



## Pakistan-India after Pulwama Attacks: Theoretical Assessment

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### Abstract:

This research paper analyses the impact of the Pulwama attacks on reshaping Pakistan and India relationship through the lenses of major theories of International Relations: Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism. Pakistan and India have deep rooted territorial disputes due to which their relations remained in a state of flux since partition. The relations between Pakistan and India remain at the centre stage of the international arena both being nuclear powers. However, the recent rise in tensions following the Pulwama attacks 2019 gave new dimensions to the relations. The paper gives a brief overview of the recent history of relations between the two countries leading to a short description of the Pulwama attacks. Furthermore, the situation has been assessed by laying out the theoretical dimensions of the essay and explains the key tenets of these theories: Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism. Then, the paper focuses on the impact of incidents on inter-state relations in the light of key assumptions of these theories. Additionally, the research predicts future relations based on discussion in light of theories and recommends a way forward for peaceful relations between the two nuclear neighbours.

**Keywords:** India, Pakistan, Pulwama attack, realism, liberalism, constructivism, territorial dispute

### INTRODUCTION

Pakistan and India have deep rooted territorial disputes due to which their relations remained in a state of flux since independence from the British Rule in 1947. The relations of both the states have been explored, explained and analysed through various theories of international relations in the past. Tensions between Pakistan and India grew in February 2019 after local youth carried out attacks against Indian atrocities in the Pulwama region of Indian Occupied Kashmir and garnered worldwide attention. The relations between the two nuclear armed states are in turmoil since then, which is a matter of concern at regional and global arena. Developments in Pakistan –India relations after Pulwama attacks have heightened the need for reassessment of the factors reshaping the relations between the two South Asian states to a greater extent. Additionally, the diversity of conflictive and cooperative relations between these two countries cannot be fully comprehended by a single theory of International Relations (IR). Therefore, the aim of this research paper is to

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analyse the impact of the Pulwama attacks on reshaping the relations between Pakistan and India through the lense of major theories of International Relations: Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism. The analysis is carried out at individual, domestic and interstate level with few shades of global level: which are recognised levels of analysis (Goldstein, 1999, p.17). The arguments are based upon the key assumptions and critique of these theories of International Relations.

### **BACKGROUND OF PAKISTAN AND INDIA CONFLICTING RELATIONS**

Pakistan and India conflict is regarded as one of the oldest and longest enduring conflicts of the twentieth century (Michael, 2018). Both the states adopted a hostile posture towards each other right from independence in 1947 due to a multitude of factors involving territorial, ideological, and international engagement with actors like the United States, China and Russia (Paul and Hogg, 2005). In my perspective, major reasons of this animosity include the faulty partition of the Subcontinent which displaced around 11 million people and unjustified distribution of resources between two newly created states. Since independence in 1947, both of these so called democratic countries have had approximately 15 conflicts and crisis of varying intensity (Chari et al., 2009, p.15). The major conflicts include the First Kashmir War (1947-1949), September 1965 war, 1971 war, and 1999 Kargil conflict which is also known as Operation Koh-e-Paima. Therefore, it is argued that both countries had a conflict after every four years on average. The major issue between the two countries is the disputed territory of Kashmir. The roots of Kashmir conflict can be traced back to the partition of the subcontinent in 1947. An agreement was made during the partition process of the subcontinent to give right to a total of 625 princely states, of joining either India or Pakistan or remaining independent. A Sikh Maharajah Hari Singh was the ruler of the princely state of Kashmir which had a majority Muslim population. Maharaja Hari Singh (under threats and pressures from both India and British Raj) was forced to sign the Instrument of Accession to accede to India. Kashmir is situated towards the extreme north of Pakistan and India who have challenged each other for gaining control of the majority Muslim region in two wars. The 1972 Simla Agreement, succeeding the December 1971 war over Bangladesh, created the Line of Control (LOC) that splits Kashmir into Pakistani-held and Indian-held regions (Hussain, 2009, p.1015). India has control over the eastern regions of the state, which comprises the Kashmir Valley, Jammu and Ladakh while Pakistan has control over the western areas, which it called "Azad Kashmir", and the Northern Areas. The assertion of dyad states for control over this strategically and economically vital valley has provoked a perpetual conflict in South Asia. Although there are periods of improved relations specially between 2003 to 2016 yet those are very brief periods (Michael, 2018). The Pulwama attack 2019 and ensuing crises are the latest manifestation of conflict between two countries on Kashmir issue.

### **Overview of Pulwama Attack 2019**

Pakistan and India relations remain in a state of flux and highly unpredictable mainly due to the deep rooted territorial dispute of Kashmir. The tension grew in mid-February 2019, after attacks on Indian police force in Pulwama region of Indian Occupied Kashmir. A police contingent was attacked with a vehicle borne Improvised Explosive Device (IED) by an individual of Kashmiri origin. India lost more than 40 security personnel of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in this massive attack (Ahmed and Ashraf, 2019, p.2, Pandya, 2019). Indian media and the

Government immediately blamed involvement of Pakistan in Jaish-e-Muhammad (Internationally proscribed organisation, banned by Pakistan in 2002 and also banned by United Nations) and further claimed that Jaish-e-Muhammad has accepted the responsibility for the attacks based on an unknown call received by Indian intelligence agency (Rashid, 2019, Hashim, 2019, Pandya, 2019, Tufail, 2019). The Indian Prime Minister Mr Modi threatened Pakistan that India will carry out surgical strikes in Pakistan on alleged training camps of Jaish-e-Muhammad (Bukhari and Miglani, 2019). India further claimed that she will ensure total isolation of Pakistan from the world community by playing the card of Pulwama attacks (Ahmed & Ashraf, 2019; "Pulwama attack," 2019). The government of Pakistan condemned the attacks and denied any linkages with attacks as well as the statements of the Indian government for involvement of Pakistan. Furthermore, Pakistan made it clear to the world that even if Jaish-e-Muhammad has accepted responsibility, it does not show any involvement of the state and state will take action against the already proscribed organisation (Ahmed & Ashraf, 2019; "Pulwama terror attack," 2019). Nevertheless, the tension kept on simmering between the two nations and India conducted air strikes on Balakot region Azad Kashmir against alleged training camps of Jaish-e-Muhammad on 26 February, 2019. Pakistan retaliated to the air strikes considering it a threat to its sovereignty and shot down two jets of Indian Air Force and captured one of the pilots (Regen et al., 2019). The relations between the two countries saw a new low because no crisis went to the level of exchanging air strikes in last two decades. The two nuclear armed rivals came to the brink of a conventional war and India threatened Pakistan of a retaliatory attack through surface to surface missiles (Pellegrino and Lewis, 2019, Haider & Azad, 2021). Keeping this background of the incident in mind, the theoretical framework is presented to further analyse the relations between the two countries.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical framework of the study is based on the three major and most influential schools of international relations including Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism. The key assumptions and critique of these theories are explained in ensuing paragraphs to give a brief overview.

### **Realism**

Realpolitik, Power Politics or Realism is regarded as one of the oldest and most influential theory of International Relations and its roots can be traced back in the Philosophical writings of Thucydides, Nicollo Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes. Thucydides argued in his account of Peloponnesian war that strong can impose upon weaker as per their power while weaker can only accept as they do not have any other choice (Goldstein, 1999, p.54). We see power as the central element in the writings of Thucydides. Machiavelli said that, "it must be taken for granted that all men are wicked and that they will always give vent to the malignity that is in their minds when opportunity offers" (Donnelly, 2000, p.9). Therefore, realism primarily assumes that humans are selfish / egoistic in nature, who strive for maximising their power at the expense of others and states being unitary actors also behave in similar fashion in their relations with other states. National security and state survival lie at the core of the realist perspective and it is assumed as an ideal type model. Realism also maintains that power politics is a zero sum game. Realism gained special attention after the end of World War II because idealism could not prevail to stop wars. There is an extensive body of literature on realism and it is defined in diversity by scholars and experts of international relations however, the key arguments revolve around State, Self-interest, Power and Anarchic international

system (Burchill et al., 2013, p.31). Most proponents of realism agree that self-interest and egoistic cravings are the core characteristics of the international politics. While another group of realists including Schuman envisions the political behaviour as an outcome of anarchic system which makes states to preserve own self-interests, thus causing conflicts (Dunne et al., 2013, p.10). Therefore, when egoistic behaviour interplays with anarchy, it brings the element of power politics at the core of international relations. Classical Realism and Structural realism are two widely accepted schools of thought however, both have divergent and inconsistent views (Dunne et al., 2013, p.79). The Classical realists, like Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes and Morgenthau, underpin the importance of egoistic and self-centric human nature based on variables of interest and power in international relations. This is also called the pessimistic view of human nature. The structural realists, like Waltz, are more concerned with the anarchic nature of the international system where states opt for self-preservation because nobody cares for the interests of others. The major assumption in the Waltz regime is the balance of power system where states try to match the power of perceived opponents in an anarchic system. The major critics of realism come from Liberalists views who argue that cooperation and interdependence rests at the core of international relations rather self-interest and balance of power. Realism is further criticised for not taking into account non state actors like individuals, International Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) (Jackson et al., 2016, p.68). Realists also do not take into account the power of norms, values, morality and religious beliefs, which shape the conduct of the states in various ways. There are a lot of issues which realism fails to explain and the most obvious one is the European Union. This paper focuses upon the following basic assumptions of Realism to evaluate the relationship between Pakistan and India:

- (i) Survival and Self Interest
- (ii) Balance of Power
- (iii) Anarchic International System

### **Liberalism**

Liberalism is regarded as the oldest paradigm of the International Relations which gained importance during the period between two world wars and it argues that The Endogenous (domestic factors) determines the Exogenous (peacefulness of the international system). This perspective is largely associated with scholars like Hugo Grotius, John Locke and Immanuel Kant. Liberalism was based upon the ideas of norms, values and justice for achieving perpetual peace. United States President Woodrow Wilson was the key figure who widely supported the Liberalism thesis. Liberalism also became the basis for the study of International Relations as a distinct subject. However, the failure of the League of Nations to prevent the world from atrocities of the Second World War caused the downfall of liberalism. The theory remained in exile and was considered as a flawed theory during the cold war period because the Realist school of thought was considered a better alternative to explain the cold war tensions (Najzer, 2018, pp.15-16). The end of the Cold war and Fukuyama's "The End of History" thesis gave a new life to liberalism. The key assumptions in Kant's view are based on rational approach of individuals and possibility of progress in social life. Kant argues that although humans have a self-centred approach, yet they can cooperate with each other to build a peaceful society for coexistence (Dunne et al., 2013, p.96). The main idea is that rational individuals can play their role to bring peace through mutual cooperation. Theory of

Economic Interdependence by Nye and Keohane is also significant because it underpins the role of economic interactions between states, transnational relations and non-state actors in achieving peace. European Union is the living example of liberalism where democracy, economic integration and institutions played their role to maintain and sustain peace in the region. Institutional Liberalism also known as Neo-liberalism further underpinned the role of international institutions in facilitating cooperation between states (Dunne et al., 2013, p.117). The institutional liberalism is state centric just like structural realism and assumes states as unitary actors however unlike realism which aims for the self-interest, liberalism focuses on cumulative progress of all. Fukuyama's view of democracy underpinned the importance of legitimate internal political systems which can solve the conflicts at international level (Burchill et al., 2013, p.59). However, post-Cold war events like rise of terrorism, overthrow of democracies and resistance to implant democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan show the flaws in Fukuyama's arguments. Although Kant's vision of perpetual peace seems prevailing in some parts of the Western world however, it does not cover the whole world. Democracies are also fighting with each other and defining that a democracy is not universal. The definition of war also varies and there is no universally accepted definition for both war and democracy. The Brexit issue itself is a problematic area in relation to Liberalism key assumptions as well as Fukuyama's End of History thesis. We will dilate upon the following basic assumptions of Liberalism to evaluate the relations of Pakistan and India:

- (i) Democratic Peace
- (ii) Economic Interdependence
- (iii) Intergovernmental Organisations and Institutions.

### **Constructivism**

Constructivism also gained momentum in the post-Cold War period and largely replaced the ideas of Marxism. Constructivism was aimed to explain the reshaping of the post-Cold War world order which was not adequately visualised and explained by Realism and Liberalism. Alexander Wendt, Peter Katzenstein, Friedrich Kratochwil, and Nicholas Onuf are considered as leading scholars in the constructivist's school of thought. Constructivism focuses on international relations in terms of historical, sociological and practice oriented domains (Burchill et al., 2013, pp.218-221). Constructivism claims that political phenomena are historically and socially contingent – nothing is immutable. Wendt argued that agents and structures are mutually constitutive which means that social world is constructed by those who live there. The ontology of Constructivism is based on the fundamental aspects of ideas, identities and perceptions and not material, though it also does not reject the positivist's epistemology. The states, alliances and international organisations may be the outcome of basic human nature but the historical and social meanings come out of the social interaction of the humans. Social constructions and ideational factors play a significant role in international relations : there is no single object reality, and norms, rules and values shape the social dimension of international relations (Dunne et al., 2013, p.179). It means that there is no objective reality and our own ideas, values and beliefs shape and construct the reality. In Constructivists view, conflicts are based on ideational processes where reality is interpreted differently by different actors depending upon their perception (Michael, 2018, p.105). But the problem with constructivist's values is about right and wrong values. A set of values needs to be there which is agreed upon as acceptable and unacceptable by the international community.

Generally, Western values are considered as right ones but they may not be suitable in the context of an African or Middle Eastern country. The terms values, norms and culture are variable therefore, uncertainty in the constructivist's regime prevails at times. We will dilate upon the following basic assumptions of Liberalism to evaluate the relations of Pakistan and India:

- (i) National Identities
- (ii) Interpretation of Facts
- (iii) Social Construction of State Policies

### **ANALYSIS OF PAKISTAN – INDIA RELATIONS**

In the aftermath of the Pulwama attack in mid-February 2019, most of the analysis and research studies on Pakistan and India relations are based upon the historic rivalries of the two countries and Kashmir issue under the perspective of nationalism and territorial disputes. No serious and systematic study has been conducted to analyse the relations through the prism of the theories of International Relations. Hence, researcher has tried to unravel the incident and ensuing relations in the light of the framework discussed earlier.

#### **Realist Perspective on Pakistan-India Relations post-Pulwama Attack**

From a realist point of view, the Pulwama attack is a classic example of realism where both states tried to pursue their national interests through power in an anarchic international system. Researcher analysed different incidents based on the key arguments of realism discussed in the theoretical framework.

#### **Survival and Self Interest**

From a realist point of view, India's response to attacks in the form of surgical strike threats to Pakistan was a manifestation of power and self-interest where India wanted to maintain her superiority over Pakistan and also to pursue her strategic aim of gaining control over Kashmir. The statements by Indian Prime Minister Mr. Modi for punitive action against Pakistan are also seen as a booster to gain support in elections (Ahmed and Ashraf, 2019). Therefore, from an election point of view, a realist may argue that Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) tried to pursue their self-interest of coming again into power by exploiting the anti-Pakistan narrative which is common in India during election season. Furthermore, the conduct of air strikes on 26<sup>th</sup> February was an alleged attempt to show the world and domestic audience that Pakistan has links with terrorists and India has the political will and military power to attack anywhere in Pakistan. From the Pakistan side, the denial of any linkages with attack and action against any such elements by Pakistan was a gesture that her sovereignty will not be compromised. Pakistan considered Indian air strikes as a threat to her survival and sovereignty therefore, Pakistan's response was based on realist logic of state survival at any cost. It was also important for Pakistan to convey a message to India as well as to the international community that no compromise will be made when it comes to state sovereignty. The Indian government action on suspension of article 370, which gave special rights to the people of Indian Occupied Kashmir, is also a clear manifestation of realist argument of self-interest (Ghosal and Kr. Guha, 2012, p.26). Pakistan also made it clear to the international community at the United Nations that a war between two nuclear power states will not be limited to South Asia but it will

have global implications. This stance of Pakistan is a realist argument to convey to others that she possesses power and it will be used to any extent to ensure state survival.

### **Balance of Power**

The realist argument of balance of power can be seen in this incident because there is asymmetry in relations due to Indian numerical and technological superiority over Pakistan. So, Pakistan also exerts a lot of efforts to maintain balance of power. Pakistan responded back to India to demonstrate power to balance out Indian aggressions despite the numerical and technological superiority of the latter. Indian Air Force lost two fighter jets during the surgical strikes by Pakistan, hence the Indian Prime Minister gave the statement that their Russian fighters (SU-30) are not capable of tackling Pakistan F-16s (United States origin). Thus, they will induct Rafale fighter jets to get advantage over Pakistan and he also criticised congress for politicising Rafale deal (Daniyal, 2019). Pakistan also approached China for procurement of latest missiles to stay on solid footing against India. From a pure realist point of view, these postures show that both countries tried to maximise their relative power in the aftermath of the Pulwama attack. Similarly, India tried to convince the international community that the attacks were linked to Pakistan and India has taken legitimate action. Whereas, Pakistan also asserted that the attacks were not linked to Pakistan therefore Pakistan will respond to Indian aggression. Michael argues from realist perspective that Pakistan and India will remain in a state of hostility as they are stuck in a system of balancing different instruments of power against each other (Michael, 2018, pp.109-110).

### **Anarchic International System**

The exchange of air strikes by both countries post Pulwama attack demonstrates the realist argument that the international system is anarchic in nature hence both countries tried to sort out the issues on self-help basis through power. After the Pulwama attack, there was no considerable involvement by international institutions and other nations to pacify the developing tensions till exchange of air strikes. The United States supported Indian claims and asserted that India has the right to self-defence which made the situation further anarchic. The exchange of air strikes can be seen as a result of anarchy because the international community kept on watching the situation without any solid efforts to resolve the issue.

### **Liberalist Perspective on Pakistan-India Relations post-Pulwama Attack**

The Pulwama attack and ensuing events can also be explained through the lens of liberalism as there were certain strong indicators of cooperation and gestures of peace to diffuse the boiling situation. Liberalism perspective is analysed on the following key arguments of liberalism.

### **Democratic Peace**

Democracies do not fight with each other however, Pakistan and India are democracies and they do fight with each other. In this perspective, both Pakistan and India are not the true liberal democracies and their decision making is largely overwhelmed by the security centric approach towards each other. The Indian elections are especially prone to an anti-Pakistan centric approach to gain popularity amongst Hindu nationalists. Goldstein argued that dictatorships and democracies may behave differently in relation to each other, in contrast the behaviour of democracies may be different in election year in comparison to other times (Goldstein, 1999, p.17). Pulwama attacks and

following tensions between Pakistan and India are the clear manifestations of this logic of Goldstein (1999) since Indian approach towards Pakistan has always been aggressive during election time frames. Therefore, according to a liberalist's point of view the recent tensions were due to Indian elections where Modi's BJP wanted to stay in power by playing the Pakistan and Kashmir card but otherwise democracies do not fight with each other. The decision by Prime Minister Imran Khan and his cabinet to release the captured Indian pilot as a gesture of peace gives strength to the arguments of democratic peace thesis while the Indian stance leans more towards Goldstein (1999) argument which supports change of behaviour of democracy during elections.

### **International Institutions and Organisations**

A liberalist argues that initially the international community and institutions do not get involved just considering the incident as a routine matter in relations of the two countries. However, after exchange of air strikes, the international community and institutions played a vital role in diffusing the situation. Delegates of multiple countries including the United States, United Arab Emirate, Saudi Arabia and China visited both countries to pursue them to exercise restraints in their actions. The Pulwama attack also internationalised the Kashmir issue which was largely considered bilateral by India. Therefore, the liberalist argument of international organisations and international institutions played a vital role in pacifying the situation. Pakistan's gesture of releasing captured pilot was largely applauded by the international community as it was a step towards betterment of entangled relations between the two countries. Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan urged the international community at various occasions that they must intervene in situation to diffuse the crisis (Hussain, 2019) which shows that countries believe in the international institutions for maintaining peaceful relations.

### **Cooperation and Economic Interdependence**

The liberalists argue that despite the tensions, there was cooperation as well which nurtured the notion of improving relations. Pakistan's offer to open Kartarpur Corridor for Sikh Pilgrimage is a classic demonstration of this argument. Both countries worked out and successfully inaugurated the visa free entry corridor to the birth place of Guru Nanak for betterment of the Sikh people. This argument further strengthens the Goldstein (1999) arguments that the change in behaviour of democracy was due to elections and the relations resumed later on. This corridor may further enhance the people to people contacts for cooperation which will also ensure better relations between the states. Few diplomatic and backdoor channels also got activated to ensure the prevention of a full blown conflict. Pakistan also granted air passage to Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj to 'fly directly through Pakistani airspace' to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation meet in Bishkek in May 2019 on Indian request (The News International, 2019). This is a solid manifestation of the liberalist argument of cooperation.

### **Constructivist Perspective on Pakistan-India Relations post-Pulwama Attack**

Matissek claims that, "accordingly, some have even argued that social media platforms, such as Facebook, are undermining democratic institutions worldwide by creating different (and conflicting) versions of truth and facts. It is in this type of space (originally referred to as "fields of leverage" in 1969, that the internet has enabled the mobilization of people with similar ideas, further polarizing them (and others) toward the pursuit of self-interested political objectives"



(Matissek, 2017, p.12). This argument by Matissek is a reality in the case of Pakistan and India where several issues are interpreted through the lense of national identities to create polarisation for achievement of self-interests in the name of national interests and political objectives. The key characteristics of constructivism in relation to the Pulwama attack are being discussed in ensuing paragraphs.

### **National Identities**

The national identities played a significant role in the crisis ensuing Pulwama attack. The Indian Prime Minister Modi belongs to extreme right wing BJP party of India which has a strong stance against not only Pakistan but Indian Muslim's. They build and shape the national identities according to "Hindutva" doctrine which is for the supremacy of Hinduism. They are carrying out brutal attacks against Kashmiri Muslims and suspension of article 370 is a step forward in the direction of changing demographics of Indian Occupied Kashmir (Misra, 2000, p.23). Thus, they exploit national identity to win the election and it is also believed by few voices from even within India that Pulwama attack was staged by BJP to get Modi elected for the next term. Therefore, they used the Hindu-Muslim card as well as Pakistani terrorist card to exploit identities. Consequently, it became easy to justify the reason for exchanging air strikes to achieve victory in elections. Similarly, Pakistan also has a social construction against India based on Two-Nation theory which states that Muslims and Hindus are totally different ideologies and cannot live together. These national ideologies played a significant role in shaping the events post Pulwama attack. Indians demanded that strict action should be taken against Pakistan based on their existing perceptions about Pakistan which was reinforced by the political elite of India. After air strike by India, a similar construction of hostility was seen in Pakistan and people demanded action against India. The national identities played a significant role in escalation after the Pulwama attack. Meanwhile the implementation of Citizenship Amendment Act bill 2019 is a step further to consolidate the Hindutva ideology and large scale protests have erupted in India which show the role of National identities ("Citizenship (Amendment) Act," 2019).

### **Social Construction of State Policies**

The State policies in both the countries are formulated based on the image and perception about each other. Generally, these images and perceptions are hostile owing to enduring rivalry and deep mistrust among the two countries. Pakistan coined the term, "Shah-rug" for Kashmir which means carotid and it was socially constructed that just like a person cannot live without carotid therefore, Pakistan cannot live without Kashmir. While India adopted the term, "Atut ang" which means a part which cannot be separated. So these terms and related meanings play a significant role in formulation of people's beliefs as well as state policies. Therefore, in the sense of the Pulwama attack, this particular aspect also played the role. A constructivist will argue that both the countries take Kashmir as a sensitive issue so they fuelled the crisis to maintain that sensitivity and meaning for the people. The state policies are also formulated to cater these issues. Later, suspension of article 370 is also a constructivist approach to reshape people perceptions about Kashmir.

### **Interpretation of Facts**

The interpretation of facts plays a significant role in the relations between Pakistan and India. The cultural factors play a significant role in the interpretation and perception about each other. The

conflict between Pakistan and India can be better explained in terms of difference in interpretation of facts, rather than material differences (Michael, 2018, p.111). Both countries try to present the facts to their population differently. Indian media takes the narratives to absurd levels of hostility. The facts are tailored to their own specific requirements and interpreted in a similar context. India claimed that they have conducted surgical strikes and killed a large number of terrorists. Whereas nothing happened in reality and the same was proved by neutral observers and international media later on. Similarly, Indian claims of shooting down Pakistani F-16 was even debunked by the United States (Seligman, 2019). Indian PM Modi tried to exploit these manipulated statements for the election campaign and became successful because people accepted it as reality owing to interpretation of the media. Similarly, the release of pilot by Pakistan was a gesture of peace whereas Indian media narrated that Pakistan returned Indian pilot owing to threats posed by India.

## CONCLUSION

After critically analysing all these I.R. theories i.e. Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism, it is obvious that both states want to secure its national security and interests. Realism school of thought better explains the Pakistan and India situation. India and Pakistan have a long enduring rivalry: even though seventy years have passed after independence from British Raj, yet the antagonism between the two nations does not appear to diminish. The recent developments have shown a significant deviation from the past crisis. The level of hostility which is prevailing at the moment can be best described through realism and constructivism because the prospects for cooperation are less at this stage. Although international institutions can play a significant role however, no concrete measures have been initiated. There are ever increasing tensions along the international border and line of control. The research paper sees the chances of another conflict in line with the constructivist approach since both countries are in turmoil internally, especially India because of the Kashmir bill and nationality bill. The enduring COVID-19 crisis and protests by farmers are further deteriorating the domestic security milieu of India. Finally, research concludes that the relations seem to remain in turmoil in the foreseeable future because both countries are not ready to show leniency especially the proponents of Hindutva.

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Date of Publication	Jan 25, 2022
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