writing employ unique methods for acquiring data. In order to enhance comprehension of this research topic, the investigator consulted a multitude of models sourced from scholarly journals and publications to gain a deeper understanding of the leadership's involvement in the Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India.

SAMPLING

In the context of technique and research inquiries, a population refers to a substantial assemblage of individuals or imaginary entities that possess at least one common characteristic. Kombo and Tromp (2006) define the target population as the whole set of individuals within a certain demographic that are pertinent to the research endeavour. The study focuses on the Kashmir area, characterised by a diverse range of commodities and people. The research population would consist of individuals from Kashmir, Pakistan, and India who hold political positions, as well as any foreign or international institutions that have a role in the conflict in Kashmir.

DATA ANALYSIS

To address the research questions, the processed data is utilized within the research methodology. This data is crucial for answering the research questions while considering the objective of study. In this study, the researcher used qualitative methodologies for data analysis. The material has been presented in a way that fulfils the significant objectives of this study, which involve the leadership positions both the countries in the Kashmir issue. However, theories and approaches that have been analysed in light of the research questions.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The National Security Advisors of Pakistan and India are now making preparations for a strategic talk amidst the increasing tensions inside and beyond the Line of Control (LOC) in the Kashmir Valley. Dabla (2011) asserts that Prime Minister Atal Behari has played important role in peace between two important countries of Asia. According to Dabla (2011), Amarjit Singh Dulat, the leader of India's Research & Analysis Wing

(R&AW), expressed admiration for Prime Minister Vajpayee's successful resolution of the Kashmir problem in collaboration with Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf.

The failure of the July 16, 2001 Agra Declaration plan may be attributed to Advani's activities. Subsequently, during his time in Parliament, Vajpayee acknowledged that his personal meeting with Musharraf had beyond the expected duration, prompting Advani to inquire about the reason for this delay. The conversations between Jaswant Singh, the Indian Foreign minister and Pakistani minister of foreign affairs were also interrupted by Advani's phone calls. Nanda and Batra (2011) suggest that it would be beneficial for the Indian Prime Minister to engage in a one-day meeting with the President of Pakistan, followed by a subsequent visit to Ajmer Sharif, where he may further engage in negotiations with Indian authorities in order to settle the prevailing problem.

KASHMIR CONFLICT AND ITS REPERCUSSION ON BILATERAL RELATIONS

Cohen (2016) asserts that on September 18, 2016, four combatants involved in an armed confrontation while destroying 19 soldiers when they stormed an army base in the region of Kashmir under Indian control. At this moment, tensions reached their highest point. India asserts that Pakistan was the perpetrator of the attack, whereas Pakistan has avowed no involvement. Cohen (2016) asserts that India dispatched commandos to target insurgent positions in the Pakistan-controlled Kashmir region in retaliation nine days later. Despite the frequent exchange of armaments between the two nations, particularly across the frontier, this marked India's initial claim of responsibility for the assault, thereby substantiating the animosity that ensued.

ECONOMIC INVOLVEMENT OF US AND CHINA IN KASHMIR

Dabla (2011) asserts that the United States and China possess superpower status and wield veto power inside the United Nations. Consequently, India and Pakistan are developing nations with conflicts over Kashmir, as both administrations seek backing from the two dominant powers to rationalise their stances on the matter.

The importance of Pakistan and China strong collaboration can be seen in Balochistan which has been recognised as pivotal to China's economic development and growth. According to Cohen (2017) who emphasizes advancement of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a significant initiative for economic progress and fine relations which is an initiative that has received substantial support and funding from China, amounting to \$46 billion in investments. According to Cohen (2016), the construction of a comprehensive infrastructure including pipelines, rail lines, and roadways to link Gwadar in Balochistan with China is an integral component of CPEC.

LEADERS WITH THEIR PERSPECTIVES

Saha (2006) states that Pakistani legislators in Islamabad regard Kashmir, the predominantly Muslim region, as an integral part of their nation. The UN suggested

that, following the initial conflict between the two nations, a referendum be held to allow the people of Kashmir to decide which country they belonged to. Nevertheless, the vote was never carried out. The resolution of the conflict through a referendum is a goal pursued by the leadership of Pakistan. The Indian president asserts that a bilateral resolution to the Kashmir dispute can be found in a 1972 agreement reached during the Bangladesh conflict, and that Pakistan provides support to terrorist organisations that resist governmental authority. The opposition to Kashmir's independence is apparent from the stances of both presidents.

INVOLVED PARTIES AND OTHER ACTORS' RESOLUTION ATTEMPTS

Over its prolonged history, the Kashmir has transformed from land dispute into crises with multi-dimensions with far-reaching international results. Consequently, each endeavour to resolve the regional conflict proves to be insufficient. Therefore, in order to foster peace in Kashmir, it is imperative that the involved parties confront the matter from cultural, social, and religious perspectives.

Stopping the violence in Kashmir is the initial step in resolving the conflict. For harmony to be established, both nations must work together. Pakistan, for instance, ought to cease providing financial support to terrorist organisations operating in Kashmir. Once more, in order to foster peace, officials in Pakistan and Kashmir must alter the mindset of their compatriots who prefer the rule of Islam over Kashmir and the destruction of India over the improvement of the living conditions of Kashmiris. This measure would effectively deter insurgent organisations in Pakistan and bring an end to the ongoing conflict in Kashmir. The proposal could only be successful if the leaders of both nations encouraged education and secularism in Pakistan and Kashmir. Unfortunately, in Pakistan, these notions contradict the facts (Wolpert, 2010).

An additional approach to achieving peace in Kashmir, as suggested by Wolpert (2010), would be for India to strive towards eradicating bias against Muslims within its borders. In Gujarat, the most western state of India, there have been anti-Muslim demonstrations. Far too many Muslims were slain in the disturbances, which also incited sectarian strife across the nation, particularly in Kashmir. The action fosters animosity among the local populace and promotes acts of violence associated with terrorism in the region of Kashmir. In Kashmir in particular, India promotes secularism throughout the nation in an effort to resolve this issue. Both countries must exert considerable effort in an endeavour to restore calm to Kashmir. With the possible reduction of violence in Kashmir, the potential assistance of security forces withdrawing could be considered. Additionally, it is crucial that the governments resettle the Hindus who have been displaced from the valley; doing so would promote religious harmony and support the economic growth of Kashmir.

THE EXTERNAL ACTORS' NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE IMPACT ON ISSUE OF KASHMIR

The United Nations's (UN) involvement in resolving the issue has brought forth numerous challenges and opportunities. Given the interdependence between peace efforts and economic development, the advancement of the Kashmiri economy is intricately linked to the advancement of peace. India's policy has undergone a transformation, resulting in a more benevolent approach towards Kashmir. Firstly, it reduces the probability of a recurrence of the conflict, since unemployment and poverty are often seen as the main catalysts for those engaging in violence. Furthermore, it addresses the concerns of people by including them in initiatives, hence facilitating the resolution of disputes (Schneider & Honeyman, 2006).

They further add that tourism plays a significant role in generating revenue for the region of Kashmir. When external individuals attempt to resolve the issue, they visit locations such as Gulmarg and Sonmarg, renowned for their exceptional winter activities. In J&K, individuals have the opportunity to engage in exhilarating activities such as golf, hiking, fishing, water sports, winter sports, and climbing. In addition, foreign individuals engaged in the Kashmir conflict contribute to the closure of tourism destinations like as Ladakh and Jammu, which possess significant potential as tourist hotspots. According to Gupta (2006), the incorporation of contemporary facilities into Jammu's tourist destinations aims to attract a larger global audience.

According to Dabla (2011), the international parties involved in the Kashmir conflict are actively engaged in efforts to reduce unemployment, which is considered a positive development. The participants are collaborating with the leaders in Kashmir to construct transport lines inside the region, expand into untapped regions, assist local enterprises in recovering, and undertake many other initiatives that would not only bolster the economy of the valley but also provide employment opportunities. The militancy in Kashmir mostly stems from inadequate infrastructure and limited employment opportunities. The actor's efforts demonstrate that 80% of activism will cease if the government and industry provide employment opportunities for young people. According to Dabla (2011), empirical evidence indicates that a significant number of Kashmiris hold the belief that fostering economic growth is the most effective approach to achieving peace in the valley.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

1. Hindu Muslim Rivalry

According to the conclusions of this research, religion has a significant influence in the Kashmir conflict there is a widespread belief that the ongoing Hindu-Muslim rivalry is fuelled by Muslim aggressiveness and Hindu anger dating back to Aurangzeb's reign.

This antagonism makes reaching a compromise on settling the Kashmir problem difficult.

2. Involvement of Rebel groups in the Dispute

India blamed Pakistan to start civil disturbance and incite people to assault. India's leadership claims that Pakistani militia sought to tarnish the image of Indian control in the eyes of Kashmiris. Schofield (2010) writes that in contrast, Pakistan claims that India violated the Stand-still Agreement; while, their officials have been mistreating Kashmiris. Pakistan believes that the Kashmiris are their Muslim brothers who must be protected at all costs, making it impossible for the two countries to agree.

3. Financial Prospects in Kashmir

Indian financial gain and growth have been a base for the Kashmir because the Indus River is vital for agriculture and other financial advantages as both the countries have fought to control the river. According to Schofield (2010), Kashmir has strategic importance for India's security and economic demands, making it important for India to go aggressive to maintain its control in the lucrative valley.

Foreign Intervention

The external influences on the Kashmir dispute provide a challenge to solve long lasting tension between two most important countries such as India and Pakistan and forward their interests in a more impartial manner. For instance, it is believed that the Chinese back Pakistan. Since China and India are rivals on the Asian continent, this is a result of their rivalry. The resolution of the conflict in Kashmir is hampered by these interests.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research endeavour centred on the leadership roles and responsibilities assumed by India and Pakistan during the Kashmir conflict. The findings can be succinctly summarised in three distinct manners: initially, it is evident that both countries possess capability and aptitude to effectively resolve the Kashmir conflict through a pragmatic and transparent strategy. However, this is contingent upon the abandonment of their own interests, which hinders the establishment of peace and stability in the region of Kashmir. Furthermore, it is imperative that the leaders of India and Pakistan promptly initiate dialogue with the people of Kashmir in order to ascertain their desires autonomously, without involving any other entities. Due to the fact that the conflict directly affects the inhabitants of Kashmir, this is the case. Furthermore, it is crucial that the international community and disputing nations, including the United States and China, channel their support towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Kashmir. Engaging in favor-seeking and advocating for personal interests in the region merely hinders the progress towards a peaceful settlement. The countries and the international community are included.

India and Pakistan have taken significant steps over the last several years to improve their bilateral relations to end their ongoing war and fight over the territory of Kashmir. Schofield (2010) claims that despite a meeting between the two nations' foreign ministers in the middle of February 2016, nothing concrete has come of it in terms of bringing about peace and stability in the Kashmir region. There are several reasons that as why the tension between two countries like Pakistan and India leads to concern all over the world. South Asian neighbors Pakistan and India are at odds over the disputed territory of the Indo-Pakistani border despite both countries possessing nuclear weapons. This sort of confrontation has the potential to grow into another world war due to the many people supporting opposite sides. The fact that so many factions are on opposite sides of the fight makes peace negotiations very difficult.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Engagement of the Kashmiris in Dialogue

The Kashmir issue must become more intricate and inclusive of incorporating Kashmiris in long-ignored debates and dispute resolution. Civilians from Kashmir will jeopardize the process since their absence is incompatible with a more precise outcome. Because of the present hostility of security personnel against residents, it is hard to create atmosphere for peace and harmony.

Kashmiris don't have sources for leadership at their end. Consequently, no concerted political effort can balance the governments of India and Pakistan. However, Kashmiris are fed up with the unending carnage as they have limited legal and political options for implementation. However, almost alternatives have bypassed middle-level and grassroots participants in favor of government officials and Kashmir's elites.

2. Stereotyping perceptions eliminated

Misperceptions and preconceived notions have rendered dispute resolution between Pakistan and India unattainable. Both factions have adopted rigid stances and attitudes that have rendered the pursuit of a resolution unattainable. When Hindu extremists in Kashmir organise biased events, such as the Amarnath Yatra to attract more religious tourists, they use insurrection to seize territory and support nationalism, according to Lamb (2002). Conversely, certain extremist political organisations and groups, such as the Shiv Sena, are opposed to Pakistanis and Muslims and speak negatively about them. This causes division among the citizens of both nations.

3. Constructively address grievances and problems

Complaints and concerns are not being constructively addressed, leading them to increase in nature, producing desperation and enmity. This is a key component in settlement of the Kashmir conflict. People are skeptical and upset because legal and administrative institutions cannot develop and qualities that may foster responsibility. This causes people to be distrustful of and annoyed by the institutions. The Indian

security forces have been allowed impunity for their activities in Kashmir as a result of the actions of the government, which has only served to desensitize them to their conduct.

4. **Neutralization of Militants**

To establish a lasting solution, the terrorists' participation in the Kashmir conflict must be acknowledged and dealt with. Because it will take both countries time and money to neutralize the militants, it will be challenging to end the conflict; it can only be controlled to a certain extent. India can defend its sizable security presence in Kashmir as long as the terrorists continue to instigate attacks and carnage. This is advantageous for them since it preserves the Indian government's control over Kashmir, which may be questioned if a comprehensive peace agreement is formed and put into effect.

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