

**THE ROLE OF SOFT POWER IN TRANSFORMING THE
INDIA-PAKISTAN CONFLICT: A PAKISTANI PERSPECTIVE
OF PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES**

By

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Declaration

I declare that the thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree DPhil (International Relations) at the Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other institution of higher education.



Arshad Mehmood Abbasi

November 2020

Declaration

I, Arshad Abbasi student number 18388958 state that the research for this study has been conducted in line with the research ethics laid down by the University of Pretoria. The Research Ethics Committee gave approval in a letter to undertake research for this study. The letter from the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria is attached with the thesis in appendix A.



Arshad Abbasi

ABSTRACT

The India-Pakistan conflict has remained intractable for decades, and much has been written on the causes and nature of the conflict. To be sure, studies abound on how to resolve the conflict and ensure sustainable peace between the two conflicting states. However, few of these studies focus on the use of soft power as a tool for transforming the conflict between India and Pakistan. This is a gap in the literature, which this study sought to fill. This study therefore explores, from a Pakistani perspective, the plausibility and challenges of soft power to transform the conflict between India and Pakistan which has negative development implications for South Asia. Such a conflict transformation approach addresses the root causes of conflict by altering the psycho-social conditions and political environment at micro i.e., personal and macro i.e., structural levels.

Using a qualitative approach, primary data was collected through semi-structured interview of 6 clusters of interviewees namely, government officials in Pakistan and South Africa, and soft power individuals such as renowned businessmen, personalities from the entertainment industry, politicians and retired diplomats, civil society members and sports persons. Archives were also consulted mainly from 3 institutions viz. the National Archives of Pakistan, archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan and the National Documentation Center in Pakistan. Published books of politicians, diplomats, sports persons and movie actors have also been consulted, which provide first person accounts of India Pakistan relations in the soft power domain. All data collected including from secondary sources were analyzed thematically in line with the research objectives and research questions.

Within a conceptual framework of synergy between soft power, John Lederach's moral imagination and conflict transformation, the study argues that the soft power tools and resources of both India and Pakistan can be instrumental for unleashing the potential and moral imagination of people in both countries to view one another in a positive light and co-exist in healthy competition. The findings show, for example, that both countries share a commonly spoken language, there are followers of the same religious sects on both sides of the border, both nations have an interest in the same sports, particularly cricket, they share a common

culture, similar day-to-day fashions and modes of expression as well as successful film industries. However, a hard power approach pursued by the ruling elite of both nations, amongst other challenges, has hampered the prospects of peace in these countries with negative implications for South Asia. This notwithstanding, opportunities exist for the conflict to be transformed through a soft power approach to politics.

Given its intractable and perennial nature, the study concludes that the India Pakistani conflict lies deep in the hearts of people of both nations, and solutions need to be people-focused and tailored to change hearts and minds. India and Pakistan, as nuclear powers, cannot subdue each other. They have also failed to resolve this conflict as its management has only temporarily resulted in cooling down tensions. Therefore, durable peace between the two nations is possible when there is a change of heart on both sides. This change of heart will have to be among the ruling elite as well as the masses. The findings of the study show that people of India and Pakistan have the latent potential to view one another in a positive light, and this can be brought to the fore through moral imagination. The transformation generated by moral considerations will create conditions preparing the ground for durable and positive peace in South Asia. India and Pakistan also share moral responsibility to save millions of lives and improve the lives of millions of their poverty-stricken citizens, and this can be done if they can transform their hostile relations into mutually beneficial ties rooted in a humane conception of interstate politics. The study makes a number of recommendations, which amongst others, include the concept of conflict transformation needs to be advanced at official level of engagement between the India and Pakistan governments; mainstreaming conflict transformation into their respective foreign policies towards each other; imparting peace education through curricula change at all levels learning from elemental to tertiary institutions in both countries; establishing visa-free corridors linking up the border cities of both nations to enhance travel and tourism, and building cultural centers as vehicles for unleashing and cementing shared cultural heritage between the two nations.

KEY WORDS: Conflict transformation; India; Moral imagination; Pakistan; Soft power

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAP, Aam Admi Party.

AIC, All India Congress.

AIML, All India Muslim League.

AU, African Union.

BCCI, Board of Cricket Control in India.

BJP, Bharitya Janata Party.

BLA, Baluchistan Liberation Army.

BRA, Baluchistan Republic Army.

BRI, Belt and Road Initiative.

CAA, Citizenship Amendment Act.

CFL, Ceasefire Line.

CPEC, China Pakistan Economic Corridor.

CSA, Cricket South Africa.

CTBT, Comprehensive Test ban Treaty.

FMCT, Fissile Material Cut off Treaty.

ICC, International Cricket Council.

IOK, Indian Occupied Kashmir.

IPL, Indian Premier League.

IPRI, Islamabad Policy Research Institute

IPS, Institute of Policy Studies.

IPSI, India-Pakistan Soldiers Initiative.

ISSI, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad.

IWC, Indus Water Commission.

IWT, Indus Water Treaty.

KSD, Kashmir Solidarity Day.

LOC, Line of Control.

MOFA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

MTCR, Missile Technology Control Regime.

NPT, Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.

NRC, National Register of Citizens.

NWFZ, Nuclear Weapons Free Zone.

OIC, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

OSCE, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

OSI, Office of Strategic Influence.

PCB, Pakistan Cricket Board.

POK, Pakistan Occupied Kashmir.

PSL, Pakistan Super League.

PTI, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf.

PTV, Pakistan Television.

RAW, Research Analysis Wing.

RSS, Rashtriya Swayamsawak Sangh.

SAARC, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

SAKAG, South African Kashmir Action Group.

UAE, United Arab Emirates.

UN, United Nations.

UNGA, United Nations General Assembly.

UNMOGIB, United Nations Military Observer Group for India and Pakistan.

UNSC, United Nations Security Council.

UP, Uttar Pradesh.

USA, United States of America.

USSR, United Soviet States of Russia.

VHP, Vishwa Hindu Prishad.

WIPSA, Women for Peace in South Asia

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. CONTEXTUALISATION

This study analyses the prospects of conflict transformation between India and Pakistan with the help of soft power resources. The conflict between the two countries is rooted in their shared but divisive colonial history under the British imperial rule. Attempts at conflict resolution and conflict management have not resulted in addressing the root causes of rivalry between the two countries. Conflict transformation as a field of study and as a practical approach goes to the heart of conflict and takes a holistic view of conflict, the parties involved in conflict, their attitudes, perceptions, and a number of other subjective and objective conditions. Soft power can alter the attitudes and behaviours of people as it can be exercised by the people vis-à-vis one another as opposed to hard power, which is largely the preserve of state agencies and institutions.

Soft power is described as the ability to influence the behaviour of others not through the use of force, but through the instruments of culture, media, religion, and other tools similar in nature. The conflict between India and Pakistan can transform if both countries intentionally utilise soft power to realise their national interests. The role of soft power in conflict transformation is especially plausible when one considers the soft power resources available to both nations, such as language, culture and sports. Tapping into these resources can enhance the prospects of soft power as a means of conflict transformation.

A number of studies have dealt with India-Pakistan relations, but they tend to focus on conflict management and conflict resolution. Very few studies, if any, have approached the India/Pakistan conflict from the viewpoint of conflict transformation. Similarly, the tense relations between the two countries have resulted in the scholarly focus being on hard power with little attention paid to the agency and interface of soft power between the two countries. This study has taken into account the literature dealing with India-Pakistan relations with particular focus on conflict and the role of soft power in conflict transformation. To prove the

study's proposition that soft power has the potential to transform the India-Pakistan conflict, primary and secondary sources of data have been collected and analysed using a thematic analysis technique. The sources of primary data include interviews with Pakistani citizens from the sports world and entertainment industry as well as retired diplomats, politicians, civil society activists, businessmen and government officials. Secondary data has been collected from within Pakistan and elsewhere. This is why the prospects and challenges in the way of transforming the India-Pakistan conflict through soft power have been analysed from a Pakistani perspective.

1.2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The review of literature highlights the areas which have not been studied comprehensively as it pertains to the conflict between India and Pakistan. This study focuses on those aspects with a view to explore the possibility of transformation of the conflict between India and Pakistan through the use of soft power. This has been done by critically examining the prospects and challenges of soft power in transforming the conflict.

The review of literature serves to establish the point that the India-Pakistan conflict has proved to be endemic and intractable; lasting over 70 years thus far and, as such, there have been many studies on the causes of this conflict. For example, Jalal and Bose (1998) assert that in the process of state building after independence, both states turned on each other while attempting to consolidate their governing dispensations at home. Seervai (1989) traces the roots of the India-Pakistan conflict to and in the context of the colonial period, which sowed the seeds of acrimony and division along religious lines between Hinduism and Islam. In the same vein, Paul (2012) assesses the rivalry between both countries from the angle of regional politics in South Asia where both countries are embroiled in a zero-sum struggle to outdo each other, which has created deep layers of mutual suspicion and mistrust that sustain the conflict both at state and people-to-people levels. In terms of conflict resolution and peacebuilding between the two nations, Sattar (2007) views constructive engagement at the bureaucratic level driven by top leadership as the way-forward to get out of cycle of mistrust. Advancing this argument, Misra (2010) makes a case for sustained and institutionalised dialogue between India and Pakistan to resolve their disputes and differences. Doulat and Durrani (2018) foresee the enhanced role of the military forces of the

respective countries as a way to further the peace process. What is more, according to these authors, both of whom formerly served as spy chiefs of their nations, their respective voices and suggestions can be critical for conflict resolution. As mentioned, there are few studies that focus on the use of soft power as a tool for transforming the conflict between India and Pakistan. This is a gap in literature which this study will attempt to fill.

Indeed, peace and conflict studies regarding the India-Pakistan conflict remains focused on conflict management and conflict resolution. Both these approaches take a short-term view of this long-standing conflict rooted in the colonial history of both nations. Further, the acquisition of nuclear weapons along with a number of unresolved disputes makes the India-Pakistan conflict all the more intractable and points to the importance and worthiness of searching for alternative approaches. One such approach is conflict transformation, which addresses the root causes of conflict along with the attitudes, behaviours and perceptions of citizens as well as social, political and economic aspects and the nature of the relationships between conflict parties. The transformation approach aims at altering the psycho-social conditions and political environment at micro i.e., personal and macro i.e., structural levels so as to think beyond the violent opposition of the other. Within the conflict transformation framework, soft power can be employed as a tool and, as such, the exploration of the potential of soft power to transform an interstate conflict is another significant component of this study.

Indeed, the soft power tools and resources of both countries can be instrumental to unleashing the potential and imagination of people in both countries to view one another in friendly terms. For example, both countries share a commonly spoken language, there are followers of the same religious sects on both sides of the border, both nations demonstrate an interest in the same sports, particularly cricket, they share a common culture, day-to-day fashions and modes of self-expression and film is popular in both countries. The study is based on the premise that conflict transformation through soft power can create peace constituencies in India and Pakistan, which can act as a force multiplier for creating lasting peace and averting the threat of violence. The moral imagination underpinning this transformation can persuade both nations and peoples to work collectively for human upliftment and possibly halt or slow down the arms race between India and Pakistan. Economic prosperity and the provision of education will foster the social moorings that discourage violent behaviour. This societal

foundation for peace in both nations will introduce an era of harmony that has eluded India and Pakistan since their respective independence from British colonial rule.

1.3. PROPOSITION

The intractable conflict between India and Pakistan can be transformed by the use of soft power tools and resources that exist in abundance in both countries.

1.4. RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The main aim of this study is to explore the plausibility and prospects of soft power to transform the conflict between India and Pakistan from a Pakistani perspective.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. Examine how the focus on hard power by both India and Pakistan has perpetuated the conflict between both countries.
2. Explore the soft power resources of India and Pakistan which can be used for transforming the conflict between them.
3. Explore how these soft power resources can be deployed for transforming the India-Pakistan conflict.
4. Analyse the challenges of using these soft power resources to transform the conflict with a focus on how they can be mitigated.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The dissertation answers the following principal and secondary questions:

Principal Question:

How can soft power transform the conflict between India and Pakistan and what are the prospects and challenges in the way of conflict transformation by using soft power?

Secondary Questions:

1. How has the focus on hard power by both India and Pakistan perpetuated the conflict between both countries?

2. What are the soft power resources of India and Pakistan which can be used for transforming the conflict between them?
3. How can these soft power resources be deployed for transforming the India-Pakistan conflict?
4. What are the challenges of using these soft power resources to transform the conflict? And how can they be mitigated?

1.6. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In order to understand the historical context of the conflict between India and Pakistan, its present dynamics and future trajectory, a conceptual analysis has been carried out in the chapter 2 of this study. The conceptual framework elucidates the concepts of conflict, conflict management, conflict resolution, conflict transformation, soft power and moral imagination. For the purpose of this study, the synergy between conflict transformation, soft power and moral imagination is also discussed. Then, the prevailing conflicting environment between India and Pakistan has been assessed with a view as to how this conflict can be transformed through the use of soft power.

Soft power has been defined as the use of culture, values, language and a variety of social, political and economic tools to get the desired outcomes (Nye, 1990; Wagner, 2005; Rahman, 2014). The traditional sources of power, such as military power and economic embargo, have proved to be insufficient to cause the change in the other party. As a result, non-traditional sources of power are being deployed to affect the outcomes vis-à-vis contending or competing parties. The core aspect of soft power is to use persuasion instead of the threat of force or force.

Conflict transformation is mainly defined as an approach where the conflicting parties undergo a change resulting in the short term ceasing of hostility and prospects of long-term settlement. Here the purpose is to take away the focus from the cycle of violence and its causes and emphasise on building bridges and mending fences (see Lederach, 2005; Ahmar, 2011). The immediate cause is that conflict is put on the backburner to let the people feel that there are unifying factors instead of only dividing aspects. If the conflict is transformed, then the prospects for reconciliation introduce the element of normalcy between the conflicting sides.

The focus in conflict transformation is on self-images and recognition of others' images and social structures which influence the formation, construction and conveyance of these images. If conflict is left unattended, then the destructive consequences can multiply the lethality of violence. So, conflict transformation aims at modifying the consequences so as to improve the human relations involved in conflict.

Soft power can be a useful approach to transform India-Pakistan conflict if the element of moral imagination undergirds the process. Moral imagination is defined as creating the conditions which are beyond the ordinary imagination but at the same time refers to the ability to cope with hard realities of life (Lederach, 2005). This means that the leaderships of both countries along with the informed and educated segments of society can help to create an ethical environment where hostility and violence are perceived as mutually harmful. Conflict transformation can then be a possibility that bridges the gulf between the nations.

1.7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.7.1. Design

This research is based mainly on an analytical and qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is justified for this study as it accommodates the subjective nature of interpretivism through its emphasis on the importance of understanding people's views, attitudes, beliefs, values and the meanings they attribute to social phenomena. This also informed the methods the researcher used for participant selection, data collection and analysis. However, an important question to grapple with before discussing the data collection and analysis is whether an interpretivist epistemology is justified for this study.

1.7.2. Epistemological Justification

An enduring challenge of social epistemology is both the ontological question of what is known (the very nature of social reality and existence and how to know what counts as valid knowledge). This challenge resonates in the tension between the positivist and interpretivist schools of thought, with the former arguing that the social world can be understood by applying invariant laws that are used in the natural sciences. In other words, there is enough similarity in the object of inquiry in the natural and social sciences to warrant the pursuit of methodological unity between the two

(Babbie and Mouton, 2009: 43). Positivism's ontological stance is that only phenomena that are observable by the senses count as knowledge and this knowledge is acquired by empirically testing hypotheses derived from theory (Wissink, 2009: 7). Opposed to this school of thought is the interpretivist tradition, which argues that other than direct observation, there are a variety of ways of knowing about the world. Thus interpretivism, as an approach of social research, "is founded on the assumption that knowledge about the world is not given by the senses immediately, but by the human interpretations of it. In order to understand the world, one must investigate how people give meaning to the world around them" (Wissink, 2009: 7). This is also rooted in phenomenological thinking which emphasises the centrality of human consciousness; people are conceived, not primarily as biological organisms or bodies, "but firstly and foremost as conscious, self-directing, symbolic human beings" who need to be understood, not explained (Babbie and Mouton, 2009: 28). For the phenomenologist, "the fact that people are continuously constructing, developing and changing the everyday (common sense) interpretations of their world(s) should be taken into account in any conception of social research" (Ibid: 28). According to Snape and Spencer (2003), the discussion on what can be known about the world refers to the question of whether a social world exists independent of human conceptions and interpretations. In this regard, the interpretivist school of thought argues that there is no such thing as an "external reality", but that senses of reality are reconstructed by those giving meaning to it (Wissink, 2009: 7). According to Wissink, "even when an external reality would exist, it will only be meaningful when human perceptions of it are studied" (Wissink, 2009: 7). In the case of this study, the reality of armed conflict between India and Pakistan might be an objective feature of their national reality as nation states, and as such construct global understanding of the conflict. However, this reality was constructed and can be reconstructed based on the peoples' experiences and the perceptions they form as a result to improve relations between India and Pakistan in ways that can transform the conflict with positive implications for the region and the world at large. Both countries have acquired nuclear weapons, hence making war a mutually destructive endeavour. This research posits that as both countries have reduced the possibility of war through mutual nuclear deterrence, so options for peace are still to be explored and exploited. Among a broad range of options for peace is the use of soft power which could potentially transform this conflict.

1.7.3. Data Collection and Analysis

Data has been obtained from both secondary and primary sources. The secondary sources of data include research articles in recognised journals, published interviews of key personalities and reports of reputed think tanks and research centers. Published books related to the topic and specialised studies have also been consulted. Tertiary sources such as news reports, news articles and seminar talks have been used as well. All these sources are in the public domain for easy access.

Primary data has been sourced from documents such as reports of government departments available in the public domain, declassified archives from the Cabinet Division of Pakistan that is publicly accessible, other government documents and studies in the public domain, reports of national and international research organisations, autobiographies and political memoirs of Pakistani and Indian politicians and leaders as well as sports persons and personalities from various walks of life. The list also includes semi-structured interviews of both state and non-state actors from Pakistan involved in the domain of soft power in the context of India and Pakistan to lend a practical blend to the conceptual aspects of the study.

A semi-structured format has been chosen for the interviews because of the analytical nature of the study. This interview technique affords greater flexibility for responses which fit in the qualitative scheme of the research. In total, 18 respondents have been interviewed whose composition is as follows: entertainment industry i.e., film, music and theatre (3), sports fraternity (3), retired diplomats and politicians (3), civil society activists (3), business and trade circles (3) and government officers (3). These participants have been selected on account of their experience in the fields related to soft power. Moreover, they have exposure in interacting with their Indian counterparts in their respective fields. Pakistani sportsmen play against the Indian sports teams. The people within the Pakistani entertainment industry, for instance film, music and drama, travel to India and work in their movies. Retired diplomats, civil society notables and politicians of Pakistan often interact with their Indian interlocutors in both formal and track two diplomacy i.e., informal or back channel diplomacy. The people from trade and commerce chambers of Pakistan regularly interact and transact with Indian businessmen. The government officers play a key role in formulating policies vis-à-vis India. Therefore, the responses of these participants form part of the primary input for the thesis. The participants

for the semi-structured interviews have been approached through a variety of means including telephone, face-to-face contact and emails. It was ensured that the interviewees had physical addresses, e-mail contacts, in some cases organisational affiliations and social media profiles so that they could be accessible and recruited for the interviews. The requisite government permission was also obtained to interview the government officials of Pakistan. The technique of snowballing sampling was employed to recruit and access the participants for the interviews. This technique led the researcher from one interviewee to other interviewees. In all cases, consent forms were sent to cover any ethical considerations such as anonymity and confidentiality. Here the focus was on sources from Pakistan because the research analyses the role of soft power in transforming the conflict between India and Pakistan from a Pakistani worldview.

1.7.4. Data Analysis

The data analysis technique which has been employed for this study is thematic analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a method for identifying and analysing patterns (themes) within qualitative data. A theme “captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents a level of ‘patterned’ response or meaning within the data” (Gray, 2014: 609). This speaks to the qualitative and interpretivist approaches the study has adopted as research design and epistemological approaches respectively. According to Harrison (2001: 132), “documents are constructed within a particular social reality” and should be understood from that frame. In this light, the relations between India and Pakistan are conditioned by the social world in which the people of both countries are contextualised. As such, the conflict between India and Pakistan arises and is sustained on the basis of different and competing interpretations of historical and contemporary events and facts to which different meanings are attached and propagated by both elites and masses, and which have been documented in literature. Furthermore, the role of soft power in transforming this conflict as well as the prospects and challenges have been evaluated within the derived themes from the whole range of data.

While thematic analysis has the advantage of being flexible to assess data across a broad range of various sources, and relatively easy to conduct, it has potential weaknesses. For example, a researcher could merely paraphrase the data without actually developing an analytic

narrative, and when done, the analysis could be weak. (Braun and Clarke, 2006). However, to prevent these possibilities, it was ensured that the themes cohere around the research objectives and questions. This enabled the researcher to identify and analyse patterns out of the large corpus of secondary and primary data that have been collected around the different dimensions of belligerent relations between India and Pakistan.

1.8. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant as it brings into focus the potential of soft power to transform the conflict between India and Pakistan. The idea proposed here is novel and untested on two accounts: a.) conceptual discourse and practical attempts from both countries have mainly centered around conflict management and conflict resolution. In doing so both nations did not address the underlying causes of conflict such as bitter colonial legacy, religious differences and cultural divide. b.) both India and Pakistan have been using and building hard power hence practically undermining the efforts for conflict resolution while managing their hostility through negotiations and fragile peace agreements.

Soft power instruments and resources are not only abundant in both countries, but these countries share most of these tools and capital. It is a matter of intent and purpose to use soft power to transform the conflict, which is hampering the prospects of lasting peace. The hard power approach is still viewed as the tried and tested method to conduct bilateral relations by both sides. This study, however, develops and presents an argument for the utility of soft power to transform the conflict by addressing its underlying causes. Governing elite and the masses on both sides can reinforce the use of soft power as a transformative platform to break the cycle of mistrust and occasional violence and the threat of violence.

As mentioned, there are two previous studies which have applied a conflict transformation approach to the India-Pakistan conflict, namely Sardar (2007 and 2011) and Khan (2009). However, these studies had limitations in that they did not explain how such a transformation can be brought about in this bilateral conflict. This study aimed to take up this question and argued that soft power coupled with moral imagination can be helpful to initiate a process of transformation in this conflict. Therefore, this line of thinking is an original contribution in the overall field of peace and conflict and more particularly, the India-Pakistan conflict.

1.9. STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The thesis consists of seven chapters:

Chapter 1 introduces the research topic in detail. The chapter sheds light on the analytical framework, the historical context of the India-Pakistan conflicting relations and the fusion between soft power and conflict transformation. The chapter also briefly touches on research methodology and presents a survey of available literature on the topic.

Chapter 2 provides a conceptual framework of the study. It discusses the key concepts to be operationalised for the study, such as soft power and conflict transformation. The concept of moral imagination is also explained in order to understand the current situation as well as to lay the theoretical basis for transforming the conflict between India and Pakistan by using soft power.

Chapter 3 discusses the historical evolution of conflict between India and Pakistan. The chapter contextualises the bilateral conflict as it was marked by several ups and downs in the course of last seventy-three years (1947-2020).

Chapter 4 describes in detail the research methodology and methods used for data collection and analysis. It also includes a presentation of the themes and sub-themes that formed the basis of thematic analysis.

Chapter 5 highlights the prospects of transforming conflict between India and Pakistan through soft power. The chapter is based on the themes derived from the data collected and analysed.

Chapter 6 discusses the challenges in the way of transforming the India-Pakistan conflict with the help of soft power. It also recommends the ways to overcome these challenges.

Chapter 7 concludes the study. It deals with the futuristic map of the conflict. Here, the whole dissertation is summarised with the objective of restating and concluding the argument. After the conclusion, some recommendations are made as to how both countries can reduce their rivalry by focusing on the societal aspects of their relationship and sidetracking the political tensions.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the conceptual review of the study. Concepts employed in this study have been studied with regard to previously published literature. The conceptual review first explores the concept of conflict and the field of conflict studies. This is followed by an explanation of soft power and synergy between conflict transformation and soft power. The diversity within the larger field of conflict studies has resulted in several interpretations and denominations. These include conflict management, conflict resolution and conflict transformation. This chapter reviews and explains these concepts as they evolved over time in the context of various interstate and intrastate conflicts. The focus is more on interstate conflicts because the objective of this study is to explain the India-Pakistan conflict in terms of its management, resolution and the possibility of its transformation through soft power.

The field of conflict studies mainly revolves around conflict management, conflict resolution and now conflict transformation also forms its part. Conflict management emerged during the initial years of Cold War. The thrust of this approach was to keep conflicting parties i.e., states at bay from each other. In subsequent years another approach namely conflict resolution began to take shape. The focus of this approach was addressing the immediate causes of conflict and bringing the parties to negotiations in order to find some solution to their conflict. The evolution within the field of conflict studies resulted in another conceptual development termed conflict transformation. In 1980s the concept of conflict transformation was first advanced by scholars of the discipline. This chapter also explains the concept of soft power followed by the analysis of the linkage between soft power and conflict transformation within the context of Lederach's moral imagination model of peacebuilding. This last section throws light on how the tools of soft power can unleash the potential for transforming a long-standing conflict using the moral imagination as the vehicle of conflict transformation. However, it is pertinent to start the conceptual review with a literature overview of the India-Pakistan conflict

2.2. LITERATURE OVERVIEW

The bulk of the literature dealing with political aspects of relations between India and Pakistan focuses on the conflict between them from a hard power perspective. To be clear, the policies of both countries are formulated and executed against the backdrop of the security dilemma arising out of their rivalry. The literature therefore mostly sheds light on conflict management and conflict resolution between the two countries. While doing so, the emphasis is on hard power and its effects on the conflict management and resolution. Yet, the conflict between India and Pakistan is rooted in their shared colonial history. The post-colonial state building and evolution of society in both countries suffered from the negative fall-out of their colonial past. Accordingly, the literature dealing with this aspect of India-Pakistan relations assesses the policies of the British colonial rule in the United India and then its extended impact on post-independence countries in South Asia, particularly India and Pakistan. Accordingly, the literature overview is discussed under different but related themes which are central to this study. These include conflict transformation, soft power, India Pakistan conflict and elements of soft power in foreign policies of India and Pakistan.

At the conceptual level, Lebow (2008) argues that societal interaction across states influences people. This influence ends up dividing individuals or reconciling their differences. Lebow draws the strength of his argument and analysis from a constructivist approach which core focus is on people instead of states and governments. Wallensteen (2008) assesses conflict resolution from the perspective of the transformative value of peace accords and negotiations. His argument is that resolution of conflict eludes long term settlement, hence conflict transformation becomes a productive process. The author also refers to the rivalry between India and Pakistan asserting that both countries have fought wars and negotiated agreements, but their conflict still remains. Going to the heart of conflict transformation, Lederach (1995) specifically answers the question regarding what role is played by cultural values and orientation in a conflict setting. To this end, Lederach asserts that “cultural knowledge is the key source in conflict transformation”.

Ahmar (2011) attempts to locate the position of conflict transformation in the field of conflict studies. According to him, conflict transformation is an innovative approach to understand and examine the shape of a conflict and scope for its resolution. The basic purpose of conflict transformation is to lower the tension between or among the conflicting parties. The reduction in animosity may lead to the final settlement of a conflict. Lederach (2005) suggests an innovative idea in conceiving and practicing conflict transformation and peace building. His discussion is rooted in the concept of moral imagination. In his definition, moral imagination is the capacity to imagine something rooted in the challenges of the real world whilst giving birth to something which does not yet exist. The moral imagination enables the movement from destructive violence to constructive social engagement.

Nye (1990), in coining the concept of soft power, analyses US foreign policy in the wake of the end of the Cold War and its preceding decades. The main conclusion of the study revolves around the nature of power which evolved and altered considerably after the Second World War. Power measured only in materialist terms is bound to erode but the power of culture, language and leadership fills that vacuum. Melissen (2005) argues that public diplomacy is an essential component of soft power. The argument revolves around the integration of values and norms in policymaking and their practical manifestation in foreign policy formulation and execution. Public diplomacy has the potential to address the prevalent tensions in scenarios where states are locked in conflict.

In studying the divisive colonial history of the British India, Seervai (1989) digs into the politics of India under British rule. The author carefully details the events and personalities shaping those events leading up to the Partition of the United India in 1947. The violence accompanying the division of the territory and subsequent bitterness about the apportionment of resources left a trail of acrimony which continues to bedevil the relations of India and Pakistan after independence. Both countries still manifest a deep imprint of their past on their present. Bose and Jalal (1998) connect the pre-independence and post-independence strands in the history of India and Pakistan. In the preface of their book, the authors note that it was indeed a feat for them to have written the book as they each come from the bitterly rivalled countries. But they hoped that just as they had been able to arrive at mutually agreed conclusions in the book, that the dialogue between India and Pakistan would bear fruits. The

book shines a light on the challenges of state building and nation formation in both countries after independence, explaining how the political elite heightened the tensions of foreign policy issues to cover up domestic weaknesses.

While capturing the formation and execution of the foreign policy of Pakistan, Sattar (2007) focuses on relations with India. Serving in the foreign service of Pakistan himself, he participated in several rounds of parleys with India. He also engaged with the Indian political and diplomatic establishment while he was Foreign Minister of Pakistan from 1999-2002. In his analysis, the relations with India invariably suffer from a lack of complete trust. Paul (2005) approaches the conflict between India and Pakistan from the concept of enduring rivalry. Enduring rivalry between states takes on a wider dimension of state and society between the conflicting sides. The rivalry is rooted in the asymmetry of goals and values expressed in the tenacity and lethality of militaristic posturing towards each other, which is the case in the India-Pakistan conflict. Focusing on the India-Pakistan Peace Process, Misra (2007) analyses the structured dialogue between India and Pakistan and the obstacles in its way to reach a resolution of bilateral disputes. The author details the ups and downs and the composite dialogue that both countries had to go through since the beginning of the process in 1997. The main assumption of his study is that the dialogue could not sustain the shocks arising from unexpected events on both sides.

Kumar and Holli (2018) focus on the role of communication to create the prospects of peace between India and Pakistan. The emphasis is on the new forms of communication via social media, which connects people and groups of people across borders. The common language and shared cultural moorings help individuals to understand one another more easily than, for example, through the deliberate attempts of the traditional media. Bibhu (2014) underlines the competing domestic pressures forcing the political elite and military circles to focus on the fragility of peace. The cross-border fire and violations of ceasefire along the international boundary play into the hands of anti-peace constituencies on both sides. The author points to the limitations of both countries in terms of capacity and intent to undertake a meaningful result-oriented dialogue to get out of the pattern of recurring violence and mistrust. Detailing the past failures and current conditions that are hampering the prospects for peace and stability between India and Pakistan, Hirsh, Awan and Sarmah (2018) highlight the

common areas where progress can be made by mutual agreement. The conflict between both countries is rooted in partition and outstanding territorial disputes, mainly as it pertains to Kashmir. What is more important to note is that the educational curricula in both countries portray a negative image of the other country.

Adnan and Fatima (2016) point to the ideological challenges standing in the way of creating friendly relations between India and Pakistan. In India, secularism faces a challenge in the face of a rising Hindutwa menace whereas in Pakistan the religious obscurantism poses an obstacle to reconcile modernity with Islam. Durrani, Doulat and Sinha (2018) enumerate the obstacles for peace but also pinpoint the possibilities for rapprochement between India and Pakistan. The book is significant as it has been authored by the former intelligence chiefs of India and Pakistan. As mentioned, the authors assert that their co-authoring of the book itself proves the point that both countries can engage in meaningful discussion. According to the authors, there are big hurdles to overcome in order to create permanent peace between India and Pakistan, but they also assert that the leadership of both countries should not be deterred by the difficulties and should actively engage in compromise and negotiate an end to the conflict. Haq (2002) brings to light the human cost of conflict owing to interstate and intrastate wars in South Asia. India and Pakistan have to spend large amounts in arms purchase, thus neglecting critical human needs. Poor human development in turn fosters the environment that incites the popular mindset to jingoism and violence.

Kumar (2017) critically dissects India's current approach to tap into soft power resources to advance its goals in its regional and global outreach. India has rich and diverse resources of soft power, but their optimal use still remains a pipedream. The author suggests that India ought to pursue its historical, ethno-linguistic, spiritual and cultural depth and richness to engage its neighbours and countries beyond its neighbourhood. Wagner (2005) locates the soft power approach in the evolution of India's foreign policy since independence. Initially, the country focused on hard power projection and its use in disputes with neighbouring countries. This mindset began to alter in 1990s and onwards when the country's leadership undertook to deploy soft power tools. However, India's soft power approach still lacks consistency in the face of its outstanding disputes with neighbouring countries and changes in domestic politics.

Rehman (2014) analyses soft power in Pakistan's foreign policy and domestic politics. Referring to China and Russia's realisation of the importance of soft power to achieve their goals, the author focuses on the need for Pakistan to undertake a holistic review of its foreign policy while learning from these countries. Pakistan is facing challenges of terrorism, wide-scale corruption and propaganda by certain hostile elements, making it difficult to fully reap the dividends of soft power. Reliance on hard power to cope with the external challenges then replicates at the domestic level prompting the use of the stick instead of incentives to neutralise the internal security challenges.

Hussain (2016) places Pakistan in the context of a fast-changing regional and global political landscape. The foreign policy of the country vis-à-vis India is vacillating between working level diplomatic engagement and tension arising out of the non-resolution of outstanding disputes. In terms of soft power, the author identifies a challenge, namely, that India's intention could be viewed as a cultural invasion of Pakistan. It is for this reason that there is a reservation in Pakistan to positively and intentionally engage with India in the domain of cultural interaction.

There are two previous studies which have approached the India-Pakistan rivalry from a conflict transformation perspective. Sardar (2007 and 2011) applies the concept of conflict transformation on the India-Pakistan conflict. In doing so, he argues that long-term peace between the two nations can be achieved if they are able to transform the dynamics of their conflictive interaction. Khan (2009) posits that the nuclear weapons have made the termination of conflict impossible between the two countries. Hence transformation of conflict can lead to permanent peace between the two nations. Neither of these studies explain how the conflict between these two nations can be transformed which creates a gap. This study addresses this gap by arguing that soft power and moral imagination can generate conditions and factors, which can bring about transformation in the India-Pakistan conflict.

The investigation of the literature touches on conceptual as well as practical aspects. The review takes into account what has been written about the conflict and peace from various conceptual standpoints. In the context of conflict transformation, various strands are connected with the broader fields of conflict resolution and peace building. The analysis of soft power

and its increasing role in contemporary times is another significant part of this conceptual review.

The originality of this dissertation is rooted in the application of a conflict transformation approach to the inter-state conflict between India and Pakistan. Another seminal contribution to the discourse of peace and conflict between the two nuclear rivals is fusion of soft power with conflict transformation. This research has ventured into evaluating the potential of soft power resources to lend critical assistance for transforming the conflict between the two nuclear armed neighbours.

This overview highlights the potential of soft power to transform the India-Pakistan conflict. At a conceptual level, it is established that this transformation can come about considering the evolution of bilateral ties between the two countries. The conflict between the two countries may undergo a critical yet positive transformation with the help of soft power resources. The leadership of both countries have to generate an environment where the elite and the masses can think beyond the ordinary patterns of tense relations. That can happen when they are able to create new realities by tapping into untapped moral imagination which exists on both sides of the divide. However, it is pertinent to now contextualize the concept of conflict through its evolution from conflict management to conflict transformation, the concept of soft power and moral imagination before ending with a conceptual framework that ties soft power, moral imagination and conflict transformation together.

2.3. ELUCIDATING THE CONCEPT OF CONFLICT

The concept of conflict has wide currency and usage, ranging from daily life matters to academic analyses. This section attempts to analyse the concept of conflict as per its various definitions, usages, levels, shades and meanings. For instance, the concept of conflict from psychological standpoint differs from its social, political, economic and personal interpretations.

The word conflict comes from a Latin word “confligere”, meaning striking together (Remi, 2013: 2). In the lexicon, the Webster Dictionary defines conflict as “to strike, to fight, struggle or battle, clash, contention, confrontation, a controversy or quarrel, active opposition, strife or

incompatibility, to meet in opposition or hostility, to contend, to be contrary or to be at variance.” (Remi, 2013: 2).

With the growing interest in conflict studies, a number of definitions of conflict has emerged. For the purposes of this study, a few definitions have been picked to elaborate the concept of conflict with regard to different spheres of human life. Bercovitch and Jackson (2009: 20) define conflict as “a perception of incompatibility between two or more actors and the range of behaviour associated with such perceptions.” Kelman (2009: 171) defines conflict as a dynamic process, shaped by changing realities, interests, and relationships between the conflicting parties. Galtung (2007: 16) views conflict as the reflection of “hatred in the inner world of attitudes and violence in the outer world of behaviour”. Zartman (2008: 1) gives his definition in these words:

“Conflict refers simply to an incompatibility of positions, a static situation when mutually exclusive views are present... an effort to prevail in a contest between those incompatible positions. When one party decides to increase its efforts, the other may decide to give in or to increase its own efforts too. And so, it goes on.”

What can be extrapolated from the above-mentioned definitions is that conflict is essentially a human phenomenon and social process. Conflict manifests in all human interactions viz. social, psychological, economic and political. Zartman (2008: 1) asserts that “conflict situations are omnipresent in human and social relations.” This ubiquity of conflict in human life lends it to be studied from diverse perspectives. Therefore, the word conflict is understood and approached through various conceptual lenses.

Causes of conflict and actors involved in conflict are major reason for divergent conceptual approaches to analyse peace and conflict. These competing interpretations are rooted in psychological, social, economic and political aspects. The instinct theory of conflict advanced by psychologists provide for the inherent fighting nature of man which is expressed through aggression at interpersonal and intergroup level (Jeong, 2008: 10-11). The social conceptual templet approaches conflict at intergroup and intragroup level as people organised in groups take one another on (Jacoby, 2008: 23). The economic theories focus on resource allocation and distribution which lead to conflict (Coulomb, 2004: 6). The political analysis emphasises intra-

state and interstate conflicts mainly revolving around civil wars and national wars (Gray, 2013: 20; Zarif, 2017: 24).

This study deals with international conflict, which primarily falls in the political domain. However, any international conflict can also be approached from social, economic and psychological viewpoints. The dominance of the realist school in International Relations lead to it being defined according to political mode. This situation began to alter when alternative schools of thought emerged within IR challenging the hold of realism. This led to interstate conflict being studied from a socio-psycho lens.

According to the realist explanation, conflict is inherent in interstate interaction given the anarchic nature of the international system. Liberalist interpretation contends that conflict poses danger to cooperation among states, but it may not be an ever-present aspect of international relations. Conflict may engender positive competition among nations if it is a functional conflict and not a dysfunctional one. This binary explanation of conflict split further as the conceptual canvass of international politics broadened with the end of the Cold War. It is this multiplicity of interpretations which spawned theoretical and conceptual diversity and differences in the discourse on peace and conflict. Specialised knowledge and expertise in conflict studies grew in parallel to the growth of academic inquiry into the field of international relations.

The field of conflict studies has gone through several stages of evolution and this journey still continues. The emergence of the jargon around conflict management and conflict resolution is directly linked to the outbreak of international conflicts among states. The fields of peace and conflict studies concomitantly emerged with the growth of nation states after the end of the Second World War and the beginning of the Cold War. The conceptual diversity in the field of conflict studies results from different interpretations of causes, consequences, actors, factors and levels of conflict

Proliferation of interpretations of causes of conflict and attempts to bring peace led to the emergence of more subfields within peace and conflict studies. This trend resulted in the coining of terms such as conflict management, conflict resolution, conflict prevention, conflict termination and conflict transformation. On the other hand, the related field of peace studies also developed apace refining the concepts of negotiations, reconciliation, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and

peace-making. Institutions and research centers dedicated to researching and studying peace were established and began to emerge alongside institutions in politics and security studies.

The Peace Research Institute in Oslo and the Center for Conflict Resolution at the University of Michigan were the trailblazer institutes for research in peace and conflict. Later, there emerged government-funded peace and conflict research platforms such as the United States Institute of Peace and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Wehr and Bartos, 2002: 57; Barash, 2017: 230; Spears, 2019: 186). In terms of international conflict, the initial focus and attention was on managing a conflict. The next section analyses conflict management as it unfolded and evolved at the level of states and subsequently factions within states.

2.4. CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

As it is natural for conflict to occur, so its regulation and management began to concern scholars and practitioners. At the basic level of society, the family elders and other norms and sanctions operate as conflict managing tools and platforms to manage conflict among individuals. In organisations, there exist tools and personnel to manage conflicts. At the international level, global institutions such as the United Nations and regional bodies take the responsibility to manage conflicts among and within states. Butler (2009: 3) defines conflict management as follows: “In the most basic sense, conflict management refers to any effort by a third party at preventing a conflict from getting worse.” For Runde and Flanagan (2007: 24), through conflict management we develop approaches which lessen the potentially harmful effects of conflict. Conflict can be negative and positive depending on the motives of conflicting parties and the dynamics driving the conflict. If not managed carefully, negative conflict can result in destruction and positive conflict may not yield advantages. Remi (2013: 3) makes the point that conflict is a process which can degenerate into violence and crisis if there is no managing hand involved. The conflict among groups become important to manage so that collective harm can be reduced. Otherwise, group conflicts can become violent and set off a chain of events which perpetuate conflict over generations. Such conflicts create perceptions, arouse emotions and leave memories which act as catalyst to keep the conflict alive. It is for this reason that conflict among states become vital to manage, which is one of the main foci of this study. This section sheds light on conflict management between and among states in terms of various approaches, tools and practices.

The discourse and practice of conflict management at international level took shape after the end of the Second World War coinciding with the process of decolonisation resulting in the birth of numerous free and new nations. The countries which gained independence during this period i.e., 1940s to 1970s experienced violence during their struggle to secure freedom. When they became independent, they developed conflicts with neighbouring states. These interstate conflicts resulted mainly from controversial boundary demarcations, tussles about acquisition of resources and ethnic tensions defying borders. It was a time when theoretical and conceptual debate within the field of international relations was dominated by the realist school of thought. According to the realist scholars, states have to live in an insecure environment and the best way for survival in such an atmosphere is to enhance power. When all states do so, a condition termed ‘security dilemma’ occurs (Herz, 1951). In a scenario characterised by security dilemmas, states are locked in a never-ending arms race and power competition. Therefore, as contended by the protagonists of realism, conflict is a natural condition among states (Butler, 2009: 32). However, on the flipside, the same field of scholarship recognised the necessary element of understanding among states to manage their hostile attitudes and behaviour. This is where management of conflict figured in the discourse on interstate peace and conflict. The literature on international conflict focused on wars at state level and civil wars at intra-state domain. The violence at domestic level also impacted the foreign policy of states. This was reflected in ethnic conflicts which at times manifested in territorial conflicts. Zartman (2008: 155), in defining international conflict, notes that such conflicts among and within states are affected by the involvement of external parties. Jacoby (2008: 21) posits that conflictive behaviour among states is influenced by the conflictive situation. Hence the recurrence of conflictive situations between states propelled them to conflict and trapped them in a vicious cycle.

The concept of international conflict management took shape in the wake of these three crucial factors viz. Second World War, Cold War and the process of decolonisation. All these factors are intertwined and contributed to the emergence of conflict in the international sphere. The second world war sapped the energies and ambitions of the colonial powers of the time. Coupled with the weakening grip over colonies and indigenous freedom struggles, the colonial powers withdrew to their core hinterlands. The departing colonial powers drew arbitrary demarcation lines hence sowing the seeds of conflict. As a result, territorial claims and counter claims emerged between the newly independent states. An example of this is the disputed territory

of Kashmir between India and Pakistan, which led to four wars between them and is yet to be resolved. The ethnic element resulted in deep-rooted conflicts. It happened with more ferocity and bloodshed where people of the same ethnicities were split among different countries. Examples of such conflicts include, but are not limited to, the Arab-Israel conflict, conflict in the Congo, the conflict between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the conflict between India and Sri Lanka. In all these conflicts, people belonging to the same ethnic groups became citizens of different states. For instance, the Palestinian Arabs living within Israel and other Arab nations exacerbated the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. People of the Pushtoon ethnicity living in Pakistan and Afghanistan fanned the flames of separatism in both nations resulting in conflictive situations. Wallensteen (2019: 130) aptly captures such conflicts by stating that “border disputes become part of national conscience”. Managing these conflicts was crucial to mitigate their harmful effects and to avoid further polarisation. War and violence within and among states escalated and with the growth of technology it caused damage at a far wider scale than it did previously (Saidman, 2001: 15; Bercovitch and Jackson, 2009: 87.) This factor augmented the need for conflict management in conflicts at interstate and intrastate levels.

Cold War era international politics witnessed increasing conflicts among states but attempts at conflict management also subsequently developed. Cold War rivalry between the US and the former Soviet Union also resulted in conflicts in different regions. These conflicts involved both interstate wars and intrastate civil wars. Both superpowers were engaged in proxy wars involving other states. They competed to keep the elite in power in peripheral states to wage their proxy wars (Galtung, 2009: 8; Wallensteen, 2019: 38). In doing so, both superpowers magnified the lethality and scale of conflict in Afghanistan, Angola, Horn of Africa, West Asia and South and Central America (Kalinovsky and Radchenko, 2011: 324). The Cold War was itself an illustration of conflict management between the rival superpowers. They never fought directly during the Cold War, but came close to taking up arms on a few occasions. Lebow and Stein (1994: 323) have noted that the cold war has ended but its lessons survived. This also applies to the management of conflicts, which were the product of superpower rivalry and outlives the end of cold war.

As the incidence of conflicts increased in frequency and lethality in the international domain, focus was placed on managing these conflicts. Here the purpose was to prevent the

violence from getting worse by temporarily engaging the conflicting parties. Interstate conflict mainly involves threat of military force, demonstration of military force and actual use of military force (Butler, 2009: 3). The conflicting states used all these tactics in wars and crises. This prompted the UN, regional bodies, major powers, international NGOs and peace advocacy networks to come to the aid of conflicting states in order to manage conflict. Conflict management has also been adopted by states involved in bilateral conflicts. These bilateral conflict management practices and tools mainly involve negotiations, peace agreements, ceasefire and truce agreements, confidence building measures and reduction in arms races. States employed single approaches or a combination of these to manage their conflicts. Invariably, however, these bilateral attempts at conflict management had some third-party involvement. The reason for such involvement was that conflicting states wanted some guarantor or witness of agreement or understanding. International conflict management, either enacted by states or facilitated by a third party, mainly involves mediation, adjudication, peace enforcement, arbitration, ceasefire lines, peacekeeping missions and negotiations.

Some examples of this are the ceasefire lines between India and Pakistan established in 1949 with the help of the UN along the disputed border in Kashmir. The UN also deployed a military observer mission at the India-Pakistan border in 1949 which has been monitoring the situation ever since (Duschinski, Bhan, Zia and Mahmood, 2018: 5.) The UN also moved to enforce peace where conflicting parties did not abide by the terms of peace accord. One such example of peace enforcement is the UN arms embargo on Djibouti in 2009 when it failed to keep part of the agreement reached with Eritrea (Wallensteen, 2019: 99). The peace agreement between Israel and Egypt in 1978 was facilitated by the US, which was reached through bilateral negotiations between the two countries (Carter, 2006: 48-50.) the Soviet Union undertook mediation between India and Pakistan to help them reach a ceasefire accord to end their second war in 1965 (Lyon, 2008: 82).

A Ceasefire agreement was implemented between Iraq and Iran in 1988 with the help of the OIC/Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, which ended an 8-year war (Hossain, 2012: 287). Further, the territorial conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia on the Nagorno-Karabakh was managed through a ceasefire agreement in 1994 with the help of OSCE/Organisation of Security Cooperation in Europe (The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2019: 142). It should be

noted that agreements and mediation does not solve conflict indefinitely. For instance, India and Pakistan went to war again in 1971, only six years after their war came to an end through a third-party mediation. Azerbaijan and Armenia resumed skirmishes after their ceasefire broke down in 2016.

The above-mentioned international conflicts are meant to show that the efficacy and success of conflict management efforts and attempts in international conflicts vary according to the time, intensity, attitudes and stakes of the parties involved in a conflict. The conflicts listed above are for example's sake and illustrate this point.

The conflict between North and South Korea is alive despite confidence building measures, 6-party negotiations and summit meetings involving both Koreas, China and the US. There is a lull in the Greeko-Turkish conflict over Cypress, but the tension persists between the two countries. The Arab-Israel conflict still bitterly divides Israel and Middle Eastern states. These conflicts demonstrate that the conflict management exercise is not enough to bring a durable peace between the conflicting parties. Wallensteen (2019: 57) argues that the conflict management approach focuses only on the armed aspect of the conflict. Therefore, conflicting parties relapse into armed encounter after reaching an agreement or they simply wage conflict by other means such as propaganda, covert interference in each other's affairs, or by engaging in espionage against each other.

Existing conflicts remained alive while new conflicts erupted during and after the end of Cold War. This prompted the theorists and practitioners of conflict management to consider alternative approaches and worldviews to solve international conflicts. During this time, the term 'conflict resolution' emerged and various ways to resolve conflicts were invented and attempted. The next section brings into focus conflict resolution in the context of international conflict and ways to cope with such conflictive behaviour within states and between states. Conflict management approaches cannot be discounted or dismissed entirely. By managing or attempting to manage interstate conflicts, the harm and destruction of war and violence were surely reduced. Conflict resolution goes a step further in order to pacify conflicting states and societies.

2.5. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

When conflict management and the various approaches to it began to be critically evaluated, conflict resolution approaches were adopted. The reason was the damage and destruction caused by unresolved conflicts. Such conflicts evaded attempts at successful management and therefore kept posing challenges to international peace. Attention from conflict management shifted to conflict resolution but it did not replace the approaches of conflict management altogether. Rather, both conflict management and conflict resolution developed parallel to each other. Sometimes, there was an overlap between the two as conflicting parties were receptive enough to engage directly in negotiations and bargaining processes.

Conflict resolution has been defined as the use of both formal and informal procedures to resolve a conflict. These procedures may include negotiations, mediation, arbitration, truth and reconciliation commissions, spiritual and religious platforms and track two or unofficial diplomatic channels (Leiner and Schliesser, 2017: 4-5). In conflict resolution, the emphasis is on addressing the causes which led to the misunderstanding between the conflict parties. There is then an attempt to persuade the parties to agree on a settlement by the way of compromise (Spears, 2019: 57 & 72). The central pillar of conflict resolution is an agreement reached between the conflict parties whereby they settle their incompatibilities, cease all violence against each other and recognise their existence as parties (Wallenstein, 2018: 8 & 57).

Formal/traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in interstate conflicts have been employed either by the conflict parties themselves or with the help of a third party. Conflict resolution focuses on removing incompatibilities between the conflict parties by bringing them in contact with each other. Here they can engage in negotiations between themselves to arrive at a consensus to address and settle their differences. Zartman (2009: 2) puts forth that “negotiation is the process of combining of divergent/conflicting positions through communication into a joint decision”. India and Pakistan engaged directly in negotiations in 1972 to settle their conflict. They were able to reach an agreement whereby they agreed to settle the remaining issues after their third war in 1971 (Burki, 1999: 195-196.) The process of détente between the US and the USSR during the Cold War was a result of a series of negotiations and agreements. It is for this reason that cold war never turned hot as both adversaries managed and resolved their crises (Powaski, 1998: 167-169.)

The role of a third party also becomes a part of conflict resolution between states. For third party involvement, the conflict actors must be willing, and the outside actor has to be well-resourced and aware of the underlying conflict dynamics and the viewpoints and positions of the conflict actors. In the regard, mediation, arbitration and facilitation methods have been employed in various conflicts over time. These tools have been employed by the UN, regional organisations, major powers, eminent persons and international NGOs. The UN has undertaken mediation in a number of conflicts with a view to manage and resolve them. It was the UN mediation which averted a catastrophic civil and interstate war in Yugoslavia between 1990 and 1995. As a result of this mediation, Croatia and Slovenia peacefully seceded from Yugoslavia (Touval, 2002: 43-47). A territorial dispute between India and Pakistan over the Rann of Kutch was resolved by an arbitration handed down by a tribunal setup by the UN with the consensus of both parties (Lyon, 2008: 105).

Norway, along with the US, was a facilitator to help Israel and Palestine to reach the famous Oslo Accord in September 1993 whereby Palestine got partial self-governing status under Israel (Tessler, 1994: 13). These examples show that third party intervention, through various methods, played an effective role to resolve international conflicts between states. Wiegand (2011: 2-3) notes that between 1953 and 2011, 97 interstate territorial disputes were resolved through bilateral negotiations, third party mediation, arbitration and adjudication by the International Court of Justice. Regional organisations have also been involved in settling inter-state conflicts such as the African Union in the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Regional actors act in unison with the UN in resolving intractable conflicts (Bercovitch and Jackson, 2008: 119).

Interstate conflicts are not the only ones in the international domain worthy of resolution and management. Rather, intrastate conflicts also increased in frequency and scope, so much so, that at times they are treated at par with interstate conflicts. Wallenstein (2019: 96) uses the term “internationalised civil wars” for intrastate conflicts with international reach and implications. The reason for this assertion is that states lost monopoly over the use of power and absolute control over their citizens. Moreover, an intrastate conflict can no longer remain confined within geographic borders due to interests and concerns of outside powers and increasing publicity and reporting through electronic and social media. On this count, these conflicts began to draw scholarly attention and the involvement of outside players. The theoretical journey within the field

of international relations also played a part in conceptualising the approaches for resolution of conflicts between and within states. The hold of realism began to be challenged by the return of liberalism, which modified its early stance about the possibility of interstate cooperation. The liberal thinkers began to see the possibility of peace driven by growing economic and societal interdependence. The constructivist, critical and post-modernist interpretations of peace and security also weighed in to inform the discourse and practice of conflict resolution (Spears, 2019: 50). Moreover, the new actors, able to influence state conduct in foreign policy, also altered the traditional notions of peace and security. The realists' focus on state sovereignty and primacy of military power gave way to the rise of non-state actors and the currency of power diversifying from military prowess. The role of non-state actors and transnational groups in local and international conflicts has broadened the approaches for resolving these conflicts (Ramsbotham, Miall and Woodhouse, 2011: 9). These actors raised the issues of the environment, human rights, gender and refugees in a conflict situation (Senehi, Ryan and Byrne, 2010: 13).

The rise of terrorism and genocidal violence strained the state-centric traditional approaches of managing and resolving conflicts, therefore new forums, notions and practices of conflict resolution developed. These include the UN-mandated responsibility-to-protect, civil society, social activism, international NGOs, personal mediation, research centers having expertise in conflict and campaign groups. The UN-led humanitarian intervention to protect civilians in intra-state conflicts has matured in the post-cold war era (Bercovitch and Jackson, 2008: 101). The UN intervened in Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo and Rwanda in the 1990s where genocidal violence was taking place. The purpose of such UN involvement was to save the civilian lives in violent internecine conflict. The UN helped these war-torn states and societies to resolve their incompatible positions (Cormier et al., 2010: 43-44). The rise of civil society and social activism also figure in non-traditional approaches for conflict resolution. Such platforms appeal the collective conscience to prevent the violent conflict and address the reasons leading to armed strife. One such civil society platform, the Parents Circle and Family Forum, is pursuing the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This forum consists of parents from both conflicting sides whose sons and daughters have been killed during this unresolved conflict (Anders, 2012: 113).

The eruption of intra-state conflicts has spill-over effects in their neighbourhood which prompted regional actors to facilitate resolution of conflicts. In this regard, the African Union,

Organisation of American States, European Union and Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe have been active in managing and resolving intra-state conflicts.

The post conflict rebuilding, reconciliation and healing process is sponsored and augmented by regional/transnational, non-state and substate actors and networks. The conflicts in Kosovo, Bosnia, Rwanda and East Timor have witnessed the salutary effects of nontraditional conflict resolution actors and approaches (Carey and Richmond, 2004: 40; Ramsbotham, Miall and Woodhouse, 2011: 133; Kriesberg, 2016: 158). In East Timor, a civil society group named Martial Arts Leaders, played a crucial role in ending the social strife which the newly-free state was facing. This forum approached the gangsters and criminal groups who were the main perpetrators of violence and rehabilitated them into mainstream social fabric. This also helped the country to reduce acrimony towards Indonesia from which it seceded.

The role of NGOs and civil society in rebuilding Kosovo after the reduction of international funding and personnel was critical for the country. The Kosovo Civil Society Foundation and Kosovo Women Network were instrumental in solidifying peace in Kosovo by reaching the people directly affected by violence (Woodhouse, Miall and Ramsbotham, 2005: 250). The community forums, civil society groups and NGOs played an important role to set Rwanda on the path of reconciliation and recovery after one of the worst genocides in human history in 1994. The range of these actors and platforms included National Gicaca Commission, The Unity and Reconciliation Commission, the National Association of Widows of Genocide, the Association of Student Survivors of Genocide and a student-run organisation “never again” (Samuel, 2006: 416).

In the conflict between India and Pakistan, the role of civil society networks, NGOs and campaign groups assumed importance in last few years. A civil society group, Women for Peace in South Asia/WIPSA, consisting of women from both India and Pakistan actively campaigned against nuclear weapons in 1999 when both countries went to limited war in Kargil, a mountainous piece of land in Kashmir.¹ The conflict between India and Pakistan over Siachin Glacier is taken seriously by the environmental activists and groups in both countries. They call on governments

¹ Kargil is an area situated in the mountain peaks of Kashmir. It is under India’s control. In winter, the weather is so harsh that human activity is impossible. Therefore, the Indian forces vacate this area in winter and return in summer. But in 1999 Kashmiri freedom fighters, with the assistance of Pakistani regular forces, took the vacant positions of the Indian forces. When the Indian forces returned, they found their positions occupied. The battle ensued between the occupants and the Indian forces which also drew Pakistani troops.

to resolve this conflict as military activity in the glacier would cause it to melt, causing an environmental disaster for both countries.

Resolution of conflicts produces agreements to solve the disagreement that leads to violence. However, settling a conflict by an agreement may not remove the underlying deep-rooted causes which initiated a conflict in the first place. Even if a conflict is resolved through negotiation or any other procedure by reaching an agreement, post conflict realities and perceptions may not be in sync with the resolution process and outcome. This keeps the parties in a state of anxiety even if conflict is resolved. The conflicts listed above vindicate the point that resolution alone is not sufficient for long term and durable peace between conflict parties. Processes of reconciliation may help the conflict parties to overcome their past differences and acts of violence, although its effectiveness remains a point of contention. As the discourses and practices of conflict resolution are still evolving, there is yet another approach which aims at transforming a conflict.

2.6. CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Non-resolution of outstanding conflicts and eruption of new conflicts resulted in newer approaches to study and deal with conflict and the causes of conflict. In this respect, the conflict transformation scholars and practitioners consider conflict an interactive social process which is rooted in perceptions, interpretations, emotions and the expressions of people. Opposed to conflict management that has the objective to control and regulate the intensity of armed conflicts, conflict resolution's core focus is on settling the differences through agreements, thereby taking a transformational approach and a holistic view of conflict. In conflict transformation, the psychological, social, economic, historical and political environmental factors are taken into consideration. Galtung (1996:70), one of the seminal thinkers in conflict transformation, argues that conflict can be a vehicle for unleashing and mobilising positive energy in people. Wallensteen (2018: 48) espouses the notion that conflict generates popular energy. This accumulated energy can be used constructively in order to mitigate the harmful effects of a conflict.

The evolving theoretical discourse in IR also began to emphasise the societal aspect of politics among states. The end of the Cold War also contributed to the burgeoning of alternative theoretical debates in international politics whereby people were considered active agents in interstate politics. The conception of state-centric security enunciated by the realist school was

challenged by nontraditional security studies. The focus of traditional security was on states whereas the new school introduced the concept of human security. Nontraditional security thinkers assert that states are secure as long as citizens constituting these states are not vulnerable. This people-focused approach of security recognises a wide variety of challenges to human beings arising out of environmental degradation, migration, refugee crises, gender, health, development, terrorism-related issues and economic insecurities (Buzan, 1999: 16 & 196; Buzan and Hansen, 2009: 12-13; Tripp, Ferree and Ewig, 2013: 14). It was during these times that the concept of conflict transformation began to be advanced by its proponents. According to John Paul Lederach (1996), one of the leading theorists and practitioners in peace and conflict studies, it was during the 1990s that the transformational school of thought within peace and conflict studies emerged. The transformational approach takes a long-term view of a conflict and hence proposes a comprehensive framework for bringing about change in the conflict states. This change has the potential to build social platforms which can lead to sustainable peace. Critics view this approach as an idealist one, but it can nevertheless be argued that on a practical level there is the potential in people to transform their destructive interactions.

Defining conflict transformation has broadly coalesced around acquiring a comprehensive view of conflict. This comprehensive picture of a conflict puts people at the centre of conflict. In conflict management and resolution, the state and ruling elite take centre stage. In conflict transformation, ordinary citizens who are affected by conflict become the key figures. The transformational approach fosters attitudes, standards and mechanisms which can transform a conflict (Rupesinghe, 1995: 87). John Paul Lederach defines conflict transformation as a process which envisions and responds to the ebb and flow of a social conflict. As life-giving opportunity, it creates constructive change processes, reduces violence, increases social justice in direct interaction and social structures and responds to real life problems in human relationships (Lederach, 2015: 17). For Galtung (1996: 119), when a conflict transforms, the conflict parties emerge with better social relations. They are then able to cope with new conflicts nonviolently. Mitchell (2008: 117-119) relates Galtung's assertion to the transformation of combatants in Northern Ireland. These combatants upheld the delicate peace process arising out of the Good Friday Agreement by not resorting to violence in the face of grievances and complaints. They were able to cope with small disagreements which could have led to resumption of combat.

The long-standing unresolved conflict between India and Pakistan show signs of mitigation when both countries allow what they call people to people contact. One such initiative was the “exchange for change” programme between the school students of both countries. The students were encouraged to contact one another through the internet, exchange letters and souvenirs. Once a year, both countries sponsored trips for these students to each other’s countries. If both countries decide to expand such ventures to other walks of life, then they can augment the success of peace processes between them, which will be owned by a broader segment of society.

When a conflict continues for a long time, it leaves a deep psychological impact on individuals. In the case of intractable conflicts and when children grow up with war-mongering and jingoism, a dehumanisation of the enemy occurs. The transformational approach aims at removing such deep-seated sentiments so as to neutralise the antipathy from peoples’ minds and hearts. Buckley-Zistel (2008: 3) highlights a key aspect of conflict transformation by comparing it with conflict management and resolution. He notes that conflicts do not simply occur due to incompatible goals or unequal structures, rather they are also the outcome of historical processes which define the identity of conflict parties. The transformational discourse takes into account these deeply embedded historical facts and processes. For instance, a comprehensive understanding of the India-Pakistan conflict cannot be gained without understanding their colonial history and violent departure from British colonial rule.

According to Galtung (2007: 46), conflict permeates every aspect of life if it goes on for a long time. Educational programmes can prepare an environment which in turn can create peace constituencies. It is for this reason that there is an increasing trend of peace education in conflict-ridden societies. One inspiring example of peace research and education in the context of the India-Pakistan conflict is the establishment of the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies in India by an Indian retired army officer. The officer named Dipankar Banerjee fought in the two India-Pakistan wars in 1965 and 1971, but later decided to be a peace advocate which is a crucial transformation indication (Malik, Maini and Bonney, 2011: 59). A similar transformation is traceable in a retired Pakistani military officer named Shafiq Awan who fought in these two India-Pakistan wars in 1965 and 1971. According to him, he personally killed 7 Indian soldiers in the 1965 war and in the 1971 war his battalion killed 51 Indian soldiers. But subsequently he expressed his desire to have peace

with India (Ibid: 143). According to him, this change of heart was brought about by the peaceful exchanges between the people of both countries which he personally observed.

Conflict is essentially a social phenomenon, so there has to be a consideration of social factors driving and perpetuating animosity leading to armed violence or at least hostile attitudes. The approach of conflict transformation analyses the underlying social causes of conflict and then suggests long-term remedies. In order to transform a conflict, an understanding has to be gained about cultures, ideas, ideals and interests (Rupesinghe, 1995: 8). The purpose of conflict transformation is to prepare a peace constituency which can foster a culture of negotiations, peaceful existence and mutual accommodation. By understanding and absorbing this culture to cope with adversaries, an environment of mutual trust can be created and sustained.

The transformational discourse on conflict is gaining acceptance as it offers a long term historical and futuristic view. This approach does not negate or refute the contribution of conflict management and conflict resolution, but it goes beyond them. In fact, conflict transformation incorporates the tools and mechanisms of both these concepts. The transformation of a conflict can take place when there is traction for peace across all spectra of a society. When an ordinary citizen participates in understanding a rivalry and attempts to remove its root causes, then there is more productive and durable way to resolve a conflict. The focus of conflict management and resolution mechanisms and discourse is on the elite. viz. states, diplomats, armed forces and warlords in the case of civil wars. On the other hand, the conflict transformation proponents and practitioners believe in the potency of ordinary people to affect the positive change in a society.

This change can transform a conflict if it is broad-based and owned by the elite and the masses alike. In intractable conflicts which have lasted for several decades, transformation can open up new avenues for change. Such deep-rooted conflicts have evaded management and resolution attempts, so a transformational approach can create innovative ways to gain a novel understanding of conflict which can promote the spirit of mutual accommodation and dissuasion from violence and war. This spirit of mutual accommodation in a conflict situation can be created with the help of sports, art, movies, theatre, music, tourist attractions and spiritual appeal. Collectively such platforms and resources are vehicles of conflict transformation which come under the rubric of soft power, which is the focus of the next section. For instance, in 1987 the impending war between India and Pakistan was averted by the Presidents of both countries when they met on a cricket

venue in India (Burki, 1999: 196). In another instance, an initiative of the Ajoka Theatre from Pakistan called “theatre for peace” also saw the artists of both countries come together during times of tensions and, as such, demonstrated that peaceful coexistence is possible among the people of the two nations (Nadeem and Gauhar, 2009: 191). Such soft power tools and interactions help soften the hearts and minds of people in both countries, which can then cultivate a conducive environment for peace.

2.7. SOFT POWER

The concept of power is a central theme in the political discourse. In the discipline of International Relations, the significance of power, its acquisition and use have preoccupied theorists and practitioners alike. For example, a classic definition of power by Morgenthau (1978: 97) is that “by power we mean the power of man over the minds and actions of other men, a phenomenon to be found whenever human beings live in social contact with one another”. For Nye (2002: 4), “power is the ability to effect the outcomes you want, and if necessary, to change the behaviour of others”. Mearesheimer (2001: 57) defines power in more materialist terms, seeing it as “nothing more than specific assets or material resources that are available to a state”. The traditional notion of power rooted in military prowess is one of the core assumptions of realism. According to realist philosophers, the primacy of state in the international system derives from power. The international system is based on self-help where alliances are temporary, and states have to struggle for survival. The best way to survive is to build up security and this unassailable security comes from uncontested military power. For realists, power is the guarantor of security in a world characterised by anarchy. Power, therefore, becomes a continuous pursuit of states (Carr, 1946: 96 & 102).

When states are engaged in maximising their security, they inevitably invite suspicion from other states. This state of affairs has been termed the ‘security dilemma’ where the security of one state generates or is perceived to be generating insecurity for other states. Herz (1951) coined the term which refers to a zero-sum competition among states. Power and security, therefore, go hand in hand in realist discourse. This military power has been termed “hard power” which is used to advance foreign policy goals outwardly and defend the territorial boundaries inwardly.

The preeminence of power in theory and in the practice of global politics began to weaken with the emergence of alternative discourses and practices as a result of interdependence

underpinned by the forces and factors of globalisation. There are two considerations about the changing nature and use of power: a.) the notion that power is not the only central element in interstate interaction and b.) power is not rooted in military prowess and weaponisation only. The preponderance of military power was demystified by certain historical situations, such as Vietnam in the 1970s where the US could not win the war, and the failed occupation of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in 1980s despite the military superiority of both countries. These two examples of superpowers biting the dust showed the limitations of relying on military power alone for leverage in the international system. Concomitantly, alternative sources and currencies of power made it to the front-burner of international relations theory and practice.

Joseph Nye Jr. was the first exponent of soft power and its purposeful employment to achieve national interest. Defining soft power Nye (1990: 15) wrote, “soft power is the ability of a country to persuade others to do what it wants them to do without force or coercion”. Offering another expanded definition of soft power, Nye (2004: 4) noted that “it is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies”. Another brief definition of soft power is as follows, “soft power offers a way of talking about non-coercive modes of influence in international politics” (Chitty, Rawnsley and Haden, 2016: 37).

Soft power differs from hard power in several respects in terms of its sources and deployment. For example, States and governments have monopoly over the resources of hard power, but soft power resources and tools are possessed by a host of actors including both state and non-state actors such as NGOs, transnational organisations, civil society platforms and individuals. Soft power can be exercised through media, culture, sports, language, cuisine, arts and literature, cinema, academia and tourist attractions. Societies become vehicles to undertake soft power and at the same time become its recipients. At the state level, ministries or departments of culture are now everywhere. The US State Department established the Department of Cultural Relations in 1938 which has the specific purpose to spread the US culture to the rest of the world. France established its Ministry of Culture in 1959 whereas Germany used culture as a vehicle to redefine its relations with the world after its dark Nazi past. (Chitty, Rawnsley and Haden, 2016: 39-42).

Culture is a tool in the hands of governments and other groups and individuals to attract others. Now a day's countries sponsor programmes and initiatives through which they spread their language, values and a host of other cultural traits. For instance, China is investing huge sums in its main cultural venture of Confucius Centres. In 2003 China established its first Confucius Centre in Seoul in South Korea. By December 2018 it had established 570 Confucius Centres around the world (Lahtinen, 2018: 34). Similarly, the US, UK, Russia, India and Turkey are using their movie and theatre industries, scholarship and academic exchange programmes and political values to create and convey their favourable image to the rest of the world. The US has rolled out extensive academic programmes and fellowship programmes through USEFP/United States Educational Foundation Programme all around the world. The UK is doing the same through the British Council. Other developed countries are emulating this model to spread their language, culture and social values. Developing countries are also following in the footsteps of these countries. India has launched scholarship schemes through its Ministry of Education. Pakistan is doing this through its Higher Education Department in sync with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Tourism is also used as soft power tool as countries and regions are increasing visa free travel or easing the granting of visas. Pakistan has established the Ministry of Tourism at federal level whereas Provincial tourism departments are also working to promote tourism. India and Pakistan also undertake religious tourism to facilitate travel for followers of various religions on both sides of border. Sports is also used as an instrument of soft power. Countries project their image by hosting major sports events such as the Olympics, world cups and champion leagues. People from all over the world throng the venues of such events and the number of people following these events through traditional and social media is even bigger.

The states also propagate their value systems to the rest of the world through soft power. The purpose is to create goodwill among foes and friends alike. The former US Secretary of State Colin Powell once stated that the best product the US can sell to others is its democracy (Fattor, 2014: 262). The Cold War between the US and Soviet Union was not only in strategic terms, it also had a strong ideological component based on values. Both superpowers used their vast propaganda machinery to convince the world about the virtue and utility of their values. According to Cate (2005: 612-613), both powers made use of theatre, film, classical music, popular music,

ballet, painting and sculpture to create and spread their humane message and soft image. The US, in its war against terrorism, is also using soft power resources to deny any space for sympathetic views for the militant groups. The purpose of this policy is to win the war of narratives against the terrorist groups and networks.

The discussion above establishes the point that soft power resources and tools are widely applied by states to spread goodwill, create a friendly image and win over the hostile populations. It is also used in conflict situations by the antagonistic parties to spread their message and convey their favourable image. In the India-Pakistan conflict both countries have been using soft power such as films, songs, theatre and painting to prove their supremacy vis-à-vis each other and justification of their hostility against each other. Both countries' singers and movie directors employ war themes and write and sing nationalistic lyrics to arouse popular feelings. That is why soft power between the two countries, at times, comes with a hard edge. But on the other hand, there are circles in both countries who spread the message of common historical, social and cultural heritage. But the general environment in both countries remains susceptible to war-mongering even though their common language, cultural traits and religious cites provide rich and solid ground for soft power to promote durable peace. Cricket is the most popular sport in both countries. Both countries have used cricket to promote goodwill, even in the times of tension. The phrase cricket diplomacy is well-known and practically employed to enhance mutual friendliness. According to the former chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board, Shaharyar Khan (2013: 23), even during the tension arising out of the limited war between India and Pakistan in Kargil in May-June 1999, the cricketing ties were still friendly.

Another crucial aspect of soft power to consider is that the flow of communication and information through the internet is largely out of the control and scope of governments. This has empowered individuals and non-state actors on a scale like never before. However, terrorist networks and groups also employ soft power tools and resources, such as the media, to propagate their mission. By doing so such groups aim at achieving two purposes: to win new recruits to their cause, and to justify and publicise their questionable acts of terror. For example, Al Qaeda was able to win airtime on the Aljazeera Television network, a popular channel in the Arab world. In Pakistan, TTP/Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, an offshoot of the Afghan Taliban, ran its own radio

station where it used to peddle its narrative. Militant groups also engage in charity which projects them in a positive light.

Critics have questioned the use and utility of soft power by both state agencies and non-state actors, be it groups of people or individuals. According to this critique, soft power tools may well become instruments of propaganda and undermine peace and security between and within states and societies. In the age of social media, fake news has cast a shadow over its bright side. As a result, states are once again trying to set restrictions on social media, which is also perceived as an attempt to restrict freedom of speech. In Pakistan, the government has attempted to frame rules to what it declares as the regulation of the use of social media. But critics opposed the move and even international platforms criticised the decision. In India, the Government has imposed a blanket ban on social media in the territory of Kashmir following the revocation of Kashmir's special autonomous status in August 2019. Soft power resources have been bolstered by the use of social media as a country or society can project its soft image. Social media platforms have also empowered individuals like never before. Celebrities and political leaders now have millions of followers on their Facebook pages and twitter and Instagram accounts. Through these online platforms they directly communicate with their own and other nationals which was unimaginable just few years ago. People also have individual online broadcast channels on YouTube which sometimes have hundreds of thousands of followers. Hence technology has enabled individuals to project soft power which used to be in the hands of state or powerful non-state actors previously. Xamina (2015: 64) depicts this technological prowess of individuals in words to the effect that "social change is at our fingertips now". Pakistanis can directly communicate with the Indian Prime Minister on his twitter account and vice versa. Soft power has become essential in traditional foreign policy and bureaucracies all around the world.

Soft power is the power of persuasion and attraction. As such, governments and non-government actors and institutions are using it to brand their image and convey and communicate their narratives. This changing nature of power has enhanced the role of societal factors and forces which cut across the territorial boundaries and borders. Like any other form of power, soft power is not good or bad, rather it is its use which can make it so (Nye, 2011: 65). Soft power tools and resources can make a difference in the foreign policy of a country. Governing regimes can win over the discontented segments of the population by utilising the soft power resources.

Soft power is not always soft. Increasingly, military institutions, defence establishments and even intelligence agencies are using soft power tools and resources. The Pentagon in the US established the Office of Strategic Influence in the wake of 9/11. The purpose of OSI is to create favourable opinion about the US's military interventions in Iraq and its militarised response to terrorism (Fattor, 2014: 162). In Pakistan, the army has a well-equipped publicity wing, Inter-Services Public Relations. The ISPR has its Indian counterpart in all three services namely the army, navy and airforce. Both countries' militaries are using traditional and social media platforms widely to project their image. At times, these institutions engage in a war of words on social media, especially during times of crises, for example, in the case of the post-Pulwama crisis in 2019 that will be discussed in the next chapter.

Soft power has its advocates and opponents, but in the current age its importance is growing exponentially as technology progresses. In conflict situations, soft power and its tools can cause harm if conflict parties do not resolve their conflict. But the same soft power resources can prove to be of immense value if conflict parties use them to transform attitudes, beliefs and behaviours which feed into the conflict dynamics. The next section explores how soft power can be useful in transforming a conflict.

2.8. SOFT POWER AS A VEHICLE FOR CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

There are various ways and tools to affect transformation in a conflict. Soft power is one such approach for transforming conflict. The resources in the toolkit of soft power include but are not limited to culture, social characteristics, education, sports, music, cinema, public opinion, religious beliefs, welfare and charity activities and projects, cuisine, media, social media and projecting a soft image. The list is certainly not exhaustive but covers a broad range of soft power resources. These soft power resources are executed across the political, social and economic spectra in a state and society. This section will explore the possibility of conflict transformation by using soft power resources.

Power is the ability to influence others and affect their attitude and behaviour. Power is not good or bad, its use makes it so (Nye, 2013: 61). In a conflict situation, soft power can play a transformative role given that its appeal is felt by the individuals and groups involved in animosity. However, soft power can be deployed to affect both negative and positive transformation of a

conflict. Soft power can be used by people and collectivities of people. On the contrary, hard power aims to preserve states. In conflict transformation, the focus is on people. So, individuals can become active agents of employing soft power and they may also become its recipients and audience.

Conflict can transform when relations of people are transformed. For this transformation to occur, communication has to take place. This communication has to take into account the emotional and psychological makeup of the individuals. A film or a sport can bring not only the performers into action, rather they can trigger discussion about the issue and performance. The Palestinian and Israeli cinema use themes from their long-standing conflict. The films and theatre on both sides paint emotional pictures, but at the same time there are glimpses of a collective identity (Gertz, 2008: 195-201). India and Pakistan have a deep-rooted conflictive relationship, but their show-business fraternity perform together every now and then. Similarly, the population of both countries adores the film actors and singers irrespective of their nationality, religion and caste. Cinema develops the cultural memory of a society. In conflict situations it becomes even more crucial as people can relate to an experience which is visualised by actors. Due to digital technology, there is currently an era of post-cinematic representation. Now people can view the visual images on their computers and mobile phones. In a conflict scenario, the post cinematic technology has become vital for people from opposite sides to feel connected and experience empathy (Rastegar, 2015: 205-210).

Sports is another soft power tool to influence a conflict situation. Vinokur (1988: 133) describes sports as a “basic part of the culture of a nation”. Sports players of opposing teams come face to face. The fan club also gets in touch with one another. Underpinning the communicative potency of sports, South Africa’s former iconic President Nelson Mandela observed that “sport is probably the most effective means of communication in the modern world, bypassing both verbal and written communication and reaching directly out to billions of people worldwide” (Levermore and Budd, 2004: 77). Sports and politics become enmeshed with each other in cases of hostile relations between playing teams. The war between El Salvador and Honduras is known as the “soccer war” denotes war mongering through sports (Risolo, 2010: 135).

Cricket diplomacy is a familiar concept between India and Pakistan (Osborne, 2015: page number not available). So, in both these examples one can see sports being used with negative as

well as positive implications and connotations. There are instances when in team sports such as football and cricket players of opposing teams play in a single team. The impact of this proximity is that fans of opposing nations cheer the players regardless of political tensions between their nations (Cotterill, 2012: 23). Transformation of sports and its wide publicity can result in changing perceptions. According to Galtung (1996: 139), “conflict is an interactive process rooted in people’s perceptions, intentions, interpretations and expressions”. Hence sports is itself an illustration of creative and friendly conflict and can change people’s emotions and worldviews.

Culture can play a crucial role in transforming people’s mindset and shaping their attitudes. Culture is one of the most potent soft power tools as it incorporates a wide range of social activities. In conflict transformation discourse, culture holds a key position. Galtung (1999: 32) argues that conflict is rooted in culture. For him culture legitimises both violence and peace. “Peace of any kind breeds peace. Violence of any kind breeds violence”. Culture shapes and affects people’s responses to conflict. In turn, conflict also influences the cultural patterns of the people in a conflict situation (Lederach, 2013: 24-25). The transformational approach focuses on resources and mechanisms within a culture, which can foster an enabling environment for constructively responding to conflict.

The transmission and publicity of soft power tools have been radically transformed on account of conventional and social media outreach. Movies produced by Hollywood can be watched all around the world regardless of partisan sentiments about the US. Indian movies are keenly watched in Pakistan and Pakistani TV dramas are viewed with similar interest in India, albeit that both countries are locked in a conflict situation. Soft power tools in the digital technological age cut across territorial boundaries and defy governmental control. In one way they can transform people’s opinions about one another by bringing them directly in contact. At the same time this familiarisation can result hostility if underlying differences are not overcome. For transformation to occur, it is essential that people can know one another and see the humane side of the opposing conflict party and this is what soft power can do, which is important to build constructive change at a social level.

2.9. MORAL IMAGINATION AS AN INSTRUMENT OF CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

War and peace are made in the minds of men. Their resolution, transformation and solution of any kind is therefore rooted in the mind (Keating and Knight, 2004: 337). The role of imagination becomes vital in conflict situations. People are the main carriers and executors of conflict, whether in a social setting or political domain. Conflict is first imagined and then springs into action. Werhen (2015: 25) posits that “at its most basic level, imagination is the ability to form mental images of real or unreal phenomena or events and to develop different scenarios or different perspectives on those phenomena or events”. Imagination can be negative and positive. Negative imagination can render a conflict harder to be resolved and transform the conflict in a negative manner. On the contrary, positive imagination can result in positive transformation of a conflict.

Morality, as a concept and practice, has been long debated in the religious, philosophical and social discourse. In conflict scenarios, moral justification is often evoked to inflict harm on the rival side. In religious discourse it has been termed as a holy war, whereas in a broad secular cum political discourse it has been denoted as merely war. But on the flipside, the moral dictates of religion and social norms prohibit violence of any sort. It is this kind of moral discourse which influences imagination in a conflict setting (Wakkin, 1986: 319; Dawson, 2018: 196). The term “moral imagination” was first used by Edmund Burke in the context of the French revolution. Subsequently, this concept has been used by various authors, primarily in the parlance of public policy, business ethics, religion, arts and literature (Lederach, 2004: 25-27; Bromwich, 2014: 5).

Defining moral imagination, Lederach (2004: 29) writes, “moral imagination is the capacity to imagine something rooted in the challenges of the real world yet capable of giving birth to that which does not yet exist”. Lederach further applies the concept of moral imagination to conflict transformation and peace building. He explains it with the analogy of a pyramid which top consists of leadership, the bottom is the ordinary masses and in the middle is the people who can move between the top and the bottom. So, for long term peace building and conflict transformation there has to be coordinated movement supported by constructive change processes rooted in moral imagination (Lederach, 2004: 79-81).

Mark Johnson (1994: 2002) defines moral imagination as "an ability to imaginatively discern various possibilities for acting within a given situation and to envision the potential help and harm that are likely to result from a given action". Charles Larmore quoted in Werhane (2015: 93) approaches moral imagination as our ability to elaborate and appraise different courses of action which are only partially determined by the given content of moral rules in order to learn what in a particular situation is the morally best thing to do. Moral imagination belongs to the exercise of moral judgment. What we can derive from these two definitions is that the destructive fall-out of conflict creates a situation whereby it is difficult to perceive beyond immediate events and memories. Even memories and emotions from the past cast a shadow on peoples' attitudes during a conflict. It is in such a scenario where the possibility of constructive change can break the cyclical destructive patterns. In the conflict between India and Pakistan, the bitter experiences of partition still shape the discourse, policies and attitudes on both sides. Both countries refer to their past in some of their movies, theatre plays and even pieces of literature, which Zakaria (2017) terms as the feeling of "otherization." This goes on to perpetuate the feeling of mutual dehumanisation leading to the ceaseless continuation of conflict between India and Pakistan. It is the ability to create and imagine alternatives other than violence which can free the people of India and Pakistan from a conflictive mindset.

Moral imagination can create possibilities which otherwise are not thinkable (Babbitt, 2018: 128). These possibilities can generate the forces for constructive change essential for resolving and transforming a conflict. An agreement reached to manage or resolve a conflict or a behavioural change to transform a conflict is the result of such possibilities arising out of imagining a new initiative or novel course of action. Moral imagination enables the people from opposing sides to see beyond the horizon of violence and its aftermath. This ability can lead to the direction of unleashing a potential for transformative platforms which can then alter the relationships. Babbitt (2018: 61) puts forth an assumption that moral imagination is the capacity to envision alternative social arrangements. These alternative social arrangements can transform the conflict dynamism and may foster an environment of sympathy and empathy which is necessary for a conflict to be transformed. Referring to the nonresolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Kapitan (1997: 36-37) argues that both sides are not able to imagine alternatives beyond their maximalist positions. So, lack of imagination has perpetuated this conflict to the point that both sides are caught in deep suspicions rooted in imagination. Taking the argument further, he argues

that even if the most plausible two-state solution is reached between the Palestinians and Arabs, it can reinforce the collective memories of the past aspirations and grievances. It can provide temporary breathing space and may result in polarisation leading to conflict in the future over resources in a small geographic space. What follows from this analysis is that even if an agreement resolves a conflict, the absence of moral imagination may keep the flames of aggression alive.

Conflict can transform through the alteration of perceptions, emotions, feelings, behaviours and attitudes in positive manner. The same can take a negative trajectory. But moral imagination can be a medium through which a conflict can transform positively to enable the affected individuals to come out of an interminable trap of animosity. As moral imagination concerns the mental reflection of a situation, a conflict can distort the mental makeup of individuals. It is from this standpoint that moral imagination can have a liberating influence on minds and hearts. “Moral imagination enables one to envision and actualise the possibilities that are independent of context” (Werhane, Wolfe and Bevan, 2019: 96). Intractable conflicts which spread over generations pervade every aspect of life. Such conflicts cast influence on all facets of life. People fall victim to stereotypes and deep-seated biases in long-standing unresolved conflicts. Moral imagination opens up new frontiers of thinking which could lead to what Babbitt (2018: 293) terms “humane social vision”. Reflecting on the post-genocide reconciliation in Rwanda, Totten (2006: 417) refers to this social vision which enables the victims and perpetrators to live side by side peacefully in a post-conflict era. Genocide memorials have been setup in Rwanda to keep alive the genocide memories, which can jolt the conscience and move the imagination so that people can see beyond their violent past. Moral imagination can motivate conflict parties to conceive novel solutions for their conflicts which may result in agreements for resolution in the short-term and transformation in the long-term. Pakistan’s former Foreign Secretary Riaz Muhammad Khan (2020) believes that novel and out-of-box solutions of India-Pakistan disputes can transform arenas of conflict into areas of cooperation².

Conflict creates its own language and imagination. In order to offset the discourse and imagination flowing from a conflict, moral imagination can play a climacteric role. Emancipating the people from the effects of violence in a conflict is an uphill task. Especially when family

² Foreign Secretary in Pakistan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the highest administrative post. The Foreign Secretary is the in charge of foreign affairs and works under the foreign minister.

members have been killed or are alive with physical handicap, the bitter experiences and memories shape attitude towards the rival side. Here reconciliation plays a critical part to heal people's past and prepares them for a future where they think beyond conflict memories. Moral imagination, therefore, can unleash a hidden potential for reconciliation not only with the opponent in a conflict, but also with the harsh memories of the past. Transformation of a conflict can take place with the help of moral imagination given its wide-spread nature and the fact that it is rooted in all segments of society affected by violence.

2.10. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: SYNERGY BETWEEN SOFT POWER, MORAL IMAGINATION AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

This section explores the symbiosis between soft power, moral imagination and conflict transformation. In order to do this, it is apposite here to revisit the main thrust of conflict transformation and then juxtapose it with soft power and moral imagination. Conflict transformation focuses on the individuals and their potential to make a difference in a conflict situation. Galtung (2007: 7) terms it as "internal transformation". Conflict is essentially a social phenomenon involving the relationships of people. If the relationship is transformed, then the whole environment can be changed. Lederach (2013: 3) reflects on the notion of constructive change for transforming a conflict. This positive change may range from the family level to complex bureaucratic organisations and from local to the global level. For Lederach, dialogue is a precondition to initiate and sustain such a constructive change (Lederach, 2013: 4-6). Contrary to conflict management and conflict resolution, conflict transformation takes into consideration the context of a conflict, its present contours and future trajectory. Solutions found through an agreement or negotiations is one element in a conflict. The transformational worldview goes beyond the immediate causes and consequences of conflict and delves into the deeper surface to address the conflicting situation for a long term and sustainable change (Rupesinghe, 1995: 201; Galtung, 1996: 89; Galtung and Webel, 2007: 138; Arai, 2009: 135; Lederach, 2015: 7).

Soft power tools directly influence the individuals. Soft power accesses to sensory perceptions of people. Moreover, soft power is outside the elite state control and, therefore, has popular grasp and reach. Coupled with moral imagination, soft power can introduce constructive change which is helpful for transformation of a conflict. Soft power influences cognitive and behavioural elements in individuals at the micro level and shapes public opinion at the macro level

(Chitty, 2017: 108). The cricket and hockey competitions between India and Pakistan in the past have proved to be critical in breaking the cycle of bilateral tensions. Both these sports are team sports and quite popular in both countries. Pakistan's former President Parvez Musharraf (2006: 302) who was himself engaged in cricket diplomacy with India, asserts that this sort of diplomacy with India has produced results. According to Javed Miandad, former cricket captain of Pakistan (2013: 118), the game provided an opportunity to interact with the Indian players. He further notes that off-field interaction with Indian players is friendly and jovial. This is how sports can be an instrument of soft power as it injects an element of friendliness among the players of the two nations, which have fought four wars in their history.

When public opinion is prepared for peace and becomes averse to waging conflict, it is auspicious for conflict transformation. This broad-based desire for peace has been termed "peace formation" by Oliver P Richmond. According to Richmond, peace comes through transformative politics, which is rooted in local customs, religion, myths, culture, economic realities and history (Richmond, 2016: 174-76). Soft power tools can communicate the peaceful side of a society. This in turn can lead to the imaginative faculty of the other side to perceive the opponent in a humane way. Dehumanisation is a corollary of a long-standing intractable conflict. Moral imagination enables an individual to imbibe the spirit of humanity. Countries or societies locked in conflict can foster a benign image of one another when they engage in sports competition and collaboration. North and South Korea, despite their conflicting relations, allow sports competitions between their teams and on each other's soil (Walsh, 2017: 94). Tourism exchanges between the two Koreas also promote a soft image in their frayed relations (Kim, 2012: 581). Soft power stirs imagination which can result in creative options to alter the acrimonious relationships. Galtung terms imagination as creativity. In a conflict where there is a persistent deadlock, imagination can break that stalemate through creative acts and utterances (Galtung, 2007: 23). In the context of the India-Pakistan conflict, tensions in the decade of the 1990s were decreased when the then Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee decided to travel to the Pakistani city of Lahore by bus. That bold venture was termed as "bus diplomacy" and it demonstrated that the top leadership imbued with moral imagination can turn things around with a single act. But lack of imagination pushed both nations in the direction of potential nuclear confrontation when they fought a limited war in Kashmir in the summer of 1999.

Lederach (2015: 111) states that in the universe of conflict transformation and peace the womb and home of conflict are relationships. It is moral imagination which can transcend the gripping influence of violence. The tools of soft power, such as music and dance move the minds and in a tense environment of conflict, they leave an impression of tranquility and peace. Jingoistic songs and pieces of art also exist and are used to incite feelings of hostility and revenge. But for moral imagination to bring positive transformation of a conflict, soothing musical performances are desirable. Music is both reflective of society and influential on society. Therefore, it can generate sociological imagination which can create platforms for constructive change essential for transforming a conflict (Perone, 2001: 6; Lederach, 2004: 13).

Moral imagination and soft power reinforce each other to transform the attitude and perceptions of people suffering from conflict. Whether they are active agents of conflict or its passive victims, they are not immune to the influence of soft power tools in the age of social media. This expression and conveyance of soft power can unleash the imaginative potential of people so that they are able to see beyond the immediate horizon of violence and hostility. This is how a short-term process of ceasing violence and a long-term process of reconciliation can take shape. This helps in transforming a conflict and can create what Richmond (2016: 175) terms “peace infrastructure”.

Cricketers, singers, actors, civil society members and peace activists in India and Pakistan can become active peace agents through soft power for conflict transformation. These days celebrities on both sides have millions of fans on social media platforms. Pakistani singers like Atif Aslam and Rahat Fateh Ali Khan and cricketers like Shahid Afridi and Shoaib Akhtar are admired and adored by citizens of India. On the contrary, the Indian movie actors such as Sharukh Khan, Salman Khan, Sanjay Dath and cricketers like Sachin Tendulkar, Virath Kohli and Mahindra Singh Dhoni are household names in Pakistan. This is the outcome of moral imagination which inspires love and passion for Indians in Pakistanis. These famous personalities value their fan-following despite conflict in the political domain. In cases where these agents of soft power are not driven by moral imagination, they can spread the feeling of enmity by their acts and words. For instance, the movies and songs in both India and Pakistan at times peddle the hostile nationalistic sentiments in the name of patriotism. There are governing and regulating bodies such as the Censor Board of Pakistan in Pakistan and the Indian Censor Board and Central Board of

Film Certification in India. The purpose of these supervising state organs is to see that the movies, songs and other entertainment content is in line with socio-cultural norms and national interest. If both countries make it their national interest to embark on regional peace in South Asia, then the themes and content of entertainment genres can be a crucial element of soft power for resolving and transforming this interstate conflict. At times, the sports persons join the divisive political chorus in times of tension between the two countries. A recent example of this comingling of sports and politics was witnessed when the Indian cricket team was wearing the Indian military insignia on their cricket uniforms during the Cricket World Cup in the UK in 2019.

The International Cricket Council intervened and asked the Indian team management to remove these militaristic insignia (BBC News, 07 June 2019). The development was signifying the India-Pakistan hostility in the wake of tensions in 2019 bordering on outbreak of another war. It is on account of moral imagination that soft power can transform the relationships of people which can transform the India-Pakistan conflict.

Soft power bereft of moral imagination can go in the reverse direction and aggravate a conflict. In the India-Pakistan relations, soft power tools and their agents imbued with moral imagination can play a role in transforming the mutually antagonistic perception and mindset. The transformation of perception at grass-root level can initiate a constructive change process leading to the transformation of conflict among the opponents. When a conflict spreads over generations and a hard power approach is waged by nuclear powers, then it is all the more important to bring a positive change in the conflict dynamics. Here moral imagination becomes the key as it can open up new vistas to see beyond nuclear-driven military confrontation and unleash the potential for mutually beneficial cooperation. Soft power can become a source of expression and reflection of this moral imagination, strengthening the prospects of transformation of a conflict.

The discussion on synergy between soft power, conflict transformation and moral imagination is meant to identify and fill an important gap in the peace discourse. In the context of India-Pakistan conflict this gap becomes even more evident where dominant hard power approach eclipses the avenues of conflict transformation and positive use of soft power. This study however demonstrates that soft power coupled with moral imagination can unleash prospects for transforming the India-Pakistan conflict.

2.11. CONCLUSION

This chapter laid out a conceptual framework for the study. The field and discourse of peace and conflict is grounded in a multiplicity of conceptual and theoretical interpretations. The reason for this is the differences in approaching the causes of conflict. The same difference of opinion exists in coping with conflict resulting in three main schools of thought, namely, conflict management, conflict resolution and conflict transformation. The focus of traditional approaches viz. conflict management and conflict resolution is on elite processes and structures to deal with conflict, whereas conflict transformation focuses on individuals and grass root level peace making.

Soft power and moral imagination have been studied as vehicles for transforming conflict. A conflict can transform in a positive direction when soft power tools are employed to communicate with the adversary. Moral imagination enables a party of conflict to consider the possibilities which can provide alternatives to perceive and see a conflict situation. A synergistic link between soft power and moral imagination can render a conflict ripe for transformation. In the context of the India-Pakistan conflict, which is the main purpose of this study, soft power can imbue moral imagination in key agents such as sports stars, the show-business fraternity, civil society activists and even politicians in both countries. These, in turn, can spread the message of peace and harmony to the ordinary masses who bear the brunt of this conflict. Both countries spend massive amounts on hard power by purchasing arms and weapons. This results in mass poverty and illiteracy in both countries. Soft power can prepare peace values in both countries which have the potential for transforming the conflict between the two countries. The next chapter will analyse the India-Pakistan conflict in terms of its inception, evolution and possible future direction.

CHAPTER 3

THE INDIA-PAKISTAN CONFLICT: HISTORICAL EVOLUTION AND CURRENT DYNAMICS

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter sets out to provide an historical trajectory for current dynamics of the conflict between India and Pakistan, which is an ongoing rivalry. Like other conflicts, the India-Pakistan conflict is also a byproduct of history, which subsequently plays out in determining the bilateral relations. According to Paul (2005), the conflict between India and Pakistan has affected all state and societal aspects of their relations. The disputes, which sprang from colonial rule, prove to be tricky for both countries in terms of their management and resolution. Outside powers are also involved in the South Asian region, primarily on account of their regional and global interests, and as such they attempt to persuade both nations to overcome their differences. The UN also engage with the India-Pakistan conflict. It is the second oldest conflict on the UN's agenda (UN archives).

The disputes between India and Pakistan range from territorial to resources and competing policies and worldviews. The result of this long-standing tense relationship is what Paul (2005) terms as an “enduring rivalry”. According to this concept, the relations between India and Pakistan have been hostile for such a long period of time that they find it difficult to make compromises in the spirit of give and take. Kashmir can be described as the most pervasive and hardest of all the disputes to be resolved. Kashmir was the epicenter of all 3 wars and one limited war between the two countries. The nuclear dimension has also complicated the India-Pakistan conflict and created a scenario of two nuclear neighbours with unresolved conflicts and extremist elements in the society. The domestic factors in both countries not only make it hard to resolve conflicts, but most of the time, they add to the tensions by their actions and propaganda. In India, there is an extremist political party motivated by religious sentiments governing the country. In Pakistan, there are militant groups operating with the connivance and sometimes collusion with state institutions to spew venom against India. The non-state actors within Pakistan, on few occasions, went too far in their anti-Indian actions and carried out attacks on Indian soil. These attacks added fuel to the fire

between the two countries. One such attack was executed in 2019 in Pulwama, a town in Indian Kashmir. India instantly blamed the attack on Pakistan which the latter denied. The outcome of that incident was that India launched an air assault on Pakistan in February of 2019. In response, Pakistan brought down two Indian fighter aircrafts and captured one Indian pilot named Abhinandan. In 2019, another Indian measure was to revoke the autonomy of Kashmir, which caused the tensions to spike to a level rarely seen in the past. The controversial citizenship act enacted in December of 2019 by India and on the basis of religious identity, which excluded Muslims, has also caused tension. Both countries have decreased their diplomatic representations. They are squared off against each other at all regional, multilateral and global forums.

In the last 72 years of their history, India and Pakistan for most part remained locked in cyclical pattern of hostility. But while doing so, both countries concluded several agreements in the fields of trade and commerce, sports, culture, road, rail and air links, adopting a nonthreatening posture towards each other's nuclear facilities and implementing exchanges of academics, artists, parliamentarians and civil society activists and members. Cricket ties were also friendly although fans and players demonstrated extra charge and motivation during matches. Indian Bollywood movies and songs are liked in Pakistan and Pakistani TV and theatre dramas and plays are admired in India. But all that has come to a halt in last 5 to 10 years owing to persistent tension. The chapter highlights these ups and downs in the bilateral relations centering around management and resolution of conflicts. In fact, two conflicts have been resolved, namely, the water dispute and demarcation of a land strip known as Rann of Kutch. But other disputes namely Kashmir, Sir Creek, Siachin and Wullar Barrage are still unresolved. Apart from these specific disputes, there are issue areas which also caused a chill in the bilateral relations. These mainly include religious extremism and nationalism in both nations, terrorism, propaganda against each other, both at political level but also in films, songs and TV and theatre plays. The onset of social media coupled with unprecedented growth and reach of electronic and print media results in the spreading of hatred at a wider level and with spontaneity. On the other hand, there is a positive side of this phenomenon which conveys a favourable picture of both nations to one another. But in the current tense scenario, the pugnacious aspect of this technological domain is dominating the discourse in South Asia. The chapter concludes with the impact of developments in 2019 as to how they are likely to shape the India-Pakistan conflict in near future. In terms of a long-term view of the conflict, the transformational approach will be briefly touched on.

3.2. COLONIAL ROOTS OF INDIA PAKISTAN CONFLICT

The conflict between India and Pakistan is rooted in their shared yet divisive colonial history. The present conflict dates back to the colonial past under the British viceroyalty. The Indian Subcontinent, consisting of present-day Bangladesh, India and Pakistan came under the complete British control in 1858 (Tharoor, 2016: 6). There were ethnic, tribal, linguistic, religious and cast denominations amongst this large collective of peoples. Differences along these lines existed even well before the arrival of the British in the Indian Subcontinent. But these differences were exacerbated after the establishment of the British colonial government (Tharoor, 2016: 65).

Before the arrival of British colonial administration, the Indian Subcontinent was under Muslim rule. In order to offset the influence of the Muslims, the British promoted the followers of the Hindu religion. They also promoted the Sikhs and other local religions and sects (Peter, 1996: 256). The purpose of this policy was to tighten the grip on India. This became what is considered a tested method to rule over a colonial possession - “divide and rule” (McLeod, 2002; Tharoor, 2003; Wynbrandt, 2008; Shamika, 2018). The local conditions of the Indian colony of Britain at that time were conditions of inequality, poverty, illiteracy and divisions along the lines of cast, clan and creed. The religious differences existed but were not manifest. On the other hand, India was prosperous on account of its natural and industrial wealth. According to Tharoor (2016: 5), the Indian economy, in the year 1800, was 23 percent of the world economy. This figure was more than the combined European average. When Britain left the Indian Subcontinent in 1947, the Indian economy was reduced to a paltry 3 percent of the global economy. Religious harmony was enforced rather than ensured during the rule of the Mughal Empire. Even during the last days of the Muslim rule in India, rebellious tendencies among the Hindu and Sikh communities began to exploit religion for political ends. In response, the Muslim communities also used the religious sentiments to thwart the growing Hindu threat to their ruling dispensation (Ambedkar, 1946; Ali, 1962; Pandey, 2001). Guha (1997: 3) depicts this British colonial policy to rule over its diverse Indian colony in the following words: “spurious continuity was conferred over a total rupture”.

Political developments in the united India after the arrival of British colonial rule were also tinged with religious discourse. Two main political parties/organisations/movements namely the All India Congress established in 1885 and the All India Muslim League founded in 1906 primarily pitched their respective appeals on religious grounds (Ambedkar, 1946: 239; Quraishi, 1987: 815;

Pande, 2016: 43). Even outside the fold of these two political parties, other social religious movements also added to the combustible mix of religion and politics. As a result of these religious movements, riots often broke out involving the followers of Hindu and Islamic religions. There were incidents of life loss and property damage arising out of these riots. The British colonial administration did little to quell and address these incidents and tendencies of religious violence. On their part, both Congress and the Muslim League continued to wage their political campaign in the name of religion. It was on that basis that both political parties called for separate homelands, even though Congress focused on freedom for India in its entirety from the British rule. Muslim League demanded an entirely separate country purely on the basis of religion. Muslim League feared that once India would be free from British rule, Muslims would be under Hindu domination as the latter outnumbered the former in terms of population (McLeod, 2008).

The link between religion and politics continued to exist and aggravate even after the freedom of India and Pakistan from British colonial rule. Political parties in both countries invariably bagged a large chunk of the electorate mainly in the name of religion. For their political messaging, these religious parties not only confine themselves to domestic issues, but they also ventured into foreign policy domain. In both India and Pakistan, political parties incite popular feelings by portraying each other's countries and people as enemies. For example, in India the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, during its various campaigns over a period of last three decades, always painted Pakistan in negative colours in order to secure votes from the rightist side of the socio-political spectrum. In Pakistan, one of the main focal issues is painting India as an enemy country. This sort of religio-political discourse creates hostile feelings among the masses of one country towards the people of the other country.

During the British colonial rule, the socio-economic conditions also created an environment where inter-communal tensions increased. These British policies were aimed at promoting certain industries which were meant to increase the economic output of Britain. They imported cheap raw material and then exported the finished products not only to India, but to the rest of the export destinations. That resulted in some parts of the country being more developed than other areas. Therefore, within the same country, a difference between the periphery and centre (Misra, 1999) emerged. When freedom was realised in 1947, the gap between the developed and under-developed parts in both countries became even wider. Consequently, the socio-political

milieu was affected in a way that the relations between India and Pakistan were influenced. The people of less developed cities and rural areas were easily duped by the propaganda against the other country. This went on to perpetuate the hostile environment between the two countries. In turn, it led to hard power approach resulting in arms buildup.

The hasty and unplanned departure of Britain from the Indian Subcontinent also sowed the seeds of post-independence conflict between India and Pakistan (Wolpert, 1998 & 2009; Misra, 1999; Tharoor, 2003). The Second World War sapped the imperial energy and ambitions of Britain. Consequently, it decided to leave its Indian colony. But the manner in which the British Government decided to leave did not take into consideration the local conditions. Tharoor (2003) dubbed this manner of withdrawal “untidy departure” whilst Wolpert (2009) termed it “shameful flight” and Cohen (2013) described it as “botched departure”. The partition committee consisting of Indian politicians and experts was given only 70 days to complete their task of post-British withdrawal administrative arrangements (Spinner, 2017: 167). The outcome of this haste resulted in uprooting communities and families on both sides of the border exacerbated by communal rioting.

At the time of leaving, the British sent few bureaucrats and lawyers to help negotiate the territorial boundaries and division of resources between the would-be independent states namely India and Pakistan. Those experts were not aware of the local political sensitivities, social realities and technical aspects of the issues they were dealing with. Moreover, they were hard-pressed on account of paucity of time to complete their task. As a result, they could not satisfy the opposing sides viz. Hindus and Muslims. The British left the Indian Subcontinent in August 1947 creating the two states India and Pakistan. Those two states became independent on 14 and 15 August 1947, but their borders were drawn on 17 August 1947. Ali (2017: 57) portrays this situation as “two states without borders”.

The partition of India and Pakistan was a bloody affair accompanied by mass migration. The demographic composition of the Indian Subcontinent at that time was such that a good number of Hindus were living in Pakistan and a considerable number of Muslims were living in India. The atmosphere leading up to the partition was already poisoned along religious lines. So, people from opposing sides resorted to violence against each other. Incidents of murder, rape and injury tinged the freedom of India and Pakistan from the British rule with violence and bloodletting. This bitter

memory at the time of partition also influenced the post-colonial attitude of both countries vis-à-vis each other. Therefore, the birth of India and Pakistan in 1947 was partly the outcome of conflict generated by the British departure in haste. The situation was further compounded by the religious extremism and nationalistic fervor prevalent among Hindus and Muslims, the two main communities residing in the British India. The events and memories of partition and freedom struggle greatly influenced the post-independence state building and nation formation in both India and Pakistan (Lyon, 2008; Umar, 2009; Wolpert, 2010; Keay, 2014; Ali, 2017).

3.3. POST COLONIAL AND EARLY INDEPENDENCE CRISES

India and Pakistan began their journey as free nations under the shadow of massive bloody violence. That violent episode deeply influenced their attitude towards each other. Right from the beginning, they viewed each other with deep suspicion and feelings of hostility. This wide-spread feeling of mutual hostility was among the masses and the elite leadership. The tales of harrowing sufferings told by the people on both sides of the border kept up the sense of rage and insecurity (Jalal, 2013: 19). In India there were political elements who could not reconcile to the existence of Pakistan. For them, India was a united country and must have remained so. For them Pakistan was an aberration in India's history. They hoped that one day Pakistan would rejoin the mainland India. For instance, the President of the ruling Indian National Congress Party, Acharaya Kripalani, stated on the occasion of Independence Day, "Let us henceforth bend all our energies to the unification of this land of ours" (Rizvi, 1987: 39). Echoing this line of thought an adviser to the Princely State of Bikaner, KM Panikar, stated that Hindustan (India) is an elephant and Pakistan is like two ears. An elephant can exist without ears (Khan, 2007: 87). Such sentiments and vision were mixed with anti-Pakistan populism in India. These elements also whipped up nationalistic sentiments bordering on jingoism to choke Pakistan to compel it to rejoin India (Matinuddin, 1994: 273). In Pakistan, the religiously driven circles viewed partition of British India as a temporary construct. They regaled the glory of the Muslim empire ruling over the whole Indian Subcontinent. For them their struggle would end with the establishment of Muslim rule once again over the length and breadth of India.

The initial years of freedom (late 1940s and early 1950s) witnessed the outburst of violence on borders, which in fact was a continuation of pre-partition rioting. The border skirmishes

involving the regular soldiery was also the outcome of a violence-ridden environment caused by the British dispossession of their Indian colony. Tinker (1962: 215) establishes this point by stating that till 1960, 60 percent of the Indian budget and 75 percent of Pakistan's budget was consumed by defence. The generation that grew up in both countries in that atmosphere of mutual hostility subsequently could not come out of that vicious cycle. This caused what was termed "enduring rivalry" between the two countries (Rusi, 1997). The conflict has affected all the key dimensions of interstate and societal relations of the two antagonists (Paul, 2005: 1).

Lack of governance and administrative capacity posed a big hurdle for both countries to come to terms with each other as well as with their own people. The colonial era did not allow the political participation in governance to enable the native political consciousness to grow. When under pressure by the native resistance and their own waning colonial ambitions, the British initiated a process of political reform in India - it was too late and too little for local empowerment and awareness. Vakil (1951; Tharoor, 2003; Wolpert, 2010) argues that British policy which diverted local resources towards defence and law and order ignored material development. Consequently, when India and Pakistan became free, they had to build the political system from a scratch. The British parliamentary system was adopted but without the necessary political, social and economic prerequisites. The outcome of this half-baked adoption of an alien political system was political instability and parochialism along regional, tribal, clannish and cast lines.

When the Governments in both countries could not meet the expectations of the masses, they whipped up the enemy image. By doing so, they intended to divert the popular frustration generated by the failure of governance and administration (Griffiths, 1952; Cohen, 2013: 29). The atmosphere, which was already charged because of fresh partition wounds, was readily receptive to such policies and utterances. In both states there were elements which tried to gain advantage by creating the enemy image of the other country (Cohen, 2013). In doing so, the perception of India in Pakistan and vice versa was of sworn foe. Walker (2014) poetically describes this acrimony in these words, "partition continued even after partition". The feeling and gesture of patriotism was intermixed with nationalistic fervor was fed by anti-sloganeering and propaganda (Malik, 1963: 294; Misra, 2010: 89). Both countries were hard-pressed on the front of running a smooth administration. They could, therefore, not attend to a political environment that smacked of populism.

The migration factor played a crucial part in determining the state policy and forming a social fabric in India and Pakistan immediately after the independence. At the time of partition in 1947, approximately 15 million people were uprooted from their homes and migrated on both sides. Wolpert (2010: 51) termed it the largest mass migration in the world on account of its scale and the circumstances underpinning it. It was not only displacement of people, the accompanying violence, abduction and rape of women made it all the more agonizing (Naumana, 2017: 165). The settlement of migrants and allocation of land resources also created unwanted scenario. The native residents were initially generous in welcoming the incoming migrants. But later on, there was tension between the migrants and native population. This also affected the attitude of both countries towards each other.

Security took precedence over development in both India and Pakistan following their independence. Both states, right from the beginning, resorted to arms buildup and hence got locked in an interminable arms race. They began to import arms from Western countries. The Soviet Union also supplied arms to India, whereas the US sold weapons to Pakistan. In the 1950s and 1960s, security became the main preoccupation of both states, chipping away at the attention and resources for the essential process of nation building and state formation. During the initial two decades after freedom, 60 percent of India's budget was consumed by defence and 75 percent of Pakistan's budget was absorbed by the defence sector (Tinker, 1967: 215; Jalal, 2008: 43).

In Pakistan, the focus on security led towards consolidation of the military rule. Civilian bureaucracy and military were trained in the British ethos under the British institutions. After independence, these two segments of state machinery had their say in defining a security paradigm for Pakistan. Moreover, the political class was not fully mature and was divided within itself. This provided the military to interfere in the politics of Pakistan. Ultimately, in 1958, the military in Pakistan launched a coup d'état dismissing the civilian government. Ever since, Pakistan has been either directly or indirectly under military rule and influence (Rizvi, 1987; Jalal, 1990; Cheema, 2002; Cohen, 2008; Waseem, 2016). In India, there was no outright military coup uprooting the civilian government. But the animosity towards Pakistan, confrontation with China and sporadic internal rebellions, gave the military a strong voice in the affairs of statecraft. Hence in both states military had a tangible role in deciding foreign policy and shaping domestic political contours.

Added to the prevalent security situation was the religious rhetoric in both nations. The religious organisations and political parties continued the pre-partition religious agendas and discourse. In fact, after partition, the religious element in the socio-political makeup of India and Pakistan became more potent. Religion was employed to construct a monolithic image of the state in Pakistan as it was pitched as the most common factor among the citizenry (Talbot, 2012: 181). In India secularism was the declared state policy. But underneath, at social level, religion played a crucial role in mundane political life. For instance, in India, the founding father Mahatma Gandhi, was murdered by a religious zealot from Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh as he called for a benign approach towards Pakistan (Wolpert, 2001: 256). In Pakistan the concept of Jihad was exploited to meet the secular ends and its main target was India. Therefore, religion became a battle cry for whipping nationalistic sentiment in a precarious security situation between the two countries (Jalal, 2008: 279).

The issues and problems discussed above created the biggest challenge for Pakistan and India after their independence. That challenge was the process of state building and nation building. Pakistan, being a smaller country, with diverse social denominations along the lines of language, cast and ethnicity, faced more serious problems in state and nation building. India too faced the herculean task of constructing a cohesive state and nationhood once free from the British rule. But the country was able to mitigate the effects of failure while forging a state and nation in unison with each other. Both countries employed different policies to inject unity as a nation among their populations. One of those measures was raising the bogey of external enemy. Hence Pakistan raised the fear of Indian hegemony and India spread the fear of Pakistan's collusion with anti-India countries to thwart its independence. In doing so, both countries ended up creating the enemy image of each other, which exacerbated the conflictive environment prevailing between them (Rehman, 1996; Qayyum, 2019).

3.4 UNRESOLVED DISPUTES GENERATING CONFLICT

Disputes arose between India and Pakistan no sooner than they won their independence from the colonial rule of Britain. These disputes resulted in a conflict situation between them and despite pledges from the top leadership of both countries to live in peace with each other, the enmity became deeply embedded. Mistrust, accompanied by the bitter episode of partition, engendered a mentality which strengthened war like attitude on both sides. Moreover, the political elite in both

countries was not skilled and trained to negotiate to resolve interstate disputes. They knew only the politics of agitation and not accommodation because of confrontation with the colonial rulers.

The first dispute that broke out between the two states right after their independence was related to the princely states. There were 562 princely states in South Asia during the British rule (Cohen, 2013: 82). These princely states covered almost 45 percent of the landmass of the British Indian Subcontinent (Jones, 2002: 58). These small princely states pledged their allegiance directly to the British rulers and were treated distinctly by the colonial rulers. However, when Britain withdrew from the South Asian Subcontinent, these small princely states had to decide their future. Since they were too small to exist independently in the neighbourhood of the two large countries, they had to either join India or Pakistan. While deciding their future, they mainly took into consideration their geographic proximity, the wishes of their people and whims of their rulers (Menon, 1955; Wirsing, 2008).

There were four princely states whose cases caused controversy between India and Pakistan at the time of independence. They included the State of Hyderabad, the State of Junagadh, the State of Minawadar and the State of Kashmir. These autonomous states played a crucial role in stamping the British writ in India (Lyon, 2008; Wolpert, 2010; Zahid, 2012). They were also sizable in terms of population and territory. For instance, the State of Kashmir was the size of France and the State of Hyderabad equaled Italy in terms of population (Walker, 2014). Due to geographic proximity to India and the proclivity of their rulers towards India, the issue of princely States of Junagadh, Hyderabad and Minawadar was settled without much controversy. Albeit it evinced a strong response from Pakistan. Where the rulers of Hyderabad and Junagadh hesitated to join India, they were crushed by the might of Indian forces (Dixit, 2002; Zahid, 2012). Kashmir, however, presented a different scenario. It laid in close proximity to Pakistan. Its population was of Muslim majority, but its ruler was a Sikh. The demarcation of the boundary in Punjab was done in such a way by the British arbiter that India received a strategic land strip connecting it with Kashmir. When the Kashmiri ruler and population clashed with each other about deciding its future accession with India or Pakistan, the former invaded and forcefully got the territory acceded to it. The case of Kashmir is so complicated in the conflict between the two countries that it has been given separate consideration in the following pages. The forcible annexation of the princely states and unresolved dispute about the State of Kashmir generated subsequent tensions between India

and Pakistan culminating in the wars of 1948, 1965, 1971 and a limited war in 1999 (Indurthy, 2019: 1).

The drawing of territorial boundaries by the departing British arbiters left a bitter trail and sown seeds of conflict between India and Pakistan. The personnel employed by the British Administration for the purpose of carving out demarcation lines was neither qualified nor aware of local topographic and demographic sensitivities and realities (Wolpert, 2010). Moreover, the paucity of time to complete such a herculean task further compounded the already tricky situation. The boundaries which were drawn in the Province of Punjab overnight rendered the settlers as foreigners. That also resulted in chaotic migration as people were neither ready, nor willing to leave their native places (Chester, 2002). In Punjab, the District of Gurdaspur became controversial on account of its close geographic link with the Princely State of Kashmir. The Radcliffe Boundary Commission allotted the District to India to which Pakistan objected bitterly (Nawaz, 2008). This decision later on confirmed Pakistan's fears when India sent its ground forces to Kashmir in October 1947 to help the native ruler of Kashmir (Lyon, 2008: 135).

On the Eastern side, boundaries were drawn partitioning the Provinces of Bengal and Assam. That demarcation line sowed the seeds of a war that occurred between India and Pakistan in 1971 resulting in the creation of another independent country named Bangladesh (Matinuddin, 1994: 423). The arbitrary demarcation of boundaries did not allow India and Pakistan to negotiate on their own as to how to deal with this issue and the subsequent migration of people as a corollary of partition. The mistrust at the time of partition was so deeply rooted and widespread between the Hindus and Muslims that the negotiated demarcation of boundaries was an uphill task. But, on the other hand, they could have talked to each other about these issues and could have avoided or reduced the impact of uprooting of the population. The subsequent wars and border skirmishes have a lot to do with the arbitrary and controversial boundary demarcation. In the initial years of freedom, this issue put both nations at odds with each other to create mistrust, which could not be adequately addressed in years to follow.

The division of resources left by the British colonial administration was another post-independence crisis facing the two nations. That issue not only strained their bilateral relations, it also adversely impacted the governance machinery and administrative apparatus in both countries. Since the British colonial government had its seat in New Delhi (present day India), so the bulk of

colonial resources were situated within the Indian territory. The unplanned and half-baked executed British departure from their Indian colony complicated the task of division of those resources equitably and justly (Chester, 2002).

The Second World War sapped the economic resources of Britain. The consequences of those economic difficulties in Britain were also felt by its Indian colony. British private firms pulled out from India whereas the public exchequer was ill-prepared to execute the division of assets and resources (Spate, 2017: 323-324). However, after independence both countries attempted to settle the outstanding amount of assets and liabilities left over from their colonial past. But they could not break the deadlock sparking distrust leading to the generation of conflictive scenario.

Water disputes, which emerged right after freedom, added to the explosive mix of issues which put both India and Pakistan at odds. As the geography of both countries are concerned, Pakistan happens to be the lower riparian for 5 rivers that flow from India. The irrigation system of Pakistan mainly relies on river water. The economic activity of Pakistan also relies on water as the bulk of country's electricity comes from hydro power generation systems. In 1948, one year after independence, India stopped the water flow to Pakistan (Quraishi, 2016). Accompanying that action, there were statements to the effect that Pakistan would be forced to go hungry. The Indian measure was like rubbing salt to injury as partition wounds were not completely healed by then.

Discussions started in order to resolve the water dispute. The issue was temporarily settled as both countries reached an understanding to let the water flow without any hindrance. Permanent settlement, however, could not be reached until the year 1960 when the Indus Water Treaty/IWT was concluded with the help of the World Bank (Quraishi, 2017). The IWT is an example of successful conflict management and resolution between the two countries. However, with the passage of time, differences about water sharing kept arising because of climatic changes and sporadic tensions. According to Shaysta (2014), the water issue has a security dimension of conventional nature between the two countries.

The crises and disputes that erupted between India and Pakistan during the first decade of freedom created the conflictive environment affecting their subsequent bilateral interaction. Some of these disputes such as water disputes and the division of resources were resolved, but others

like the Kashmir dispute could not be solved. Unsolved disputes, along with new disputes, constantly keep the relations between India and Pakistan tense. On the other hand, both countries have been engaged in negotiations to manage their tensions. These negotiations sometimes produced results whereas, at other times, they could not break the impasse on a particular point. But efforts at conflict management formed the corner stone of foreign policy of India and Pakistan once they began their journey as independent nations.

3.5. THE ROLE OF OUTSIDE ACTORS

The India-Pakistan conflict is such a multidimensional and deep-rooted affair that it always attracted outside attention. That outside attention had far-reaching implications for both countries. Chester (2002) posits that the Muslims and Hindus were having conflicts in pre-1947 India, but after 1947 the conflict was internationalised by India and Pakistan. The role of outside powers in this conflict happens to be from within the region as well as far beyond the region. It mainly involves the UN, the US, Britain, Russia, China and the rest of the international community. Different actors got involved for different reasons at different periods. Britain was the first outside actor that became involved in the conflict due to historic reasons, as it was the colonial power in the united India. Subsequently, other above-mentioned players were engaged with both countries. That outside involvement sometimes exacerbated the conflict whereas on some occasions they were instrumental in mitigating the rivalry (Jalal, 2002; Wolpert, 2010; Cohen, 2013). Both India and Pakistan at times welcomed the outside role to help overcome their rivalry. But, several times, they could not reach consensus as to how to align their actions and policies to outside involvement. India insists that the disputes with Pakistan have to be solved through a bilateral approach and platforms. On the other hand, Pakistan welcomes both bilateral and multilateral platforms to resolve the outstanding disputes (Cohen, 2013). The disagreement about the outside role and different motives of these actors also perpetuated the conflict between India and Pakistan.

The British role in the India-Pakistan conflict dates back to its colonial rule. Immediately after its withdrawal, the two countries could not reconcile with their differences and fell victim to a war-like environment. Britain tried to play a mediatory role, but it could not convince both nations to overcome their territorial and other minor disputes (Wolpert, 2010: 23). In India, Britain was viewed as tilted towards Pakistan as the latter joined the Western alliances, namely, SEATO-

South East Asia Treaty Organisation and CENTO/Central Treaty Organisation. Both these treaties were aimed at containing the Soviet influence in the South, South East and West Asia (Jabeen and Mazhar, 2011). On the other hand, Pakistan distrusted Britain on account of Viceroy Mountbatten's predilection towards India.

During the two wars between India and Pakistan in 1965 and 1971 Britain attempted to play some role to commensurate for its past influence in both countries, but could not do so. In India, Britain was seen favouring Pakistan whereas in Pakistan the perception was that Britain was responsible for creating discord with India. The British influence was subsequently reduced owing to its declining global profile and regional interests in South Asia. Moreover, the Chinese and Soviet footprint in South Asia nudged both India and Pakistan towards them. The US involvement in the South Asian region also decreased the British influence and clout. Britain, however, continues to play a marginal role in mitigating the India-Pakistan rivalry. Both countries share the platform of the British commonwealth, which happens to be among other shared multilateral forums. Both countries have sizable expatriate populations settled in Britain, which also keeps the country involved in South Asia. The colonial legacy also keeps Britain engaged with India and Pakistan in ironing out their differences and resolving their conflicts.

The United Nations has been dealing with the India-Pakistan conflict for the last seven decades. Soon after their independence, both countries resorted to the UN platform to resolve their differences. At that time, the UN had only existed for three years. So, the conflict between India and Pakistan also became a litmus test for the UN to live up to its charter. The UN charter stated that the organisation will ensure global peace and security based on respect for mutual sovereignty and integrity. It was India that took the dispute on Kashmir to the UN Security Council on 1 January 1948 under article 35 of the UN charter. In response, Pakistan also lodged a complaint to the UNSC under article 35 complaining about Indian hostilities (Rajan, 2005: 6). Subsequent to these two complaints, the UN appointed a commission to investigate the dispute and help both countries to reach a solution. The UNCIP/United Nations Commission on India and Pakistan was established on 20 January 1948 following a UNSC resolution for the purpose. The UNCIP started its work in June 1948 and worked till March 1950 (Sarwar, 1960). The Commission held extensive discussions with both countries and visited them a few times. The UNCIP proposed a plebiscite under the UN auspices to determine the will of the people of Kashmir, whether they wished to join

India or Pakistan or prefer to opt for independence (Majid, Abbas & Kousar, 2019). During those years, the UN primarily focused on managing and resolving conflicts between states. So, with respect to India and Pakistan it persuaded both countries to establish a ceasefire line along their borders and subsequently resolve their disputes.

The India-Pakistan conflict was actively pursued at the UN forum in the decade of 1950s, but the stalemate could not be broken. After initial deliberations at the UN during 1950s, the India-Pakistan conflict became dormant. There are three factors that contributed to the diminishing importance of the India-Pakistan conflict at the UN. a.) the UN began to receive more interstate conflicts and assisted in their management and resolution. b.) the superpower tussle between the Soviet Union and the US at the UN also impacted the UN mandate to help resolve the India-Pakistan conflict. Due to Cold War calculations, the Soviet Union sided with India and the US took the side of Pakistan. c.) India also refused to abide by the UN resolutions to hold a referendum in Kashmir to allow the Kashmiris to express their will. As the time passed by, Pakistan continued to refer to the UN resolutions to resolve the Kashmir dispute with India, but India insisted on a bilateral platform for the resolution of disputes with Pakistan. In their bilateral accord in the wake of the 1971 war, both countries pledged to achieve lasting peace under the UN principles (Sattar, 2003.) As the violence in Kashmir grew in 1980s and 1990s, which Pakistan termed as a freedom struggle, and India perceived as separatism, the UN responded by persuading both countries to solve Kashmir and other disputes. In the year 2019 after the hiatus of 48 years, the UN again took up the India-Pakistan conflict on Kashmir in a consultation session. This measure was prompted by the India-Pakistan border confrontation around Kashmir. The UN called for calm between the two countries and asked them to settle their disputes peacefully (News 24, 17 August 2019). In a nutshell, the UN acted as a platform for discussion for both countries to vent their anger, exchange views and reach a global audience. But it was constrained to affect a solution for the India-Pakistan conflict.

Among the outside actors vis-a-vis India-Pakistan relations in general and their conflict in particular, the US role is the most significant. This assertion is explained by the following four factors: a.) the rising US profile in global affairs after the end of Second World War. b.) Proximity of India and Pakistan to the principal rival of the US namely the Soviet Union during the Cold War. c.) Pakistan's reliance on the US for economic and military aid after its independence. d.)

India's refusal to join the US and Soviet Union and its decision to join the so-called nonaligned block (Choudhury, 1995; Kux, 2001).

The US role in South Asia can be broken down into three periods, namely the Cold War years, post-Cold War era and post 9/11 period. During the Cold War, the US was allied with Pakistan but at the same time did not totally write off India. President Eisenhower of the US declared Pakistan "the most allied ally" (Kux, 2001). But the US policymakers took care that they should not offend India to the extent that their relations get to a point of no return. This US policy prompted Pakistani leadership to conclude that the US is not reliable enough in the face of adversity (Haqani, 2013). On the other hand, there was resentment in India that the US is supporting Pakistan in its militaristic posturing towards it (Padmanabhan, 2016). This Cold War conundrum of mixed ties among the three countries began to be solved with the end of the Cold War. In post-Cold War years, the US began to open up towards India. The US slapped sanctions on Pakistan on account of its covert nuclear programme (Kux, 2001; Sattar, 2007). During the same years, India began to liberalise its economy and the commercial ties between the US and India started to expand. The armed struggle in Kashmir also picked up momentum in the 1990s. India blamed it on Pakistan and termed it terrorism. Pakistan refuted the allegations and argued that it was an indigenous freedom struggle of the people of Kashmir. The US also pressurised Pakistan to clamp down on terrorists and militants who were active in Afghanistan and other parts of South and Central Asia. The US was upset with both India and Pakistan when they carried out nuclear tests in May 1998. Sanctions were imposed on both countries, but these were relaxed as the US needed Pakistan's assistance in its war against terrorism after 9/11 (Hussain, 2008). With India the economic interests of the US prodded it to lift the sanctions.

The current trajectory of the US towards India and Pakistan is marked by the policy of de-hyphenation. During the Cold War, the US treated India and Pakistan alike and the policy was dubbed as hyphenation. However, after the end of the Cold War and post 9/11, the US has delinked India and Pakistan (Sattar, 2007). This policy is consequential for India-Pakistan conflictive relations. The US treats India as a counterpoise to China (Malone, 2011; Tharoor, 2011; Padmanabhan, 2016) whereas Pakistan is clubbed with Afghanistan on account of a raging Muslim militancy (Sridhar, 2005; Hussain, 2008; Rashid, 2008; Sanger, 2009). The capture of Osama Bin Laden, the most wanted terrorist in the world from Pakistani soil in May 2011, heightened the

tensions between the US and Pakistan (Rashid, 2013: 3). Consequently, the US is keeping Pakistan under scrutiny regarding its policies towards the Muslim militant groups operating both in Pakistan and Afghanistan. This emboldens India to keep the conflict with Pakistan alive as the US remains skeptical towards Pakistan. In Pakistan there is a feeling that the US's economic and military support to India has disturbed the strategic balance in South Asia. Consequently, Pakistan is looking towards China, Russia and some Middle Eastern nations to offset the growing Indian economic and military might (Mustafa, 2016; Boni, 2020). The current US President Donald Trump offered to mediate between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir dispute. He made that offer during his meeting with the Pakistani Prime minister Imran Khan in July 2019 in Washington. Trump repeated the offer to mediate between the two countries during his visit to India in February 2020 as well.

The Soviet Union's attitude towards the Indian Subcontinent was skeptical at best due to its past British colonial era. During the initial years of independence, Indian and Pakistani ruling elites were oriented towards the US and other Western countries. But it was a matter of few years when India began to lean towards the Soviet Union and Pakistan tilted towards the US. Choudhury (1995) terms it as "India turned left, and Pakistan turned right". This partisanship arising out of the Cold War environment also hardened Indian and Pakistani positions towards each other. For instance, when the Kashmir dispute was again brought up to the UN Security Council in February 1957, the Soviet Union exercised, for the first time, its veto to stop a resolution about resolving the dispute (Choudhry, 1995: 43).

Soviet policy towards both India and Pakistan altered in the 1960s and 1970s. In Pakistan there was disillusionment with the US on account of unmet expectations (Khan, 1967). Pakistan's domestic political environment also underwent a change and the left-leaning government opened up towards the Soviet Union which was responded to in good measure (Dobell, 1969). But at the same time, the Soviet Union inked a military pact with India in 1971. The 1980s witnessed another hostile period between Pakistan and the Soviet Union owing to Jihad in Afghanistan, which resulted in the Soviet defeat. After the end of the Cold War, relations between Russia and Pakistan remained tepid whereas with India its ties continued to grow. In the present days, Russia enjoys cordial relations with India and Pakistan is also trying to improve relations with Russia. Russia shares the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation with both India and Pakistan. It also conducted joint

military exercises with India and Pakistan in 2018 named “peaceful mission” (Khan, 2019). The Russian involvement in the South Asian region is in competition with the US and both have influenced the conflict dynamics in the past and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

Chinese interests and relations with India and Pakistan also shaped their rivalry. China, in one respect, was directly involved in the conflict dynamics between India and Pakistan which is related to the disputed territory of Kashmir. China and India fought a border war in 1962 and the tensions springing from that border confrontation have not fully subsided (Ganguli, 2004: 103-104). During the 1950s and 1960s China was aloof from world politics partly due to its own domestic compulsions and partly because of the Western opposition to recognise its existence as a separate state. That situation altered in 1971 when there was a rapprochement between China and the US, which was facilitated by Pakistan when the US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger undertook a secret visit to China via Pakistan (Kux, 2001). Chinese introvert foreign policy behaviour began to change after its recognition by the Western World in the 1970s. In terms of the Chinese increasing interaction with India and Pakistan, its attitude was shaped by regional and global factors. The US’s cooling down towards Pakistan and warming up to India in last two decades also influenced Chinese calculations vis-à-vis South Asia. China further consolidated its relations with Pakistan and lent critical support to it in its disputes with India (Zaki, 2010). On the contrary, India and China increased their economic relations, but their political tensions kept influencing the relations (Tharoor, 2011). China has made Pakistan a central plank in its ambitious Road and Belt Initiative which irks India. This China-Pakistan venture is likely to increase Pakistan-India tensions as the latter objects that part of this venture passes through the disputed territory whose fate is yet to be decided (Small, 2015).

The international community, which includes but not limited to international NGOs, civil society, peace advocacy networks, multilateral platforms and forums and conventional and social media have played their part to persuade both India and Pakistan to resolve their outstanding disputes. Both these South Asian countries share regional and global multilateral platforms where they interact with each other. These forums sometimes acted to reduce the hostility between the two nations. For instance, the 11th SAARC Summit in Kathmandu Nepal in September 2002 brought the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan together when their forces were deployed in

direct confrontation. The 12th SAARC Summit in Islamabad Pakistan in January 2004 resulted in resumption of stalled peace talks after five years.

There are peace advocacy networks and study groups which analyse the India-Pakistan conflict and call on both countries from time to time to settle their conflicts. These networks and platforms appeal the conscience of people instead of focusing their energies on governments (Kutti, 2004: 43). The rise of social media also made the communication easy and seamless among the people of both countries. This has helped to initiate a direct discussion between the public of the two countries. This sometimes produces unpalatable outcomes as political hostility pervades the public discourse. The India-Pakistan conflict is such a multifaceted affair that it always involves domestic, public, regional and global powers. This involvement at times nudges both countries to decrease the tension around a particular incident. But largely these outside countries interact with India and Pakistan to ensure their own national interests and fulfil their own regional and global ambitions. As a result, the India-Pakistan conflict never reached a comprehensive resolution albeit some bilateral disputes were settled with outside assistance.

3.6. ATTEMPTS AT CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

India and Pakistan achieved freedom in August 1947 and two months after that, in October, both countries were fighting a war. The reason for the first Indo-Pak war was the territory of Kashmir which is still the main dispute between the two nations. India resorted to the UN lodging the complaint of Pakistan's invasion. In response, Pakistan also made a complaint about Indian atrocities against its Muslim minority and its aggressive behaviour on the border. Since the complaints from both India and Pakistan were lodged under article 35 of the UN charter which deals with pacific settlement of conflicts, the UN employed conflict management mechanisms. Consequently, a commission was established to study the India-Pakistan conflict and tasked with managing this conflict. The UN called on both countries to affect ceasefire and established a ceasefire line between the two countries. The CFL was subsequently turned into Line of Control/LOC by both nations. The UN also set up an observer mission termed the UN Military Observers Group for India and Pakistan. The UNMOGIP has been monitoring the activities of India and Pakistan along border for the last seven decades. It reports to the UN if there is hostile action or likelihood thereof prompted by either country. The UN from, time to time, urges both

nations to resolve their conflicts. In the latest such persuasion, the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterez in his visit to Pakistan on 15-18 February 2020, asked India and Pakistan to de-escalate the situation both “militarily and verbally” (Dawn, 16 February 2020). When war broke out between India and Pakistan in 1965, the UN passed a resolution emphasising the need to halt war and address the underlying causes of conflict.

Apart from the UN, the major powers whose role in respect of the India-Pakistan conflict was analysed in the previous section, also played their part in conflict management exercised between the two countries. For instance, the Soviet Union played a crucial role to reduce bilateral tension in the wake of the 1965 Indo-Pak war which was the largest armed interstate conflict after the end of Second World War (Bratersky, 2016). Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygen invited President of Pakistan, Muhammad Ayub Khan and Indian Premier Lal Bahadur Shastri, to Tashkent and himself acted as a mediator. After a weeklong negotiating, the two leaders were able to reach an understanding known as the Tashkent Declaration signed on 10 January 1966 (Khan, 1967). In addition to clauses dealing with stopping the war, the Agreement also contained a clause whereby both countries were committed to refrain from adverse propaganda against each other and respect each other’s territorial integrity (Pakistan Treaty Series, 2009: Volume 3, 482).

The Indo-Pak war of 1971 also brought outside actors to bear on them to cease hostilities. During the tension leading to the third India-Pakistan war, the US President Richard Nixon made a telephone call to the British Prime Minister Edward Heath on 26 November 1971. In that call Nixon asked the British Premier to provide good offices to bring about a constructive solution to the problems between the two countries (Dawn, 27 November 1971). That particular war was more devastating as it resulted in the dismemberment of Pakistan leading to another independent state, Bangladesh out of East Pakistan. During the war, the US exerted pressure on India to desist from assault in Eastern Pakistan. But the Soviet Union openly sided with India and concluded a Treaty of Friendship with India in the same year. On the other hand, China offered support to Pakistan albeit only at politico-diplomatic level. Chinese Minister for Machine Building, Mr. Li Shui-Ching, declared that “the Chinese government and people will, as always, firmly support the Pakistan government and people in their just struggle to defend their state sovereignty and national interest” (Dawn, 25 November 1971).

When the war came to an end, India and Pakistan engaged in dialogue to settle the issue of war prisoners and the territory. This was an illustration of conflict management at bilateral level. The outcome of this was the Shimla Accord signed in June 1973. Article 1 of the agreement stipulated that both countries would take steps to end their conflict, establish durable peace and devote their resources for welfare of the masses. They further pledged that they would address the basic causes which have bedeviled their relations for the last 25 years (Pakistan Treaty Series, 2009: Volume 4, 482). Following the Simla Agreement, relations were steady for two years but the first Indian nuclear tests in May 1974 created another tension point between the two countries. Both countries, however, kept up their engagement at diplomatic level throughout the decade of the 1970s. This resulted in the signing of few agreements which were beneficial for improving bilateral ties. These agreements included the Pakistan India Agreement relating to the exchange of postal articles, September 1974, Agreement on Visa, September 1974, Pakistan India Agreement on visit to religious shrines, September 1974 and Pakistan India Agreement on telecommunication, September 1974 (Pakistan Treaty Series: 2009). These agreements enhanced people to people contact aimed at reducing political tensions. As part of conflict management, these arrangements subsequently proved to be salutary in times of crises.

During the 1980s, both countries witnessed critical ups and downs in their relations. Pakistan was consumed by the Soviet US proxy war in Afghanistan. Pakistan played a crucial role in the defeat of Soviet Union in Afghanistan with the US resources for which it was a conduit. India at that time was allied with Soviet Union under a bilateral treaty arrangement signed earlier in 1971. Therefore, the India-Pakistan conflict did not stand any chance of settlement. On the other hand, India and Pakistan were able to sign some more agreements to improve their ties. These agreements included Agreement on Consular Access, November 1982, Protocol on Group Tourism, May 1985, Agreement on Agriculture, July 1985, Agreement on Establishing SAARC Secretariat, November 1986, Cultural Cooperation Agreement, December 1988 and Agreement on Prohibition of Attacks Against Nuclear Installations and Facilities, December 1988 (Pakistan Treaty Series: 2009). The range of these agreements covers strategic as well as diplomatic, political and public interest domains. Agreement regarding nuclear installations and facilities demonstrated both country's overt acknowledgement of research for acquiring and protecting nuclear weapons.

There was one occasion during the winter season of 1986-87 when both countries were on the verge of war. The crisis was sparked by India's massive military exercise termed Brasstacks along the border with Pakistan. The location of this massive Indian military deployment in its state of Rajasthan was only 50 kilometers away from Southern Pakistan. In response, Pakistan also deployed its military along the border, resulting in war posturing between the two countries (Sattar, 2007: 194-195). The tension was reduced when Pakistani military ruler General Zia travelled to India to watch a cricket match along with the Indian Premier Rajiv Gandhi, thus giving birth to what is known as cricket diplomacy (Misra, 2010: 52). Another related point of contention between the two countries came from the violent insurgency in the Indian part of Kashmir. India accused Pakistan of orchestrating violence in Kashmir whereas Pakistan denied the allegation. The situation in Kashmir resulted in the chill between the two countries throughout 1990s which peaked in nuclear tests by both nations in May 1998.

Despite overt hostility and propaganda wars waged during 1990s, both nations also undertook to manage their conflict. In 1997, for the first time, they started a well-coordinated dialogue on all issues of contention. There were a total of 8 issue areas which came under discussion for amicable resolution at a bilateral platform. These included Peace and security including CBMs, Jammu and Kashmir, Siachen, Wullar Barrage Project/Tultbul Navigation Project, Sir Creek, Terrorism and drug-trafficking, Economic and Commercial Cooperation, and the Promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields (Sattar, 2007: 312). Essentially, it was a sectoral dialogue where experts and bureaucrats attempted to iron out their differences and then respective ministers were brought in at political level. These discussions were termed as composite dialogue and continued for two years when a limited war broke out between the two countries in Kargil, a mountainous territory in Indian Kashmir in May-June 1999. The Kargil war between the two nuclear neighbours continued for 55 days and reportedly both countries readied their nuclear weapons for launch (Anikat, 2013: 15). According to Misra (2010: 5), this dialogue was aimed at resolving territorial and resources issues but was also aimed at changing perceptions on both sides. In the meantime, a civilian government was toppled in Pakistan and in India a right-wing Hindu extremist Bharitiya Janata Party came to rule the country. As for the Kargil war, it was the US which compelled Pakistan to withdraw. Consequently, Pakistani forces were withdrawn but the affair left another bitter trail in the bilateral relations.

In June 2001, a summit between Pakistani military President Pervez Musharraf and the Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee attempted to break the ice around the sticky issues. It was hoped that since the military is the most powerful state actor in Pakistan and the BJP is the right-wing populist political force in India, both leaders were in position to take tough decisions to resolve their problems and manage their tense ties. But the Summit ended with no substantive solution. According to Dixit (2002: 408), the Agra Summit proved to be a failure in both “ambience and substance”. Six months after the Agra Summit, a militant attack targeted the Indian Parliament in December 2001. The attack was carried out by a militant group named Jesh-e-Muhammad based in Pakistan. India blamed Pakistan as JeM operated from Pakistan. Pakistan denied the allegation of state sponsorship and responded that it was a non-state actor having nothing to do with state institutions. India deployed its forces along the border with Pakistan in an attack mode. Pakistan also deployed its troops to respond to any assault. This direct confrontation of troop deployment continued for the next 18 months with the possibility of war between the two nuclear neighbours. Considering the gravity of the situation, the outside powers once again intervened to calm down the tense situation. This time, the US used its economic influence as it asked its multinationals to pull out their stakes from India and Pakistan. Other Western countries also indicated their economic withdrawal from the region. Because of these pressures, both countries pulled back their troops followed by the resumption of dialogue. The breakthrough for resuming the stalled negotiations came in January 2004 when the Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee traveled to Pakistan to participate in the SAARC Summit. Following that thaw, both countries started a range of confidence building measures. They decided to open up the border along Kashmir for trade. A bus service also started between the Pakistan side of Kashmir and the Indian side of Kashmir termed Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service. In total, there were four rounds of composite dialogue between 2004-2008 (Misra, 2010: 23).

Another tremor in the bilateral relations between India and Pakistan came on 26 November 2008. On that day, Muslim militants struck the commercial capital of India, Mumbai. In that attack, 166 people were killed including foreigners. The people responsible for those attacks happened to be from Pakistan (Riedel, 2013). India rang alarm bells for war. Pakistan denied its official backing of the militants and dubbed them non-state actors. However, there could be no denial that Pakistan’s soil was used. The threat of war averted partly by the engagement and restraint at

bilateral level and partly by outside involvement. But the Mumbai attacks left a taste of bitterness which could not be neutralised even till present day.

Both countries successfully managed their tensions after the Mumbai attacks. They resumed their negotiations obstructed by the Mumbai attacks but initially could not agree on the format and structure of these talks. The breakthrough came when the Prime Ministers of India Manmohan Singh and of Pakistan Yusuf Raza Gilani met on the sidelines of Nonalignment Movement/NAM Summit in Sharm al Sheikh in Egypt in August 2009. But it took 3 more years for the countries to initiate discussions for resolving their outstanding disputes (Anikat, 2013: 17).

In May 2013, newly elected Prime Minister of Pakistan invited the Indian Premier Manmohan Singh to his oath-taking ceremony, but Manmohan did not come. However, in May 2014 when the newly elected Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi invited Pakistani Premier Nawaz Sharif for his swearing-in ceremony, the latter accepted the invitation and went to attend the event (Effendi & Choudhry, 2016: 197). This generated another hope for improving the bilateral relations. But the euphoria generated by these atmospherics did not last long despite foreign secretary level talks in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan in March 2015. Both sides shared concerns with each other and agreed on continuation of dialogue in the future (Quoted from minutes of Foreign Secretary level meeting in Pakistan foreign office). As the diplomats and officials from both sides were trying to repair their broken ties in last few years, an unexpected incident once again spoiled all the goodwill. On 2 January 2016, a militant attack on an Indian airbase in the town of Pathankot resulted in deaths and injuries of Indian military personnel. India blamed the attack on Pakistan which the latter vehemently denied. Pakistan not only denied its involvement in the attack, rather it offered to cooperate in the investigation (Joshi, 7 January 2016). Both countries got into crisis management mode after the Pathankot incident. Just a few months down the road, another similar but more lethal attack targeted the Indian army camp in Uri, a town in Indian Kashmir causing deaths and injuries on a wider scale. India again blamed Pakistan which was categorically rejected by Pakistan. This time India claimed to have carried out surgical strikes across the international border into Pakistan. Pakistan refuted Indian claims (India Today, 18 September 2019). The war of words continued well into 2017 and 2018. In 2018 there was a political change in Pakistan. After the general elections, former cricket captain Mr. Imran Khan emerged victorious and became Prime Minister of the country. In his victory speech, the Prime

Minister designate Mr. Khan stated that if India takes one step towards peace with Pakistan, then we would take two steps. The Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, also congratulated Mr. Khan and expressed willingness to work for peace and progress in the South Asian region. This warm gesturing met a chilling freeze in 2019 when at one point both countries came to blows on the international border. The developments of 2019 will be analysed separately in section 3.11.

3.7. ATTEMPTS AT CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The previous section discussed at length how both India and Pakistan attempted to manage their conflict. The assessment included how these countries dealt with bilateral relations with conflict scenarios at various points of time. In fact, their approach towards each other during peace time was aimed at mitigating their rivalry. This section takes an aim at conflict resolution attempts undertaken by both countries during their existence in last 7 decades. There are two particular conflicts that both countries have been able to resolve, namely water dispute and a small territorial dispute at the Rann of Kuch, a marshy land. Both these conflicts will be analysed against the backdrop of conflict resolution mechanisms and approaches adopted by both nations.

Conflict became a defining paradigm of the India-Pakistan attitude and relations since their freedom. But on the other hand, motivated on their own and pushed and persuaded by the outside regional and global players, both countries undertook to manage and resolve their conflicts. In terms of conflict resolution, the first conflict which was resolved was related to distribution and division of water. The conflict was settled in September 1960 after an arbitration award handed down by the World Bank. But it was not mere outside involvement culminating in arbitration, rather there were internal factors within both countries which prompted that resolution.

When India and Pakistan became free nations in August 1947, they shared a unified irrigation mechanism under Indus Basin Irrigation system. That system was designed in such a way that it could cater for 37 million acres of land and there were no irrigation boundaries (Khan, 1990: 195). But conflict between the two nations resulted in water stoppage from India to Pakistan in April 1948. After negotiations, both countries reached an agreement concluded on 4 May 1948 whereby India released river water to Pakistan (Pakistan Treaty Series, Volume 1: 59). But that was just a temporary settlement and a permanent solution was needed for water sharing which was critical for both nations. In 1955 both countries concluded an ad hoc arrangement for sharing of

Indus river water in June 1955. According to that understanding, water diversion or stoppage would not be made without prior notice and it would not be injurious to seasonal crops (Pakistan Treaty Series, Volume 2: 132).

Apart from the water-related interim agreements, India and Pakistan also signed agreements to regulate air links, protection of rights of minorities in each other's countries and regulation of trade and banking services. The range of those treaties and agreements built the trust of diplomats and technical experts to conduct negotiations which culminated in the Indus Water Treaty on 19 September 1960 in New Delhi. The agreement, apart from specifics on water sharing, clearly articulated that it is the outcome of spirit of goodwill and cooperative relations (Pakistan Treaty Series, Volume 2: 543).

Misra (2010: 31) terms the Indus Water Treaty as one of the largest water sharing agreements in the twentieth century. Analysing the successful resolution of water conflict, Misra (2010) highlights these 5 factors for the successful conclusion of IWT: negotiations in neutral venues such as Rome, London and Washington; keeping the negotiations secret from the media; long and patient negotiations before final understanding; the third party role of the World Bank; and a subsequent fund to help both countries to implement the agreement. This analysis also helps to assess failures and successes in conflict resolution exercises with regard to other conflicts between the two countries.

The success of the Indus Water Treaty can be gaged from the fact that in last 60 years it has withstood the shocks of two full wars and one limited war and numerous other border crises and skirmishes. There are, however, two factors which are putting a strain on this treaty, namely, climate change coupled with demographic composition in both nations. The second factor creates the current (2019-2020) tension between the two countries threatening the continuation of this treaty. For instance, the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated in October 2019 that water flow to Pakistan would be stopped (Times of India, 16 October 2019). In response, Pakistan conveyed that stoppage of water would be considered an act of aggression (Dawn, 17 October 2019).

Rann of Kutch is an arid piece of land of 3500 SQM. This stretch of barren land divides the Indian state of Goojrat and the Pakistani province of Sindh (Misra, 2010: 102-103). The area

became important in 1959 when India decided to conduct a geological survey to determine and discover the subterranean mineral wealth. That alerted Pakistan to the dormant and neglected patch of land. The tussle intensified between the two nations for laying exclusive claim to the territory. The Rann of Kutch, like other territorial disputes between the two countries, also resulted from the partition in 1947. Negotiations started in 1948 and continued up until 1955 but without any progress. Later on, in 1960, both countries decided to resolve the dispute bilaterally failing and it was referred to arbitration (Gohar, 1996: 309-310). Events in 1965 took such a turn that both countries referred the Rann of Kutch dispute to an international tribunal for final settlement. It is pertinent to mention here that external mediation efforts of the US, Britain and Canada also persuaded both countries to resolve this dispute or, at minimum, exercise restraint from further warmongering (Global Security, 2002).

The international tribunal conducted its proceedings from February 1966 to February 1968 where India and Pakistan presented their arguments buttressed by maps and historical records. The tribunal consisted of 3 eminent jurists each nominated by India and Pakistan and the chairman of the tribunal was nominated by the UN Secretary General Uthant. Both countries overcame the domestic concerns and opposition in accepting the award of the international tribunal which was announced on 19 September 1968.

The settlement of the Rann of Kutch dispute within a decade after the signing of the Indus Water Treaty, once again demonstrated the capacity and willingness of both India and Pakistan to resolve their conflicts. The factors which were instrumental in motivating both countries to resolve this territorial conflict included prior negotiations between their top leadership i.e., heads of state, ministerial level, external mediation, agreement on submitting the dispute to the international tribunal and avoiding taking public positions on the findings, proceedings and decision of the tribunal.

The above-illustrated two conflicts show that both countries were able to resolve one territorial and one resource conflict. They successfully neutralised the domestic skepticism and subsequent crises that could have endangered the smooth implementation of the agreements underpinning the resolution of these conflicts. The dispute over Rann of Kutch was easier to resolve as the land in question did not hold much strategic importance nor was it comparable with Kashmir in terms of size. But the resolution of water dispute was harder to achieve and required

more statesmanship on both sides in making it a success. In a nutshell, both these conflicts were resolved whereas at other times both countries were busy in averting crises or managing them. The biggest of the disputes relates to Kashmir, which is analysed in the next section.

3.8. NUCLEAR DIMENSION OF INDIA-PAKISTAN CONFLICT

With the decision to go nuclear in May 1998 both India and Pakistan demonstrated their ultimate military prowess to each other. The nuclear programme of both nations was a product of the typical security scenario of the region whereby India felt threatened by China after the 1962 border conflict and Pakistan felt threatened by India as a result of three inconclusive wars. According to Khan (2008: 76), the nuclear programme made the protracted conflict between India and Pakistan an intractable conflict. Former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, Riaz Mohammad Khan, terms the nuclear tests of 1998 as “most consequential” for India-Pakistan relations (Khan 2018: 78).

In terms of the history of nuclear programmes of both countries, Pakistan’s nuclear programme began in 1954 with the establishment of the Pakistan Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (Khan, 2012: 26). The Indian nuclear programme began in 1948 when through a Parliamentary bill the Indian Atomic Energy Commission was established (Sagan, 2009: 115). Initially India and Pakistan made use of nuclear technology for civilian research but in 1960s the idea of nuclear weapons began to appear in the political discourse in both countries.

China carried out its nuclear test in 1964 just two years after war with India, whereas India conducted its first nuclear test in 1974 three years after its war with Pakistan. Therefore, the security considerations were the primary impetus in driving Indian and Pakistani nuclear programmes (Nawaz, 1985; Khan, 2008). Domestic political issues also played a part in motivating the governing regimes in both countries to expedite the nuclear programmes. The nuclear programmes were used to galvanise popular sentiments in both countries where issues like poverty, unemployment and inequality were rampant. This is demonstrated in Pakistan’s case when its former Foreign Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, stated in 1965 that we will eat grass or leaves or even go hungry to make our own nuclear bomb (Weissman and Krosney, 1979; Nawaz, 1985; Khan, 2008). Both India and Pakistan turned their civilian nuclear programmes into weaponised ones by dual use of technology. India claimed that if nuclear weapons are legitimate for some countries for their national security and disallowed to others, it is not acceptable (Gujral, 1998:

101). Pakistan argued that if the international community could not stop India from nuclearisation and no adequate punitive measures were taken after India's nuclear test in 1974, then it has the right to take the nuclear road for safeguarding its national and territorial integrity (Shahi, 1988; Sattar, 2007; Khan, 2012). Well before the first Indian nuclear explosion in 1974, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, while addressing Pakistani students in London in August 1966, stated that Pakistan would not be subject to Indian nuclear blackmail. He went on to say that nuclear technology cannot be restricted (Jalal and Hasan, 1971: 8).

In the 1990s when India and Pakistan were in the midst of heightened tensions on account of raging insurgency in Indian Kashmir, India carried out its overtly weaponised nuclear tests. In response, the international community got into action and tried to persuade Pakistan not to respond. The US, in particular, exerted pressure on the Pakistani leadership to show restraint and not conduct nuclear tests. The US President, Bill Clinton, at that time, writes in his autobiography that "After the Indian tests, I urged Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif not to follow suit, but he couldn't resist the political pressure." (Clinton, 2004: 786). However, Pakistan had to balance what (Khan 2008: 75) is termed "power asymmetry" in South Asia with the Indian nuclear tests.

Having conducted their nuclear tests, both countries engaged in high-pitched war of words. Before 1998 both countries maintained or attempted to maintain what Cohen (1991: 341) termed a "designed ambiguity" But after overt nuclear militarisation, both countries are living under what (Khan, 2018: 79) terms the "nuclear shadow". Pakistan's Foreign Minister in 1998, Sartaj Aziz, stated that the country had restored "strategic balance" with India by demonstrating its nuclear prowess (Aziz, 2009: 28). In order to assuage the concerns of the international community and thwart the threat of sanctions both countries announced that they would behave like mature and responsible nuclear powers. Sardesai and Thomas (2002), in summarising the justification of both countries of their nuclear maturity, note that both nations claimed that they fought wars in the past but they did not attack cities and civilian targets. Similarly, they would not use nuclear weapons in war or war like scenario. But their subsequent actions and rhetoric disproved their earlier assertions and assurances. The unresolved conflict over Kashmir was the first major point of international attention (Sardesai and Thomas, 2002). The Kargil conflict in May 1999 and the deployment of one million troops by both countries in December 2001 on each other's borders kept the threat of nuclear exchange alive (Davis, 2011: 11). The statements emanating from the

political elite and military leadership brandished the use of nuclear weapons several times. For instance, Pakistan's former President, Parvez Musharraf, in a newspaper interview on 12 June 2015, stated that Pakistan did not make nuclear weapons for celebratory occasions, but for actual use (Express Tribune, 12 June 2015). At the height of the Kargil crisis in June 1999, Pakistan's Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, expressed fears that the situation could escalate to the nuclear level (Jones, 2002: 216). The effect of these statements and threats makes the conflict harder to resolve in a meaningful way. The eruption of crises and accompanying statements made it difficult to move forward on issues of contention. In the recent crisis generated by India's revocation of Kashmir's autonomy, Indian Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh, stated in August 2019 that India can reconsider its no-first-use nuclear policy in a conflict situation (Clary and Narang, 22 August 2019).

One of the impacts of nuclear weapons and associated policies with them on the India-Pakistan conflict is that both countries have engaged in more costly arms races. Previously, the arms race was in conventional weapons, but after 1998 this race was for enhancing a nuclear stockpile and delivery systems. This leads Paul (2005) to argue that instead of persuading towards resolving their conflicts, nuclear weapons have emboldened both nations to continue their hostile mindset. Substantiating this argument, he goes on to say that in the presence of nuclear weapons, Pakistan may feel more encouraged to wage a low-intensity war against India. But in retaliation India can increase the scale of war and both countries may slip into unintended nuclear exchange. Wolpert (2010) makes a point that nuclear weapons have made India and Pakistan more dangerous neighbours. He goes on to prove this assertion by noting that it can take only 10 minutes for nuclear tipped missiles of India and Pakistan to reach each other's major cities and capitals.

The conflict between India and Pakistan after the testing of nuclear weapons has assumed fatal proportions. According to Cohen (2010), the India-Pakistan border is a "tinderbox". But the nuclear weapons have made this scenario more threatening. Especially given the fact that Pakistan developed short-range tactical battlefield nuclear weapons and India developed a missile defence system, the chances of nuclear exchange cannot be ruled out entirely. Even if there is no deliberate firing or deploying of nuclear weapons in a war-like situation, the threat of unauthorised accidental use of nuclear weapons is there (Majumdar, 2004: 126). In the face of the nuclear dimension of their conflict, India and Pakistan have been constantly urged by the outside powers to manage and

resolve their unresolved conflicts and disputes. But as things shaped up in the years 2018 and 2019, the resolution of the India-Pakistan conflicts seems a distant prospect. Moreover, the domestic political milieu in India and Pakistan does not seem to be amenable to amicable dispute and conflict resolution.

3.9. DOMESTIC FACTORS

Domestic political, social and economic factors both in India and Pakistan have contributed largely to the perpetuation of bilateral tensions. There are political parties, pressure groups and militant outfits whose exclusive focus is on (anti) feelings and emotions. These elements in both countries fan the flames of the enemy image for each other's countries. The impact of this negative political discourse, propaganda and sloganeering is that bold and innovative solutions for conflict resolution become difficult. For instance, a compromised solution in the Kashmir dispute is likely to result in hostile attitudes towards governing dispensations in both countries. The insurgencies in the Sindh Province in Pakistan in the 1980s and Baluchistan at present and in India in Punjab Province in 1980s and Kashmir at present creates the source of tension. Pakistan alleges that India provides covert backing for secessionist violence in its Baluchistan Province. In turn, India alleges Pakistan of fomenting religious separatist violence in Kashmir. Hostile foreign policy towards each other and security considerations became a preoccupation of ruling elite and the masses in both countries after the British departure from South Asia.

Religious extremism coupled with jingoistic nationalism invariably poses a challenge for improving the relations between India and Pakistan. The veracity of this pernicious tendency can be established by the fact that a religious zealot named Nathoram Godse murdered India's founding father Mohandas Gandhi in January 1948 (Jaffrelot, 2007). Godse was a follower of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. The RSS is a right-wing Hindu organisation founded in 1925 by K. B. Hajwar (Jaffrelot, 2007). The RSS always believed and propagated that the Subcontinent belongs to Hindus only and Muslims should either be expelled or converted to Hinduism. This socio-religious organisation subsequently ventured into politics and established a political party with the name of Bharitiya Janata Party. The BJP is anti-Muslim and anti-Pakistan in its orientation, feeding on communalism (Malhotra, 1991: 18-19, 147-148; Akhtar, 1996: 89-90). For (Ahmad 2004: 129), the BJP carries populist and sectarian germs. It began its political journey in

1984 and bagged only 2 parliamentary seats out of 545 seats. But only 14 years later, in 1998, it formed a coalition government in India. In 1999 BJP again won the elections and remained in power until 2004 (Jaffrelot, 2007). In the meantime, in 2002, a massacre of Muslims took place in the Indian state of Goojrat. The significance of that event, apart from its fatalities, is that the Chief Minister of Goojrat, Narendra Modi, later became India's Prime Minister in May 2014 when BJP came to power for a third time. In 2002, around 2000 Muslims were killed and 200 thousand were made homeless (Powers, 2009: 14). The extremist agenda of BJP is clearly based on anti-Pakistan and anti-Muslim sentiments. This poses a challenge to meaningful engagement between the two countries to manage and resolve their conflicts.

Among other domestic factors fanning anti-Pakistan sentiments in India, the issue of terrorism and militant violence often poses an obstacle to the peaceful conduct of bilateral relations. In the recent past, some high-profile terrorist attacks in India were traced back to Pakistan in terms of planning and execution by non-state actors. But, in other similar cases, Indian authorities blamed Pakistan without any evidence. In some cases, Pakistan also offered joint investigation to trace the perpetrators of terrorist attacks. India repudiated these offers and overtures but continued to blame Pakistan. The Muslim population in India, which is around 200 million, faces innuendos from the Hindu extremists to go to Pakistan. According to (Powers, 2009: 14), the Muslim majority areas in India are called mini Pakistan by the extremist Hindus. Therefore, the state of Muslims in India also becomes a point of tension between the two countries.

In Pakistan the sources of anti-India rhetoric and policy mainly lie in the military and the religious right of the country. At times, the interests and agendas of military and religious parties in Pakistan reinforce each other with regard to India among other issues (Haqqani, 2005; Siddiq, 2007). The military not only wields covert influence on the political landscape of Pakistan, it ruled the state for almost half of its seven decades. In order to acquire legitimacy and win popular acceptance in Pakistan, the military tended to create the enemy image of India (Haqqani, 2005: 16; Cloughley, 2016: 58). The interference of military into politics in Pakistan was also the outcome of weak and fractious political parties. According to Ayesha Siddiq (1999,) the end result of this dominance of the military is that it perceives its own institutional interest to be the national interest of the country. Siddiq (2007) also highlights the role of the military in Pakistan with the potential to turn it into a defence state instead of a development state. The military is the strongest institution

in Pakistan, and hence determines the policy of Pakistan towards India, with other institutions and actors taking its lead. Since the military is in a confrontationalist mode with India, so the resolution of disputes with India does not get a necessary and critical civilian lens and input.

The religious political parties, social organisations and militant outfits also complicate the ties with India. However, in last few years the law-enforcement institutions of Pakistan have, to a great extent, neutralised the militant outfits who were acting in the name of Islam. These militant groups were using non-state means and mandates to plan and execute attacks in the Indian Kashmir and elsewhere. But given the seriousness of things, Pakistan's civilian and military leadership decided to clamp down on these elements. However, their total elimination and deradicalisation is yet to be completed. These groups egg people on to spread and absorb hatred of India. For instance, the chief of Pakistan's most popular religious political party, Jamaat-i-Islami Sirajul Haq, while addressing a political gathering in June 2015, stated that whoever arrests the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be given the reward of 1 billion Pakistani rupees roughly equal to one million US dollar (Dawn, 02 June 2015). On the other hand, the militant Hinduism and its excesses against the Muslim minority in India provide justification for anti-Indian propaganda to these militant groups in Pakistan.

The political component of religious parties in Pakistan also directs its anger and propaganda towards India apart from the Western countries and Israel. The roots of two most potent sects within the Pakistani Muslims, namely Deoband and Baralwi, are in India (Cohen, 2009 181). This is another reason for India bashing within these political parties. They think and desire that the whole of India should be once again under the Muslim imperial rule; the way it was before the arrival of British colonialists (Jafri, 2002: 15). The extremist fringe within these religio-political parties even talk of invading and conquering India. This is where the extremist and militant elements in both countries feed on hatred spread by them. This makes it difficult to break the cycle of vicious propaganda and move beyond the logjam in conflictive relations between the two countries.

The impact of these domestic factors on both sides is that the potential areas of cooperation remain unexplored or only see half measures. For example, cricket ties between the two countries came to a standstill in 2012. Even before that, some groups in India opposed to Pakistan playing there dug the pitches, rendering them unplayable. Pakistani artists and singers have been banned

in 2016 from performing in the Indian movie industry. The trade between the two countries still languishes in negligible proportions. India granted the most favourite nation/MFN status to Pakistan, but its effects have been nullified by the erection of nontariff barriers. In Pakistan, trade with India has been linked with the resolution of Kashmir and other disputes. The net effect of these developments is that the relations between these two South Asian nuclear neighbours remain hostage to saber rattling and jingoism. The year 2019 was particularly explosive and brought both countries to the brink of another war.

3.10. DEVELOPMENTS IN INDIA PAKISTAN RELATIONS IN 2019

The year 2019 proved to be a year of tension between India and Pakistan. There were developments in 2019 which make the year quite significant in the history of bilateral relations. These critical developments included direct confrontation between the armed forces of the two countries in February, general elections in India in April which were won by the ruling BJP, revocation of the special status of Kashmir in August and opening of Kartarpur border crossing between the two countries in November to facilitate the followers of the Sikh religion residing on both sides of border.

The year began with a freeze in ties, but the tension reached its pinnacle in February 2019. On 14 February 2019, a militant attack in the town of Pulwama claimed the lives of 44 Indian soldiers. India claimed that the attack was carried by a militant linked with Jaish-e-Mohammad, a militant outfit based in Pakistan. In response, Pakistan denied any involvement. Moreover, the Pakistani Prime Minister offered to help investigate the attack if India provides “actionable intelligence”. India attacked what it claimed to be a Jaish terrorist camp in Balakot in Northern Pakistan on 26 February 2019. India claimed that it destroyed the camp and killed top Jaish commanders (Dawn, 26 February 2019). This attack of the Indian Airforce was significant as it was the first such military incursion in the hinterland of Pakistan after 1971. There was war rhetoric on both sides. In Pakistan there was a sentiment of revenge. Consequently, on 28 February 2019 an aerial battle took place in which the Pakistan Airforce shot down one Indian fighter aircraft and captured its pilot named Abhinandan. The pilot was kept in Pakistan for 5 days and then handed over to the Indian border forces.

In April 2019 India had to go to polls. In Pakistan, this episode is viewed as a tactic of BJP to swell its vote bank ahead of general elections. In the past, the nationalist parties both in India and Pakistan used the “anti” card before elections. However, this trend is more visible in India ever since the BJP has become big on the electoral map. In another turn of events, the Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, sent a message of felicitation to his Pakistani counterpart Imran Khan on the occasion of National Day of Pakistan on 23 March 2019. The tension generated by the Pulwama incident and its aftermath continued to define India-Pakistan ties throughout the year.

The BJP comfortably won the elections held in April-May 2019. The victory of BJP is significant for the India-Pakistan conflict as it would remain in power for the next 5 years. Given the history of bilateral ties between India and Pakistan during BJP rule in India, it would be a challenge to successfully manage the hostilities. The BJP, under the current leadership, is articulate in anti-Pakistan rhetoric and policies. The feeling in Pakistan is that the peace during the BJP government will remain a pipedream. But on the other hand, the Prime Minister, Imran Khan, himself stated that the BJP victory would be auspicious for peace between the two countries. The reason behind this optimistic assertion of Imran Khan is that it is the BJP that can take bold steps to make progress in settling the Kashmir dispute. The BJP commands the allegiance of the right-wing extremist Hindus so it can sell any formula to settle Kashmir and other conflicts with Pakistan. But later on, Imran Khan himself indicated that the prospects of peace with BJP in power are slim.

On 5 August 2019, India decided to revoke the special status of Kashmir stipulated in article 370 of its constitution. Kashmir enjoyed a partial autonomy under this provision. Moreover, no outsider could acquire land in Kashmir and a special permit was required for an outsider to permanently reside in Kashmir. But India in utter disregard of its own commitment changed the status of Kashmir. Ever since, there is a curfew in Kashmir. Internet services have been cut off. Public processions and protests are completely banned. This was by far the most provocative Indian decision with regards to Kashmir since the partition in 1947. The reason for this provocation is that now Kashmir belongs to India in de facto terms. But Pakistan has decided to oppose this decision and raise the issue at the UN once again. Moreover, Pakistan is constantly reaching out to the international community to take note of violation of basic human rights and freedoms in Kashmir. Pakistan has made clear that it would not accept this unilateral decision of India about

Kashmir. The decision is also violative of the UNSC resolutions passed in 1948 and 1949 that Kashmiris would be given the opportunity to choose accession with India or Pakistan. India and Pakistan are locked in a heated war of words between them at all international forums. The provocative statements of Indian army chief, Narawan, that India reserves the right to attack across the border are going to complicate the situation further. Prime Minister, Narendra Modi's statement that India can defeat Pakistan in a war within 7 to 10 days is perceived an open threat (Dawn, 29 January 2020). Utterances like this coming from the top leadership do not bode well for management and resolution of outstanding bilateral conflicts between the two countries.

There was one positive development in 2019 amid this gloom and doom between India and Pakistan. On 9 November 2019, both countries opened the Kartarpur corridor for the votaries of the Sikh religion (Dawn, 09 November 2019). The background of this positive development is that in 2019 it was the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikh religion. The Guru spent time in the areas and localities which straddle Indian and Pakistani borders. The majority of the Sikh population is in Indian Punjab whereas the birthplace of Guru Nanak is in Pakistan along with other holy shrines. The opening of Kartarpur corridor was attended by the Pakistani Prime Minister and Indian politicians of repute. The occasion marked a high point in the history of bilateral relations. Although there were controversies and subversive statements surrounding the project, the negotiations between the two sides overcame these negative elements. For instance, there was a reservation from some Indian officialdom as well as the media that some terrorist activity might originate from this corridor. The corridor is operational and both countries aim at increasing the number of Sikhs visiting the shrines in coming days and months.

Another domestic development in India in the shape of the Citizenship Amendment Act enacted in December 2019 caused ill will in Pakistan. According to this piece of legislation, followers of all religions other than Islam who came to India before 2015 from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh would be eligible for Indian citizenship. Otherwise, they would be rendered as illegal citizens in India. In order to put this legislation into effect, India rolled out the National Register of Citizens. The NRC allows all those people who can prove their documented citizenship to live in India. The fear is that millions of people would be rendered stateless within India on account of non-possession of valid citizenship documents. Muslims would mainly bear the brunt of this law. There are already protests and strikes against this law. Between 11 December

2019 and 11 February 2020, 25 people were killed while protesting against this law in India (Dawn, 11 February 2020). Earlier, a police officer, while dealing with such a protest in the Indian province of Uttar Pradesh, told protesters to go to Pakistan (India Today, 28 December 2019). Anti-CAA protests jolted the city of New Delhi between 23 and 26 February 2020 when the US President Donald Trump was visiting India. 20 people were killed in these three days and more than 150 were injured (Dawn, 26 February 2020). The CAA and NRC are likely to raise tension between India and Pakistan as their effects become more visible with the passage of time.

The tense ties in 2019 have cast their shadow on cricket and other areas of cooperation and collaboration such as the production of movies, arts and literary festivals and track two diplomacy activities and gatherings. The tension has spilled over into the year 2020 caused by the continuation of policies and events of 2019. According to a report by Islamabad Policy Institute (January 2020), Pakistan's diplomatic Band width would be consumed by tense ties with India in 2020. A justification for this forecast is a statement by Pakistan's Foreign Office in February 2020 that Indian firing at the border may lead to any "strategic miscalculation" (Dawn, 15 February 2020). On the other hand, the US, China, Russia and other countries as well as the UN are continuously persuading both countries to dial down the rhetoric of war and engage in dialogue. Given the previous track record of the conflictive bilateral relations, it is possible that both countries can resume their bumpy journey towards peaceful relations.

3.11 CONCLUSION

The chapter presented a historical and current trajectory of the India-Pakistan conflict. This is a dynamic conflict rooted in history and is likely to continue in the future given its emotive dimension and political nature. Both countries have managed their conflictive relationship with successes and failures. Similarly, they have resolved two of their eight identified conflicts (Aziz, 2009: 365). Therefore, the exercise in conflict management and conflict resolution has been ongoing and partly driven by internal motivations and partly by outside persuasion. The stickiness of the conflict is also the outcome of domestic factors as well as outside motives.

The nonresolution of conflict has resulted in a hard power approach in both countries which is increasing with the passage of time. This led Majumdar (2004: 120) to conclude that in the India-Pakistan conflict, toughness is leading to more toughness. In order to get out of this vicious cycle

and to build conflict-free bilateral relations both countries have to overcome their rivalry. It is for this reason that the approach of conflict transformation through soft power is being analysed in the next four chapters, supported by interview data, observations, personal communication, archival sources, autobiographies and biographies of politicians and sports persons, blogposts, social media posts, secondary source material including books, newspaper articles, journals, magazines and YouTube material. The transformational approach goes beyond the management and resolution approaches in conceiving the way-out of conflictive deadlock. Soft power coupled with moral imagination can bring about the change in attitudes, behaviours, emotions, feelings and perceptions on both sides. Shashi Tharoor, former Foreign Secretary of India (2016: 12), feels that there is “a moral urgency” to overcome the conflict between the two countries. Even during the hardest of times, both countries have been able to engage with each other in sports. Despite the ongoing tension, India sent its Kabaddi team to Pakistan to participate in the Kabaddi world cup held in Pakistan in February 2020 (Dawn, 17 February 2020). The cricket ties that have been frozen for the last eight years, can be used to reduce the popular hostility between the two countries.

The wounds of history are deep but not unhealable. Both nations, equipped with nuclear weapons, cannot remain forever locked in interminable conflict in the age of social media and the global reach of print and electronic media where mutual feelings of love and hatred transcend borders. In the context of the India-Pakistan conflict, military officials of both countries exchanged threats and warnings through their twitter handles during the recent spell of hostility (Dawn, 10 August 2019). This shows that in the traditional conflict setting where elites dominated the discourse, currently common citizenry has found a direct voice. This is where the conflict transformation approach lays its focus by envisioning the potential of ordinary masses to influence the conflict dynamics. The people of India and Pakistan have shown an understanding and willingness for achieving durable peace and this is what they deserve, to be bequeathed a safe and bright prosperous future.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter presents the research design and methodology of this study. The previous three chapters provided the overall framework of this research along with conceptual and theoretical explanation, evolution and the current state of affairs of the topic under investigation. The study, as explained above, is about the India-Pakistan conflict. The principal research question is how soft power can transform the conflict between India and Pakistan. The main objective of study is to explore the effectiveness of soft power resources to transform the India-Pakistan conflict. The study also aims at exploring the challenges and prospects that hinder and help the transformation of this long-standing conflict. The chapter also sheds light on the qualitative approach employed for this study. In terms of epistemology, the constructivist interpretivist framework has been employed for answering the principal research question.

While uncovering the potential of soft power to mitigate the India-Pakistan rivalry, the research is from a Pakistani perspective. The reason for this perspective is that it was not possible to travel to India to obtain primary data. The primary data in terms of interviews, observations, personal communication and archives are, therefore, investigated from a Pakistani point of view as this data could easily be obtained given the geographical contexts within which the research took place. All these elements of gathering primary data have been conducted in Pakistan and among the Pakistani community living in South Africa.

In order to get primary data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 6 clusters of interviewees namely, government servants of Pakistan, businessmen, personalities from the entertainment industry, politicians and retired diplomats, civil society members and sports persons. Archives were also consulted mainly from 3 institutions viz. National Archives of Pakistan, archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan and the National Documentation Center. Published books of politicians, diplomats, sports persons and movie actors have also been

consulted, which provides first person accounts of India Pakistan relations in the soft power domain. With regards to secondary data, books, journal articles, magazine articles, newspaper op-eds and news items and interviews have been studied. The secondary data materials have been retrieved and accessed from online as well as from print sources available in the public domain. Tertiary data has also been studied and analysed. This data mainly comes from the Indian and Pakistani movies, theatre plays, TV dramas, social media and YouTube. This data informed the analysis of the India-Pakistan conflict and the question of how soft power resources are relevant in this conflict.

Thematic analysis has been employed as the method to analyse the gathered data. The main themes have been highlighted in this chapter. Subthemes or smaller themes have also been identified. The next two chapters discuss the main themes and subthemes in further detail. These themes have been drawn from a broad range of primary, secondary and tertiary data. The chapter concludes by briefly summarising the themes generated by the data analysis.

4.2. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH FOR THIS STUDY

Qualitative research methods have been chosen for this study. The reason for this choice is the nature of this study, which is related to the India-Pakistan conflict that has remained unresolved for the last seven decades. Furthermore, the study is traversing the past, present and future shape of this conflict. The past and present deal with conflict management and resolution attempts and efforts between the two countries whereas the futuristic part deals with conflict transformation between the two countries. In terms of conflict transformation, soft power resources have been discussed with a view to assess their potential for transforming this deep-rooted bilateral conflict. The concept of moral imagination is also discussed in terms of its blending with soft power in order to bring about transformation in the conflict between India and Pakistan.

A qualitative approach is better suited to do research on international events such as the India-Pakistan conflict. There is always an element of dynamism in interstate politics. Moreover, when interstate behaviour demonstrates conflict which is rooted in history and repeats itself in all walks of life, then research of a qualitative nature can be more meaningful. This study takes into account historical facts and the contemporary trends of bilateral relations between the two South Asian neighbours. However, their conflictive relationship has rendered these facts to be differently

interpreted, understood and projected. Moreover, people have different experiences about this conflict. Berg (2001: 3) states that qualitative research provides access to the unquantifiable facts of people. For Becker (2002: 268), qualitative research has much more than mere lack of numbers. These two assertions bolster the point that people's experiences, feelings, emotions, understandings and interpretations cannot be quantified to reach some definite and comprehensive conclusion.

In order to answer the principal and secondary research questions of the study, data from primary, secondary and tertiary sources has been collected. Personal communication with notable personalities from Pakistan and South Africa was also made. Observation was also used by visiting the venue where the under-19 cricket teams of India and Pakistan played against each other in South Africa in February 2020.

In the data collected, meanings and their interpretations, emotions, feelings, perceptions, historical facts and their competing interpretations, visual representations, verbal utterances, documents and social media posts have been analysed. A qualitative approach has the ability to study the context of people and events and can give better insights into the India-Pakistan conflict. Majumdar (2004: 7) points out that the conflict between India and Pakistan is rooted in a rich variety of sources. In addition, both countries interpret the same event in a polar opposite manner. People and the political elite from both sides found themselves in a situation where they consider one another sworn enemies. But the same elite and masses express the desire to have a conflict-free relationship. There are people on both sides who are friends with one another and exchange visits. There are cross-border marriages among the people. In this context, one high-profile cross-border marriage is between a current Pakistani cricket star Mr. Shoaib Malik and a current Indian tennis star Ms. Sania Mirza. This contradiction of personal warmth and bonding at one level and bitter acrimony on the other hand is illustrative of dynamism of the India-Pakistan conflict. At the same time, it brings out the potential of transforming this festering conflict. The qualitative methods employed in this study can manage this mixed tendency of the people on both sides which cannot be numerically measured. Miles (2014: 16) summarises such a situation by highlighting the utility of qualitative data which, according to him, is the source of rich explanations and descriptions of human processes. Along the same lines, Berg (2001: 2) believes that certain experiences of

people cannot be meaningfully expressed by numbers. Yin (2011: 285) pinpoints the ability of qualitative research to cope with multiple interpretations of a single event in the world of human affairs.

What flows from the analysis above is that in order to reach the depth of this multifaceted and complex international conflict between the two nuclear neighbours, a constructivist epistemology is better positioned. A qualitative research approach for a conflict like the India-Pakistan situation necessitates the study of subjective factors and objective ground realities. Here the focus is on what created the India-Pakistan conflict in the first place. That is why the context of the conflictive relations between India and Pakistan is important to understand so as to know its present shape and future direction. Qualitative research is better-equipped to evaluate the context of a given situation. In the words of Haradhan (2018: 17), “Research in qualitative domain is context bound and the researcher must be context sensitive”. When contextualised, the study focuses on how both countries navigated through their conflict by using hard power. When hard power could not prove to be potent enough to resolve their conflict, the attention turned to soft power. In the same way, when conflict management and conflict resolution proved to be of limited although critical value, a transformational approach is required in order to transform the conflictive relationship. Soft power and moral imagination can change people’s perceptions, emotions and overall conflict dynamics at state and societal level. It is therefore essential to study the perceptions, feelings and emotions of Pakistanis towards India and vice versa. Since this study focuses on the Pakistani perspective, so, the input from interviews presents what Pakistanis think about overall relations with India.

The study, however, makes use of secondary and tertiary data from Indian published and publicly available sources to gain a holistic understanding of the India-Pakistan conflict. The qualitative methods enable the gaining of insight into the minds and words of interviewees and other bits of formal and informal conversations and observations. For instance, one interviewee in the sports category, while responding to a question, said that he always had an extra energy while playing against India. Now, there is no criterion to measure how much extra energy he put in a sports contest against India. So, these kinds of feelings and emotions cannot be measured numerically. Berg (2001: 7) points out that if humans are studied in a symbolically reduced fashion through the means of statistics, then the conclusions may not fit the reality,

albeit they may be arithmetically precise. In another example, a Pakistani movie actor, Javaid Sheik, who has also performed in Indian movies, said in a TV interview that whenever he goes to India, he gets 100 percent respect. By this he meant that he always gets respect in India. But there is no criterion to measure respect in terms of percentage. Similarly, emotions, feelings and perceptions like love, hate, trust, enmity, envy, rivalry among the Indians and Pakistanis cannot be gaged and measured with mathematical precision. Therefore, the employment of qualitative methods becomes more relevant and resourceful to understand the overall bilateral relations between India and Pakistan. This is where constructivist interpretations and worldview become relevant to the study of the India-Pakistan conflict. The next section is aimed at explaining constructivist interpretivist epistemology for this research.

4.3. EPISTEMOLOGICAL BASIS OF THE STUDY

Epistemologically, this study is grounded in constructivism. The constructivist epistemological framework is best tailored to account for the India-Pakistan conflict in terms of its potential transformation through soft power. According to constructivists, when we focus on people as the agents of conflict, then it's crucial to dig into their feelings, perceptions, experiences and emotions. People act and react towards objects, issues and events according to the meanings which they attach to them. This meaning making derives from the way people interpret different events, issues, situations and so on. Hence constructivists focus on what people think and how they approach and interpret the world around them. Guzzini (2006: 61) sheds light on the main tenets of constructivism by noting that "What counts as a socially meaningful object or event is always the result of an interpretive construction of the world out there". The crux of the constructivist position is that apart from direct observation through sensory perception, there are other ways to gain knowledge. (Wissink, 2009: 7). This is where the interpretivist element of constructivism comes into focus for researching social phenomena. Intergroup conflict such as the India-Pakistan conflict is essentially a social phenomenon. As a social phenomenon, it therefore becomes important to consider people who carry ideas and identities in a conflict to give it life and shape.

Constructivists base their worldview on interpreting reality as understood, demonstrated and explained by people as opposed to what is superimposed on what people think and say and how they act. This is where constructivism, according to Hopf (1998: 200), is rooted in

appreciation of difference instead of imposed homogeneity. In a conflict situation, what Bartos and Wehr (2002: 3) term as “conflict behaviour”, people and their interpretations become crucial for gaining insight into the ebb and flow of conflict. For constructivism, all knowledge evolves among people and conversation is the vehicle for this process. People (agents) have their freewill which makes them knowledgeable participants in the production of social rules (Kubalkova, Onuf and Kowert, 1998: 2). The corollary of this people to people exchange and communication is that they develop a sense of self identity. This individual identity takes on another significance when it has more than one layer in various contexts and situations. Therefore, actors have multiple identities, and these imply different interests (Hopf, 1998: 199). This leads to group identity manifested in various labels of collectivity such as tribe, nation and civilisation. One significant outcome of this identity formation is that it also brings out the otherisation process. For Jalal (1995: 74), this manifests in “internal selves and external others” and Brewer (1999: 429) terms this phenomenon as “ingroup versus out group”. This means that we recognise and express identity by opposing or at least juxtaposing vis-à-vis others. Elucidating this point, Mcsweeney (2004: 116) notes that “Identity is inherently relational, and identity is the basis of interests”. Therefore, constructivism gives respect to the voices and views of individuals. So, what flows from this standpoint is that there is more than one reality or there are multiple accounts of a single reality. This is where interpretation becomes crucial and more so when there are competing and conflicting interpretations and understandings of reality. Constructivism accounts for this multiplicity and variation out there in the human world by referring to the fact that it is full of diversity and dynamism. This is well expressed by Barris (2015: 2) argues that the world is too big to make sense in one consistent way. Hence there are various and different interpretations of a single reality according to the meanings forged and given to it by people. Reiterating this constructivist stance in the context of international politics Hopf (1998) argues that “The world is a complicated and vast array of different domains, the apprehension of all of which could never yield a fully coherent picture of international politics”.

Theoretically, the India-Pakistan bilateral conflict could not receive much scholarly attention in IR literature. And when it did, the realist cum materialist epistemology was mainly applied to study this relationship (McLeod 2008; Shafiq, 2008). The outcome of this epistemological blind spot on the India-Pakistan rivalry is that only elite structures are brought into focus. Furthermore, only the objective aspects of this conflict such as wars, the arms race,

border skirmishes, nuclearisation and propaganda wars are studied and researched. This leads to the conflict being framed and understood in terms of its management and resolution at the level of leadership at state and government. Constructivism, which according to Shafiq (2011) is a footnote in the scholarly discourse on the India-Pakistan conflict, brings to the fore the subjective nature of this rivalry. The subjective features of this conflict pertain to identity, ideas, interests, perceptions, feelings, history, religion, culture and the interplay of all these. Vanish (2011: 129) believes that subjective sources of perception are the key drivers of the India-Pakistan conflict. These sources are lodged in people, but they are formed and sustained to a great degree by the governing elements in both nations. The ordinary people, their role and their potential are often ignored and even looked down on by the elitist governing and decision-making circles dealing with conflict in both countries. This study, however, takes into account the people-centric approach to bring about the positive change in this stalemated conflict. Owing to transformed means of communication, the role of ordinary people has also transformed in the India-Pakistan conflict. They no longer rely on visible government and state control to connect with one another as was the case a few years ago.

Constructivism takes into account the process and possibility of change in individuals and their identities, ideas, interests, attitudes, behaviours and perceptions. Similarly, the proponents of conflict transformation argue that a conflict can change from a negative to positive one. In order for that to happen, a positive change has to take place in conflict parties. This leads to the change initiated in individuals. So, this whole process of change reflects in constructive platforms and channels which prepare conflict parties for new and novel ways of engagement and looking at one another in different ways. Rupesingh (1995: 24) explains this by noting that in the process of transforming a conflict, the parties redefine the dispute itself. The redefinition of a dispute involves the transformation of interests and emotions linked with a dispute. This also involves the interpretations and meanings of certain events and issues in a conflict by actors therein.

The epistemological framework guides the fundamentals of research. It informs a researcher's perception in conceiving and defining the focus and object of a study, designing its method, selecting the research participants and collecting and analysing data. Since this study is about the India-Pakistan conflict and its transformation through soft power, so the constructivist approach is more appropriate to get perspectives of people who are the carriers of this conflict.

4.3.1 Rise of Constructivist Interpretivist Epistemology in IR

The diversification of conceptual and theoretical discourse in IR led to the emergence of a set of concepts and explanations which focused on actors and processes neglected or downplayed in traditional schools of thought. This range of theories became more tangible and recognisable in the 1980s and 1990s. A constructivist approach with regards to international politics was first clearly articulated by Nicholas Greenwood Onuf in 1989. Alexander Wendt, in his seminal essay, stated that “Anarchy is what states make of it further defined and refined the constructivist orientation of international politics (Zehfuss, 2001: 11-13; Burchill, Linklater, Devetak, Donnelly, Nardin, Paterson and True, 2013: 195-196). McSweeney (1999: 114) termed this theoretical development as “the sociological turn in International Relations”.

The social aspect of interstate politics is the focus of constructivist scholars. According to James Rosenau (2004: 7-14; 2010: 545-549), the state boundaries have become blurred due to technology which has reduced time and distance. Even loyalties and identities traditionally tightly knit with states and societies are becoming less relevant. This has enhanced the role of individuals, transnational networks and non-state actors in driving international politics. The constructivist discourse bases its main theme on the identity and meaning attached to concepts and objects. Antithetical to rationalists, the constructivists argue that the social world is not pre-determined, rather it is constructed. This construction takes place through interaction among actors which in the case of international relations happen to be states and a host of other entities and institutions (Acharya and Buzan, 2010: 9-10).

The main thrust of the constructivist approach is on individuals, institutions, norms, identity, meaning and the interplay of all these phenomena in the international domain. Although there are disagreements within the constructivist paradigm, the main contribution is to highlight the issues and factors which were either ignored or straightjacketed by the realist discourse. Constructivism has highlighted the ideational factors in explaining the action and interaction at social level. Contrary to this, the rationalists were preoccupied with material factors and their interplay within the political domain. Constructivists posit that these ideational factors are shared intersubjective beliefs. The identities and interests of actors are constructed by the ideational factors (Wendt, 1992: 387-413; 1999: 246).

The theoretical discourse about interstate relations dominated by realism and liberalism rooted their argument in human nature which is not amenable to change in the case of the former and can be molded by circumstance in the case of the latter. On this basis, for these theoretical worldviews the social world is given and what states can do at best is to cope with it. Constructivists put human beings at the centre of international politics per se. They argue that the world and the world politics have been constructed on the basis of shared identity and the interests of human beings, which are formed and understood on the basis of intersubjectivity. People create social facts out of their interaction. This interaction creates and sustains social practices, norms, rules and institutions. The understanding of these norms is undergirded by language and communication. The interaction at societal level is governed by rules and norms. These rules and norms also replicate at international level. States consent to certain rules and adopt norms of behaviour. Conformity and violation of these norms and rules does not go unnoticed. The norms and regimes of interstate behaviour draw their legitimacy from the underlying sanction that go into their making in the first place (Adler, 1997: 319; Gould, 2017: 3; James, Bertucci and Hayes, 2018: 274-277).

Culture holds an important place in the constructivist discourse. Related to this, is the history of actors and agents constituting culture. The traditional jargon of international politics has its roots in the Western World dating back to Greeko-Roman history. Constructivism not only challenges the received wisdom of realism and liberalism; it also brings into focus the non-Western World and its issues. Acharia and Buzan (2010: 221-222) point out that the world has passed the stage when it was dominated by a single power like Britain and the US. Similarly, no single theory or at least the Western theory can explain the contemporary world and the international system.

There are two principal critiques on the constructivist worldview: one from within and the other from outside. Internally, like any theory of international politics, the key constructivist scholars are at variance with one another. Alexander Wendt, Nicholas Greenwood Onuf and Fredrieck Kratochwil are three key figures in constructivism. Their theoretical disagreements have debunked the monolith of constructivism. From outside the rationalist tradition also launched a criticism against the constructivist discourse. For them, the constructivists do not come up to the academic and scientific rigour to establish their conclusions. The protagonists of constructivism defend its cogency and argue that the theoretical canvass of International Relations is broad enough

to accommodate the core constructivist assumptions. Moreover, the internal discord of the constructivist thinkers does not weaken it, rather it promotes alternative thinking. This results in a multiplicity of interpretations as opposed to a traditional monopoly of hegemonic discourse of realism and liberalism within International Relations theory (Hopf, 1998; Lantis, 2002; Osborne and Kriese, 2008).

The discourse and debate with respect to various concepts of conflict in the international domain was also shaped and dominated by the realist school. This debate only focused on states as drivers and victims of conflict. But the constructivists brought into the focus the people, their identity and their emotions as primary elements in conflicts between states. This is where the concept of conflict transformation, which is a key concept of this study, fits in. Two further concepts employed in this study viz. soft power and moral imagination in respect of their linkage to conflict transformation are also in sync with the social aspect of interstate politics explained by the constructivists. According to the constructivist analysis of international conflict, the actors in conflict are not only states, but individuals. Politics is not the only driving element of conflict in the international realm, there are social factors which create, generate and sustain conflict. Moreover, conflict is not given, it is constructed.

Soft power and moral imagination relate to people's perceptions, emotions, feelings and experiences. Conflict transformation also lays focus on people and their perceptions. Therefore, this study brings into focus these concepts in order to highlight the India-Pakistan conflict in a different or an alternative way.

The Realist analytical framework has always informed the debate and discussion on the India-Pakistan conflict. But for Shafiq (2011: 9), realists' focus on material rationality has failed to explain the social factors in creating and sustaining the India-Pakistan conflict. He goes on to argue that there is very scant constructivist scholarship on the India-Pakistan conflictual relationship and the main reason is the dominance of realist and neorealist interpretations of this conflict. The constructivists focus on ideational factors such as language, culture, meanings and symbols, discourse and identity attached to the India-Pakistan conflict and these factors can illuminate its different facets. This is where conflict transformation can become a novel way of approaching this conflict. Highlighting these elements in a conflict and their transformative potential, Rupesinghe (1995: 17) reflects on the importance of ideas, ideals, culture and interests

for transforming a conflict. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, in the exercise of conflict management and conflict resolution between the two countries, only the elite have been taking part. Even outside powers and players engage with the state elite. But, in last few years the importance of ordinary people is also gradually figuring in the conflictive relations between India and Pakistan. This has resulted mainly because of transformed means of communication where people can communicate with each other without their governments' approval and oversight. Moreover, people of India and Pakistan can speak and understand each other's national languages and even some regional languages, so this also helps them in engaging in more seamless conversation.³ But this communication is easily influenced by the prevalent environment, whether it is friendly or hostile. Shafiq (2011: 16) terms this as the "cognitive environment" which shapes opinions and communication on both sides. This is where the role of governments is still critical despite people on both sides being able to communicate. But, in another way, this people-to-people communication is significant.

Previously, people used to hear from the state elite about the bilateral relations. But now the elite have to listen to the people as to what they are thinking and saying. In terms of conflict transformation, Galtung (1995: 21), while stressing the importance of language, believes that language and culture may emerge as the final focus of identity in a rapidly changing world. In addition, there are cultural commonalities shared between the two peoples. Even the elite in both countries have to pay heed to the common language and culture acting as force multiplier to bridge the gap at popular level. Parvez (2011: 120) terms it "bottom-up evolutionary process" to which the elite of India and Pakistan are not immune. Moreover, constructivists take a stance that culture is not permanent and fixed. It has the potential and tendency to change. Lantis (2002: 97) highlights this aspect by noting that "culture is an evolving system of shared meaning that governs perceptions, communications, and actions". So, the study aims at discovering the change in culture of hostility and distrust between the two nations so that their conflict can transform.

The above-mentioned dual ability of common language also proves the point that the long-standing enmity between the two countries at the same time gets more ammunition because of the

³ The national language of Pakistan is Urdu. The national language of India is Hindi. Speakers of both these two languages can easily understand each other because of the common roots of the two languages. The regional languages such as Punjabi and Sindhi are spoken on both sides of the border, so people speaking these languages can also easily communicate with one another.

fact that there are no language barriers. This is evident from the fact that movies produced on divisive themes by India and Pakistan can easily spread the message of hatred. For instance, a Bollywood movie “Zameen”, translated in English as “earth” released in 2003 focuses on terrorism being sponsored by Pakistan on Indian soil. The target of the terrorist attacks happens to be common Indian citizens. In Pakistan, a Lollywood movie “Waar”, translated in English as “assault” released in 2013 extols the bravery of Pakistani soldiers who daringly ward off an attack by the Indian forces on Pakistan. But then there are movies on both sides which thematise the common bonds of culture, language, dressing, cuisine and even religion between the citizenry of the two countries. This is where moral imagination comes in, which enables people from both sides to emerge beyond negative conflictive sentiments on both sides. It is moral imagination which can enable the Indians and Pakistanis to view their conflict in positive light and perceive it as means of unleashing positive energy. For Jalal (1995: 87), such a positive energy on both sides of the divide can result from “creative power of imagination and creative imagination of power”. Expanding on this point, she goes on to say that stereotypes of acrimony can be overcome provided the same friendly sentiment in both countries is fostered at popular level officiated by the state institutions.

Conflict transformation between the two countries can occur when soft power resources are imbued with moral imagination. For instance, a Bollywood movie, “Veer Zara” (2003), deriving its name from the two lead characters focuses on unremitted love between an Indian man and a Pakistani girl. Similarly, a Pakistani movie “Ramchand Pakistani” (2008) translated as “Ramchand of Pakistan” thematised the sympathetic sentiments between Muslims and Hindus living in Pakistan and India. In sports, both nations compete with the baggage of culture, history and religion. But despite that there is no personal animosity among the players. There are instances where one family member played for the Indian cricket team and another played for the Pakistan cricket team (Osborne, 2015: 111). Thus, there are film actors, sports personalities, civil society members, politicians and retired diplomats who exchange positive gestures and messages. If this interaction is underpinned by widespread social desire for peace and institutional and structural state patronage from both countries, then this internecine bilateral conflict can transform.

4.4. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data for the study was collected from primary, secondary and tertiary sources. Observation also formed part of the data. Semi-structured interviews, personal communication and archival sources were primary sources whereas books, journal articles, news reports, op-ed pieces, reports of think tanks and research centres and other published material comprised the secondary material. A good deal of input for the study was also obtained from movies, theatre plays, TV dramas, YouTube and social media. This material informed the perspective of India-Pakistan relations and their conflict dynamics.

4.5. SECONDARY SOURCES

The study drew a great deal from the secondary sources. The main body of literature review for this research is in fact based on secondary sources of data. The range of secondary sources spreads over books, journals, newspaper material in the shape of op-eds, news reports, features, interviews and editorials, seminar proceedings, situation reports and analyses of India-Pakistan relations by various domestic and international think tanks and research centres and the special reports of the UN and other international institutions.

The study also used books authored by the individuals who were involved in executing the relations between India and Pakistan during the times of war and peace. In this regard, autobiographies and political memoirs of Pakistan's former Prime Minister Chodri Muhammad Ali (1967), former President Ayub Khan (1967), former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1978), former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto (1988; 2014) and former President Pervez Musharraf (2006) were useful to understand the perspective of these leaders of relations with India. The autobiography of the incumbent Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan (2011) is also part of these secondary sources. At the time of writing his autobiography, he was retired from cricket, but quite active in the politics of Pakistan. Besides the books of these heads of state and government, the researcher also used the books written by Pakistan's former Foreign ministers such as Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1970), Abdus Sattar (2007) and Sartaj Aziz (2009). The books by retired and former Pakistani diplomats such as Shehryar Khan (2001), Husain Haqani (2012; 2015) and Javaid Hussain (2015) also came in handy to get to know their experiences with regards to the overall foreign policy of Pakistan and its formulation and implementation regarding India. Books authored

by retired Indian diplomats and state functionaries were also utilised to get their side of the story in terms of India's relations with Pakistan. In this regard, books by Principal Adviser to the former Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Sanjaya Baru (2009), former Indian army chief S Padmanabhan (2016) and former Intelligence Chief of India A.S. Doulat (2018) were consulted. Cricketers of India and Pakistan write autobiographies often when they retire from the game. Some of these autobiographies have also been used for this study. These include three players each from Pakistan and India. From the Pakistani side, autobiographies of former cricket captain Javaid Miandad (2003), Shoaib Akhtar (2013) and another former cricket captain Shahid Khan Afridi (2019) were read to gain their experience of playing against India. From the Indian side, the autobiographies of Yuvraj Singh (2013), Sachin Tendulkar (2014) and Surav Ganguli (2015) narrated their experiences and feelings about competing against Pakistan.

Secondary data has also been obtained from the books on the India-Pakistan conflict by the Indian, Pakistani and outside experts and scholars. The principal consideration to select these books was the expertise of these scholars vis-à-vis India-Pakistan relations. Books and journal articles of experts on peace and conflict, conflict transformation, soft power, moral imagination and other relevant aspects of this study have also contributed to the study. These books have been gathered from the libraries in South Africa and Pakistan. Online libraries namely questia.com and bookshare.org were also helpful to get the soft copies of books on the subject matters.

The researcher visited research centers such as the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad/ ISSI, Institute of Policy Research Islamabad/ IPRI and the Institute of Policy Studies/ IPS. I also visited think tanks like the Jinnah institute, civil society organisations such as the women action forum, government departments and ministries namely, the ministry of foreign affairs, ministry of interior and ministry of information, media houses viz. Pakistan television, Dawn news and Jung group of newspapers and universities which include Quaid i Azam University, and the University of the Punjab and Sargodha in Pakistan to search for data, meet the participants and to have discussions with people who are studying India-Pakistan relations. This also afforded an opportunity to get the published materials from some of these entities.

Secondary data was also acquired from newspapers of Pakistan, India and other countries. YouTube was also a handy source to get secondary data. The research also made use of Indian and Pakistani movies, TV plays and songs dealing with social, cultural and political themes between

the two countries. Interviews of film actors and sports persons were also heard on this digital platform. A number of notable individuals in different fields have launched their own YouTube channels. This also helped the researcher to familiarise with views of reputed academicians, political commentators, sports persons and entertainment industry personalities about India-Pakistan cooperative and conflictive relations. Social media platforms are now one of the most important sources of generating and getting data for research. The researcher is also maintaining his social media profiles on Facebook and twitter. The researcher is personally following political personalities and celebrities of India and Pakistan from various fields of life and even interact with them on their social media profiles. This also helped the researcher to get more thoughts and perspectives for this research.

All these sources of secondary data listed above provided input for the conceptual framework of the study, illuminated the evolution of the India-Pakistan conflict and explained the potential of soft power to transform the India-Pakistan conflict. These secondary sources also enabled the researcher to use primary sources more purposefully and effectively. The researcher was able to ask more meaningful and targeted questions from participants. Overall, these sources helped uncover the facets of the India-Pakistan conflict which were lying dormant with regards to its possible transformation, in addition to its management and resolution.

4.6. PRIMARY SOURCES

The research has been conducted by making use of primary sources which include semi-structured interviews, field notes and observation, personal/informal discussion and archival sources.

4.6.1. Semi-Structured Interviews

Interview is a key research tool in qualitative study. It is aimed at acquiring direct personal input for research based on particular personal experiences, feelings, memories and impressions. For Lamont, (2015: 46), interview gives access to the social window around us. Focusing on interview research on a political issue, Mosley (2013: 4) claims that interview is an important and distinct means to understand contemporary political actions. Interview is a challenging but rewarding undertaking to lend a practical blend to the study. Furthermore, interview brings a more humanistic element to research which Shea and Maloney (1998: 7) term as interactional process facilitating interhuman communication. Since this research is about the India-Pakistan conflict, it is all the

more important to know that what people think about this conflict. Outlining the advantages of interview, Crano and Brewer (2002: 223) claim that “personal contact achieves higher response rate than impersonal questionnaire”. The participants for this study are the ones who have some experience and exposure vis-à-vis India and Indians, so interviewing them really helped to highlight or reframe the various dimensions of this conflict. Darlington and Scott (2002: 51) posit that where there are many possible experiences of a same phenomenon, it is always important to talk to people having a wide range of views. It is why the researcher chose participants from 6 different categories who have had different types of experiences and exposure with regard to the ongoing India-Pakistan conflict and their overall bilateral relations.

Semi-structured interview is an interview technique which allows flexibility to both interviewee and respondent. In this sort of interviewing, there is always a possibility to ask questions with the flow of conversation. Here the interviewer can ask questions which are not on the questionnaire (Galletta, 2013: 47). In terms of the India-Pakistan conflict, semi-structured interview allows one to go back to respondents to seek views in connection with a development that occurred after one round of interviews. This conflict is so dynamic that in the space of few days, threats of war are hurled, and congratulatory messages are exchanged at the level of leadership. For instance, some interviews were conducted before August 2019 when India unilaterally altered the constitutional status of Kashmir. Some of the same respondents were approached again after that development, their tone and tenor were different this time. Galletta (2013: 46) also argues that semi-structured interviews create spaces for narrative experiences of participants. This was more evident during some interviews when participants shared their travel experiences to India or their memories in terms of working alongside the Indian citizens, such as in the entertainment industry. This also applies to cricket and hockey players who played against the Indian players in different contests on various occasions. In interviews, these players shared their experiences and memories both on-field encounters and off-field interaction with their Indian counterparts.

Abdelal, Johnston, Herrera and McDormatt (2006: 703) claim that the semi-structured technique of interviewing allows respondents to present their own notions about who they are, what matters to them and why. While going through secondary sources, movies, theatre plays, TV interviews of notables in various fields and social media posts, different aspects were revealed,

which could not be covered with respondents in the first interaction. The semi-structured format enabled the researcher to go back to the participants to get their feedback on previously undiscussed issues. On the other hand, semi-structured interview as employed in this research also allowed respondents to reconsider their answers. It happened during the course of this study. There were two respondents who wanted subsequently to add more responses and the researcher was asked to make some changes into some earlier responses. This is the strength of semi-structured interviews, as it is more interactive and dialogical. This nature of interviewing called for building a personal rapport with respondents, which was done successfully during this study. Some interviews were conducted in an environment of camaraderie, which otherwise was not possible in a structured interview. Interviewees in such a scenario feel more confident and comfortable in answering the questions. They also respond more candidly in a cordial mode of interaction which is another strength of the semi-structured format of interviewing. This technique also afforded the researcher an opportunity to conduct interviews in different sittings. For instance, a couple of respondents were approached more than once to complete their responses. The point is that semi-structured interviews allow flexibility to both interviewer and interviewee.

In research related to a conflict, semi-structured interviews are key in understanding people's feelings and emotions. It also helps to unpack the meaning attached by people to a situation or event arising out of a conflictive situation. In the case of the India-Pakistan conflict, it is important to know what people feel about this rivalry. In this age of easy cross-border communication, people from both countries now experience conflict more directly. The participants for this study have had some sort of direct interaction with Indian citizens, so their narration helped uncover the personal stories in this bilateral conflict. The transformational approach focuses on people's ability and energy to break the stereotypes generated by a conflict. So, in interviews for this study questions were asked which touched on overall bilateral India-Pakistan conflictive relations as well as experiences and perceptions of people from Pakistan.

4.6.2 Field Notes and Observations

Field notes and observations were also utilised to get input for this study. Field notes were used for those interviews where the participants showed reluctance for recording their interviews in a recording device. They were willing to speak off-hand instead of getting recorded. Notes of these interviews were taken down and then were subsequently arranged in a proper form. Field

notes were also used for jotting down personal and informal communication with various people dealing with different aspects of India-Pakistan relations.

Observation is another handy tool to get primary data for research. Research is embedded in peoples' real lives (Sapsford and Jupp, 2006: 291). In order to get a real sense of what people think and how they act in particular situation, observation is critical. The researcher employed less structured observation which is in line with the qualitative research design of this study. This sort of observation according to Foster (2006: 57) explores the meaning in a naturalistic and holistic manner to the maximum extent possible. For Scott and Darlington (2002: 75), "observation affords access to events as they happen". The observations for this study were made before and during the field work stage of the study plan such as on occasions where India and Pakistan played against each other during cricket competitions. One such occasion was the semi-final between India and Pakistan under-19 cricket teams which took place in South Africa in its North-West Province for the under-19 cricket world cup on 4 February 2020. The significance of this match was that it almost coincided with Kashmir Solidarity Day observed by Pakistan on 5 February every year. Pakistani diaspora all around the world also observe KSD expressing their support for the Kashmiris living under Indian occupation. So, the venue provided an opportunity for Pakistani diaspora to throng the venue and plan for KSD rallies and events the following day. The researcher was able to talk to the players of the Pakistan cricket team, the spectators and even officials and organisers from Cricket South Africa and the International Cricket Council. The players expressed their emotions and thoughts of playing against India. The CSA and ICC officials minced no words in saying that they are extra conscious of an India-Pakistan cricket match. Moreover, they had additional security arrangements for the event to proceed smoothly.

The researcher also closely observed the India-Pakistan cricket contest in the 11th ICC world cup held in Britain in June-July 2019. The India-Pakistan sports contests whether in cricket, hockey or any other game always cause an electric thrill on both sides. The 2019 world cup contest provided an opportunity to closely witness the pre- and post-match environment from the viewpoint of this research. It was observed that how people from both sides expressed their views on social media, electronic and print media. The researcher also closely followed the situation at venue of the match where citizens of both nations watched the match in close proximity to one another. During his trip to Pakistan, the researcher also watched a theatre play with the theme of

India-Pakistan warmongering. The researcher was able to talk to some actors in the play and the director of the play. The researcher also talked to few spectators who made it there to watch this theatre play. The observations of this nature helped the researcher to have a first-hand experience of feelings and emotions of people who think and act vis-à-vis India whether in sports or entertainment. The observation also helped to frame questions for the respondents pertaining to their direct interaction with Indian people. The way players and actors conducted themselves during the performance, how the spectators watched them perform and officials oversaw the process, made it possible to connect the observations with secondary data. For instance, the researcher went through the autobiographies of 3 cricketers from Pakistan and 3 cricketers from India. Interviews of sports persons and movie actors were also watched on YouTube. Therefore, it was possible to gauge the feelings of those spectators in actual situations where the researcher was himself present. Using the method of observation enabled the researcher to recruit respondents for semi-structured interviews. The researcher purposefully employed a snowball technique to look out for participants while visiting the venues of these events. The researcher also got in touch with people who were willing to have personal and informal communication related to this research. In a nutshell, observation provided rich data which have been utilised in next two chapters dealing with the findings and discussion.

4.6.3. Informal and Personal Discussion

Informal and personal discussion occupies an important place in qualitative research. In the context of this research, these discussions helped to gain insight of the people who were not recruited for interviews. But their views were equally enriching for the study.

The researcher conducted most of these discussions with people who had dealt with government policy towards India. In public, the views of those individuals who have interacted with Indian citizens in various spheres of life were sought out. In this respect, the researcher visited the sports venues, research centers, think tanks, government ministries and departments in Pakistan. Pakistan and South Africa have good cricket ties which provided the researcher with an opportunity to interact with cricket players and the administration of the game in Pakistan. In December/January 2018-19, the Pakistan male cricket team visited South Africa. In August 2019, the Pakistani female cricket team visited South Africa. In January/February 2020, the Pakistan under-19 cricket team visited South Africa to take part in the cricket world cup. In February/March

2020 the Pakistani retired/veteran cricket team visited South Africa. The researcher visited some of the venues of cricket matches being played. During these trips, the researcher interacted with cricket players and management. As a result, it was possible to seek their views about India-Pakistan cricket ties as a soft power tool for conflict transformation. During the conversations, the researcher asked them how they felt while playing against India. With the team management, questions were asked about the prevalent tension between India and Pakistan in the sports domain. Some questions were about the potential of cricket to change the negative trajectory of India-Pakistan bilateral relations into a positive one. The responses to such questions enabled the researcher to grasp the importance of cricket in particular and sports in general to transform the relations between the two countries.

Most of the conversation was on the condition that the names of the persons would not be revealed. On pledging this, the response was quite candid and forthcoming. However, few individuals permitted to use their names in the research. In case of those who did not allow their names to be mentioned, their permission was sought to use their institutional affiliations instead of their personal names. They consented. This was done to lend credence to the form of personal communication and informal discussion for the research. These discussions were productive in another way in that the respondents shed light on those aspects of the India-Pakistan conflict which could not be covered during the semi-structured interviews. Therefore, these conversations also reinforced and validated the interview process. The researcher also gained an advantage from these interactions as it allowed for more meaningful questions from the interview participants. One participant declined to be recruited for an interview, but he was willing to share his views about this study. This also helped to gain more personal input. These bits of conversation also guided the researcher towards some important secondary sources for the study such as books, journals and expert reports and analyses. All in all, interviews and personal communication together provided data which strengthened the aims and findings of the study.

4.6.4. Transcription of Interviews and Field Notes

Once the interviews and field notes were concluded, they were transcribed. Transcription needed to be done for interviews that were recorded. Field notes were made from those interviews which were not recorded and conducted face to face. Recorded interviews were done through using a recording device i.e., cell phone, on WhatsApp and Skype. Some interviews were also conducted

via e-mail. There were some respondents who were at ease in allowing their responses to be recorded in their voice. Some respondents were more comfortable in sending their written responses via e-mail. But there were some participants who clearly indicated that they would not want to record their responses. In that case, notes of their responses were taken.

Once the oral interviews were transcribed, the typed responses were sent back to the participants to let them check and verify what they had said. This was done to ensure the accuracy of the responses.

4.6.5. Archival Research

In order to understand the history of the India-Pakistan conflict, it is always helpful and even necessary to read the archives. Archives enable a researcher to have direct knowledge of the affairs of the past. Branislav (2015: 81) terms archival material as “trustworthy sources of information and knowledge”. The archival sources also provide information and perspectives which are otherwise not available in secondary sources such as books and journals. Furthermore, when they are quoted in secondary sources, their selection may depend on researcher. The reason for this is that every researcher or author has to select from a large volume of archives. Therefore, they pick and choose according to their research design, research question or any other guiding method and preference. Archival research also helps to gain access to the actual occurrence of an event in the past by reading the recorded conversations and correspondences directly. In this way, it facilitates more conscious bridging of past and present and academia and practice (Gilliland and McKemmish, 2004: 160). Since this research is about the India-Pakistan conflict and the possibility of its transformation through soft power, the focus was on digging out the past information which could help answer the research question of the study.

Conducting archival research was a challenging yet exciting experience. In Pakistan, it is difficult to undertake archival research. This is so on account of 3 reasons: a.) there is still no systematic record-keeping of the archival materials in Pakistan. b.) there is yet to be a clear-cut demarcation between classified and declassified archival sources. c.) the culture of secrecy shrouding the government and official documents makes it difficult to access the archival record. Due to these challenges and constraints, there is a lot of bureaucratic procedure involved to get access to archival documents. When access is granted, the relevant officials lurk around the researcher to monitor how the material is being read. The researcher produced the supervisor

introductory letter to get permission to access these archival documents, but even then, some critical questions were asked as to what would be done with this sort of research. This was so partly because of the topic of this study dealing with the India-Pakistan conflict, which is always a sensitive issue in Pakistan.

The archival material was accessed and studied mainly at 4 institutions viz. MOFA, National Archives of Pakistan, National Documentation Centre and Provincial Archives of the Punjab Province. In archives, official documents of the Government of Pakistan dealing with issues vis-à-vis India were read. The letters written to their Indian counterparts by the Pakistani leaders were also perused. Inter-departmental and inter-ministerial documents were also read to get a sense of how the process of consultations worked in regard to the policy matters towards India. Of particular interest were the documents shedding light on the India-Pakistan wars, peace agreements, people to people contact, sports and entertainment sector relations. From the archival material, firsthand information was obtained, and a direct sense was gained as to how both countries have been conducting their bilateral relations in terms of both confrontation and cooperation. The archival sources, as they do, enabled the researcher to relive the past in the bilateral relations between the two countries.

4.7. SAMPLING AND RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

There were a total of 18 participants interviewed for this study. The participants have been selected from six categories. These categories include the sports fraternity, entertainment industry, government servants, civil society, trade and business sector and politicians and retired diplomats. Given the focus of the study on Pakistani perspectives, all the participants are Pakistani citizens living in Pakistan and South Africa. These people were selected on account of their exposure and relevance to the India-Pakistan conflict, soft power, its resources and its practical deployment vis-à-vis India. Moreover, the conflict between India and Pakistan is so deep-rooted, long-standing and dynamic that it affects all these walks of life in both countries from which the participants have been selected. Some of the interviewees traveled to India, some personally interacted with the Indian citizens whereas some neither traveled to India nor had a direct and personal interaction with the Indian citizens, but they have considerable knowledge of Indian culture, sports and politics with regards to Pakistan.

Selection of participants was guided by the consideration of transforming the India-Pakistan conflict through the use of soft power. The participants are Pakistani citizens living in Pakistan. In case they were not living in Pakistan, they were registered Pakistani citizens, meaning that they have Pakistani identity documents.⁴ This applies to the respondents who were living in South Africa at the time. But care was taken to ensure that these South African Pakistanis are first generation migrants and often travel to Pakistan and thus are integrated well into Pakistani culture and society. Out of 18 participants, 13 have been selected from Pakistan whereas 5 are currently residing in South Africa. Interviews were conducted in Pakistan and South Africa by face-to-face conversation, recording device and e-mail correspondence.

Once the categories had been finalised and number of participants determined accordingly, then the process of recruiting and identifying the participants started. For identifying the participants both purposive and snowball sampling were utilised. A study does not have to be restricted to one respondent recruitment technique, rather it can be flexible enough to utilise both these sampling techniques. The advantage of purposive sampling according to Bazeley (2013: 49) is that a researcher initially gets samples which are essential to meet the particular research goals. Therefore, the researcher undertook to pinpoint and locate a respondent who was familiar with the India-Pakistan conflictive relations. Furthermore, the researcher was interested in some participants who have had direct interaction with their Indian counterparts. For example, the researcher was able to interview a former Pakistani cricket captain and a former Pakistani hockey player who competed against the Indian teams on several occasions. Similarly, in the entertainment industry, the researcher interviewed a theatre actor who performed in some Indian theatre plays alongside the Indian actors. This targeted approach was supplemented by the snowball technique. This technique affords a researcher to be flexible to choose his/her participants.

Snowball sampling can contribute an invaluable type of knowledge when conducted in a dynamic social sphere (Noy, 2008: 329). While starting the fieldwork, one is not sure about the whole range of participants, so the snowball method allows the researcher to select participants as the research progresses. In this sense the researcher was able to approach more interviewees once

⁴ Apart from passports, there are three other identity documents in Pakistan. They include the national identity card, national identity card for overseas Pakistanis and Pakistan origin card. All four of these ID documents are issued and recorded by the two departments national database registration authority and immigration and passport. Both these departments fall under the federal Ministry of Interior in Pakistan.

an interview was completed with a particular respondent. Cricketers got me in touch with their fellow cricketers and the same thing happened in other categories. In addition, after identifying respondents, the researcher contacted gatekeepers i.e., the individuals and organisations who facilitated to recruit more participants. In this regard, the researcher contacted the retired diplomat's forum in Pakistan, Pakistan South Africa Association, Pakistan Southern African Trade Federation and Pakistan Business Council.

The researcher also contacted people on their social media profiles which helped a great deal in carrying out interviews and personal communication. Below, is the detail of 6 categories of participants who were interviewed over a period of 12 months i.e., May 2019 to May 2020. The table 1 details the affiliation, age group and nationality of participants. In order to keep the participants anonymous, a number has been assigned to each participant. Therefore, all 18 participants have been numbered from 1 to 18. The following table, as mentioned, describes the characteristics of participants such as their age group, nationality and affiliation.

Participant	Age group	Affiliation	Citizenship
P1	30-40	Civil society	Pakistan
P2	40-50	Civil society	South Africa
P3	30-40	Civil society	Pakistan
P4	20-30	Entertainment	Pakistan
P5	40-50	Entertainment	South Africa
P6	50-60	Entertainment	Pakistan
P7	40-50	Government employee	South Africa
P8	50-60	Government employee	Pakistan
P9	30-40	Government employee	Pakistan
P10	50-60	Politicians/retired diplomats	South Africa
P11	60-70	Politicians/retired diplomats	Pakistan
P12	60-70	Politicians/retired diplomats	Pakistan
P13	40-50	Sports	South Africa
P14	40-50	Sports.	Pakistan
P15	60-70	Sports.	Pakistan
P16	50-60	Trade and business	South Africa
P17	50-60	Trade and business	Pakistan
P18	60-70	Trade and business	Pakistan

Table 1: Characteristics of the participants. Compiled by the researcher, 2019.

The researcher approached civil society platforms within Pakistan and South Africa through their organisational affiliations and individual public profiles. In this regard, in South Africa, the South African Kashmir Action Group (SACAG) was one of the civil society platforms. SACAG is actively engaged in advocating the issue of Kashmir from a Pakistani perspective in South Africa. In Pakistan, the Civil Society Alliance was useful in identifying and recruiting members of civil society to participate in the study. Here the purpose was to select those civil society members who are engaged in peace activism within Pakistan and in the region. The civil society activists gave their perspective as to how soft power can transform the India-Pakistan conflict with the help and involvement of common citizens.

The government officers were selected on account of their relevance to the policies of Pakistan shaping the country's relations with India. A diplomat from Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) shared his views about the working and thinking of Pakistan's diplomatic bureaucracy about relations with India. He was personally involved with the desk in MOFA dealing with India. He even took part in several meetings within Pakistan among different ministries and departments concerning conceiving and implementing decisions about India. Moreover, he personally interacted with the Indian diplomats on various occasions and against the backdrop of crucial bilateral events and incidents. Another government officer, chairman of Pakistan's censor board, gave input about Pakistan's film industry, theatre, drama, literary festivals and other aspects of soft power. The Censor Board is responsible for deciding whether a movie, whether Indian or Pakistani or of any other country, may be screened in the cinema or not. The Board has the authority to censor the content which it does not deem appropriate to be screened on account of being prejudicial to Pakistan's national interest and social values. It is the Board's final authority that allow the movies to be shown in Pakistani cinemas or otherwise. A third government officer was from Pakistan's Ministry of Commerce. He was responding to the questions about India-Pakistan trade relations and their potential to transform the conflict between the two countries.

For the entertainment category, participants have been picked from theatre, film and music. All these forms of entertainment are well-attended in Pakistan. In addition, Pakistan's musicians, actors and producers work in the Indian entertainment industry. Similarly, the Indian entertainment industry people work alongside their Pakistani counterparts in Pakistan. The respondents in this

category are the ones who either directly worked in India and with Indians. They have feelings and opinions about their experience with the Indian citizens both as co-workers and audience. India and Pakistan have a common language and, therefore, the soft power resources such as music, movies, and theatre and TV dramas are keenly watched across the length and breadth of the two countries regardless of who produced and directed and acted in them.

Sports respondents include one hockey player and two cricketers. These two sports have been chosen because hockey is a national sport of Pakistan, secondly, cricket is the most popular sport in India and Pakistan, and thirdly, both sports are team sports. As team sports, they include a number of players. A cricket team consists of 11 players as does a hockey team. In the context of cricket, a former captain of the Pakistan cricket team and a blind cricketer cum administrator were recruited for the interview. Cricket is so popular in this part of the world that it pervades every sphere of life. There are teams for people with disabilities such as the cricket team for blind persons, the cricket team for deaf persons and the cricket team for physically handicapped persons. These teams attract less publicity and coverage compared to the able-bodied teams. However, when there is political tension between India and Pakistan and the mainstream sports contests fall prey to these tensions, the teams for persons with disabilities are able to continue their contests. Both governments allow these teams to visit to each other's venues. These sports persons have a different worldview of life and sports. The focus in conflict transformation is also on these segments of society, which do not rise to prominence but whose perspectives are critical for conflict transformation because of the different vantage point from which they view relationships. The potential of sports to engage ordinary citizens is crucial in the context of changing perceptions and mindsets. This change of mindset is of crucial importance to transform the conflict between India and Pakistan.

Trade and business linkages between the two countries are far from fulfilling their true potential. The respondents from this sector emphasised the point that if exploited optimally, the relations between India and Pakistan can improve a great deal. Here those businessmen who have had some direct contact with Indian businessmen or personally know some of them were chosen. The Pakistan Business Council and different chambers of commerce within Pakistan were crucial points of contact in this regard. One organisation in South Africa PSATF/Pakistan Southern African Trade Federation was also a valuable contact point. Apart from respondents for this study,

informal and personal communications with these entities also helped to understand the economic dimension of India-Pakistan conflictive relations. Moreover, it was easy to go back to the respondents for more responses and clarity in case of some previously answered questions.

In the category of politicians and retired diplomats, two politicians and one diplomat were interviewed. The reason for clubbing these two in one category is that politicians and retired diplomats are more vocal on India-Pakistan relations. Additionally, they have more policy exposure with regard to India-Pakistan relations. In track two diplomacy, politicians and retired diplomats are most active on both sides. Among the politicians, one respondent was from the ruling party of Pakistan, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf/PTI. The leader of this party is Imran Khan, a former cricketer, who became the Prime Minister of Pakistan at the time of writing this thesis. The politician respondent happened to be the chairman of the National Assembly Committee on Foreign Affairs. The other politician interviewee was from the opposition political party namely Jamaat Islami. This is the party which has always been actively pursuing anti-India views in Pakistan. The retired diplomat remained engaged in policy input and implementation in MOFA. After retirement, he contributes to op-eds in the national dailies of Pakistan. He had direct exposure to the policy-formulation towards India in MOFA.

This sample frame was chosen because the participants ranged from elite policy-making circles to middle-range sports and entertainment domains to grass-root people from civil society.

4.8. LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

This study was undertaken to assess from a Pakistani perspective, the possibility of transformation of the India-Pakistan conflict through soft power resources and this in itself posed some limitations. The limitations of the study are owed to the fact that it only provides for a Pakistani perspective of the conflict. This is because the primary data has been sourced from Pakistani individuals and institutions only. Secondary data, however, has been obtained from Indian authors, organisations and institutions to highlight the Indian perspective of the conflict. But the basis of research is that of a Pakistani perspective of the conflict.

Another limitation of this study occurred because of the peculiar nature of social science research where human participants are subjects of inquiry. The role of interpretations, subjectivity, experiences and feelings becomes even more crucial when there is a conflict going on involving

human beings. Manheim, Rich and Willnat (2018: 6) assert that no single project can fully examine a major political question because important social phenomena are highly complex. Another limitation is on account of geographical considerations for collecting materials and doing interviews. Initially the researcher contacted few gatekeepers to recruit respondents. But on few occasions the gatekeepers were reluctant or simply uninterested to help recruit the interviewees. The reason explicitly stated or sometimes implicit was the topic of research on the India-Pakistan conflict. Their response bordered on caution or outright apprehensions that participation in such research can land them in trouble as the topic is sensitive. Some also showed apathy or disinterest indicating or stating that the study is not worth it as both countries would never make peace between each other. These obstacles were overcome by explaining to the respondents and gatekeepers that this study is purely for academic ends and there is no political or financial benefit intended. The respondents were also reassured about their anonymity and confidentiality of their responses and communication, this aspect is detailed in section 4.10 of this study. But, overall, by navigating through these challenges and opportunities, the researcher was able to complete the interview process. The researcher spent time in Pakistan and South Africa to gather data. It would have been ideal to visit India for bringing in the Indian perspective directly. But a future researcher can undertake such study which brings to the fore the Indian perspective of conflict transformation with Pakistan.

4.9. DATA ANALYSIS

The technique to analyse data for this study is thematic analysis.

4.9.1. Why Thematic Analysis?

This section explains the choice of thematic analysis to analyse data for this study. This technique of data analysis attempts to locate patterns and themes in the data which has been selected and perused for the research. These patterns are recurrent throughout the data corpus, data set and data items. Thematic analysis does not limit itself merely with counting words and phrases as it happens in content analysis, rather it delves deeper into data. The purpose of this in-depth reading of data is to familiarise oneself with the explicit utterances and implicit statements that comes forth from the data. This is applicable to primary as well as secondary data.

Braun and Clarke (2006: 4) posit that thematic analysis is a widely used method in qualitative/analytic research although its use is rarely acknowledged. For a qualitative study such as this one, thematic analysis is more appropriate. This is so because there are more nuances and complexities in qualitative data. Braun and Clark (Ibid: 5) claim that thematic analysis can aptly deal with diversity and complexity of qualitative research.

Since data for this study has been gathered from diverse primary, secondary and tertiary sources, thematic analysis is more suitable for its analysis. Interviews, observations, archival sources, personal discussion and informal communications form part of the primary data. In terms of secondary and tertiary data, books, journal and magazine articles, news sources and social media were used. Therefore, thematic analysis was employed to analyse and derive findings out of such a diverse and large data corpus. A ‘theme’, which has been defined as recurring pattern, helps in finding answers, which is the ultimate aim of the research. The principal question of this study is to weigh the possibility of transforming the conflict between India and Pakistan through soft power. The objectives of the study look at the prospects and challenges of such a transformation by using soft power. The thematic analysis across the variety of data helped reach findings which are critical to answer the core research question. The next section explains how the thematic analysis was conducted.

4.9.2. Conducting the Thematic Analysis

An important step in thematic analysis is identifying themes. These themes help to discuss the findings in an organised manner. Furthermore, the diverse data range for this study that spreads over primary and secondary sources provided themes which were suitable for analysing and discussing the findings while attempting to answer the research question. The themes have been picked by keeping in mind the research question, aim and objectives of this study.

The advantage of thematic analysis as data analysis method, according to Braun and Clarke (2006: 5), is that it is flexible and accessible. One can analyse data according to the nature of study and data items. Building on this point, Braun and Clarke (2015: 197) advise that thematic analysis does not have to be done through robotic repetition and it should involve conscious choice, action and thinking. Thematic analysis can be done by using computer software as well as manual notes. In this study, both computer and hand-written notes were used to get themes of data. The data was read and re-read to locate and derive patterns and themes out of it. But this sort of focused reading

was done in case of semi-structured interviews which are a primary source of this study. But for the secondary and tertiary data, the technique of selective reading and observation was used. Combined together, primary, secondary and tertiary data yielded the themes, patterns and unique meanings, which were in line with this study. Meaning making is at the centre of qualitative research, especially when dealing with a social conflict. Hence, the themes emerging out of data helped identify core assumptions of participants and secondary sources of literature.

4.9.3. Themes and Subthemes

As for the number of themes, Braun and Clarke (2015) state that there is no right or wrong number of themes. The number of main themes and subthemes may be contingent on the nature and volume of study. This study has 9 main themes and 37 subthemes. These themes will be discussed in the next two chapters dealing with prospects and challenges. These chapters discuss and analyse findings in light of these themes. Main themes relate to prospects as well as challenges whereas subthemes are linked separately. The range of themes relates to soft power and conflict transformation and their interface in the context of the India-Pakistan conflict. The following table illustrates themes and sub-themes with regards to prospects and challenges.

Main themes	Sub themes	
	Prospects	Challenges
1. Religion: (Source of harmony and reason of discord)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common religious heritage • Multi-religious populations across borders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politicisation of religion • Religious nationalism and extremism

<p>2. History:</p> <p>(Shared past but divisive present)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living together under benign rulers in the past • Development of common culture and language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colonial clouds still hanging • Partition wounds and memories not completely healed • Identities developed in opposite directions
<p>3. Mainstream and social media:</p> <p>(A bridge and a barrier)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Image and perception transformation through positive media coverage • Digital communication through social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative building and spinning through media • Social media and personalisation of nationalistic discourse
<p>4. Citizen diplomacy through personal relations:</p> <p>(A glimmer of hope and caught in elite-driven discourse and policies)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People to people direct contact and communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Propaganda and realpolitik an obstacle in people to people communication • Visible and invisible barriers

<p>5. Culture:</p> <p>(Emphasising commonalities and widening the gulf)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common cultural heritage and items • Tourism for changing perception among public • Language commonalty • Common social festivities • Common cuisine, fashion and getup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political exigencies and showmanship fomenting cultural hostility
<p>6. Sports and entertainment sectors</p> <p>(Shared communicative platforms and acting as poisoned challis)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cricket: a potential unifier • Entertainment sector: unifying themes and messaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politicisation of sports • Divisive themes in screen production

<p>7. Military role: harbinger for peace and dominating statecraft</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct communication between militaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuclear Stalemate an ultimate challenge • Soft power tools being increasingly incorporated in hard power • Development and human capital expenditure being compromised • Proxy wars and domestic conflicts
<p>8. Externalist role and involvement: (Enlightened interests and politics of expediency)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diaspora living peacefully • Regionalisation of problems and solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selfish interests by outside players

<p>9. Political will:</p> <p>(Force-multiplier for soft power and conflict transformation and obstacle for transforming rivalry into friendship for common better and brighter future)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong and mutually beneficial trade ties • Track 2 and 3 diplomatic exchanges as vehicles for regular diplomacy • Peace activism, peace education and thinking on both sides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of official promotion and sponsorship of soft power interactions
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Table 2: Main Study Themes and Subthemes. Compiled by researcher, 2019.

4.10. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE STUDY

Qualitative research in the social sciences comes with certain ethical challenges. These ethical issues can present while doing field work in the shape of interviews and observations. These challenges are due to the fact that subjects of social inquiry research are human beings. There is a tangible interaction between the researcher and participant which according to Finlay (2002), create “bearable tension between the two. But this tension can be managed and minimised by observing and ensuring ethical standards and protocols prescribed by the relevant university faculty. Christian (2005) puts forth 4 criteria to address ethical challenges which include consent, privacy, confidentiality and acting without deception.

This research study was conducted in line with these ethical standards. The proposal for the study was reviewed and approved by the research ethics committee of the faculty of Humanities of the University of Pretoria. Since this research is related to the India-Pakistan conflict, so the researcher had to take into account the sensitivities surrounding it. The researcher did interviews, consulted archives, and engaged in observations, personal discussion and informal conversation

with relevant experts. All this field work required the researcher to follow the highest possible ethical standards. Lamers (2005) states that good research is conducted with responsibility and a positive attitude. In order to factor this in, the researcher obtained ethical authorisation from the University of Pretoria before the commencement of fieldwork.

Participants were assured of confidentiality and their anonymity if they wished so. To make the interviews and conversations more meaningful in terms of this research, the purpose of this study was explained to them. It was also explained to them that the information provided by them would be used only for this thesis. They were also assured of post-fieldwork ethics. The purpose of doing this was to reassure them that nothing that might create any inconvenience or problem for them will be mentioned or revealed. The researcher carefully analysed the data in such a way that the study does not divulge any information that the participants shared during their conversations. Observing the guidelines for this research, the participants for this study were treated with respect and they received the best attention. Moreover, the researcher conducted himself in a manner that did not make the respondents feel uncomfortable in expressing their opinions and sharing their views, feelings, emotions and experiences. The signed letters of informed consent and the transcripts and recording of interviews are kept safe to ensure trustworthiness of research. Participants were given freedom to discontinue from the study whenever they chose to do so.

Confidentiality in terms of identity of participants has been maintained by using numbers against their names. There are in total 18 interviewees for this study. Thus, they have been numbered from 1 to 18. In personal communications, however, express consent was secured from the respondents to quote their names. In informal conversations, the researcher got consent to use people's names and those who did not agree, gave permission to use their institutional affiliations. The data is kept safe on a computer for 5 years with an encrypted password. This is done with the intention to make the data available to participants if they want to access it for review or some other purpose. The information obtained from the participants is used for this study only. If the researcher needs to use it for any other research in future, the consent of the relevant participant will be sought.

While conducting interviews, participants were informed that there is no direct benefit intended. The participants were also assured that the data gathered from their interviews would be fairly used for the study and that there would be no fabrication and falsification in doing so. The

researcher made all efforts to minimally express himself so that the participants did not feel judged in any way. The researcher attempted to answer all the queries of respondents regarding the importance of this study.

4.11. REFLEXIVITY AND POSITIONALITY IN THIS STUDY

This section shines a light on the researcher's reflections about his research; fieldwork, data collection and analysis. Reflexivity is written large in the whole chapter, but this section specifically focusses on the aspect of the study which is related to researcher's positioning as a Pakistani citizen, a government officer/diplomat and a student of the University of Pretoria. According to Tracey (2013: 3), the mind and body of a qualitative researcher is a research instrument absorbing, sifting through and interpreting the world through participation, observation and interviewing. This facet of the study resonates with the nature of qualitative social science research where an element of subjectivity cannot be entirely ruled out. Hence reflexivity on researcher's positionality in the study is an attempt to limit the subjectivity factor. Therefore, it is important to state the researcher's own background and position vis-à-vis this research. For Manheim, Rich and Willnat (2018: 6), qualitative analysis is informed and contextualised by a researcher's understanding and positionality.

As a government servant, it was both an advantage and an obstacle for the researcher to recruit participants for his interviews. Some respondents such as government servants were easy-going in giving interviews. But some participants showed reluctance to be recruited. But at the same time, some respondents were more candid in giving their responses indicating that they had confidence in the researcher and that he would use their information with due regard to their privacy being a government employee himself. Similarly, accessing archives involved a cumbersome procedure, but once given access, the researcher was told to behave as a responsible citizen. This was despite the fact that the researcher was given access to only those archives which were available for public use. The researcher was not allowed to make copies of any documents; therefore, only notes were taken.

Being a Pakistani citizen also helped the researcher to gather primary data for this research. Had the researcher been a foreigner seeking such data and to recruit such participants, he would have definitely faced obstacles. Being a speaker of Pakistan's national language Urdu and its

provincial language of the largest Province Punjab, also helped the researcher to get to his respondents and their minds albeit that interviews were conducted in the English language. Being a Pakistani citizen, doing research about the India-Pakistan conflict involves an inherent bias. In order to address this facet of the research, the researcher consulted secondary sources from India, Indian newspapers, Indian movies and interviews with film and sports celebrities. The researcher also made use of books, research articles and newspaper op-eds emanating from a third country to add more neutral voices.

The research bears the mark of the researcher's own experiences and observations as a Pakistani citizen, diplomat and former academician. The researcher traveled to India twice in 2011 and 2013 to participate in academic conferences. Hence, he could relate to some of his participants' experiences about securing a visa for India, traveling there and interacting with Indian citizens. Tracey (2013: 3) notes that good research provides opportunity for transformation. So, the researcher undertook this research to study the India-Pakistan conflict from a perspective of conflict transformation. This conflict, up till now, is viewed mainly from the prism of conflict management and conflict resolution and is shaped largely by hard power. But this research addresses the question of how this conflict can be transformed and how soft power sources can aid in this transformation.

CHAPTER 5

PROSPECTS OF SOFT POWER FOR TRANSFORMING THE INDIA-PAKISTAN CONFLICT

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the findings in terms of prospects of transformation of conflict between India and Pakistan. These findings have arisen out of data collected and analysed for this study. Thematic analysis has been used as data analysis technique. Themes have been divided into two categories which relate to prospects and challenges discussed in chapters 5 and 6 respectively. There are 9 main themes which have been broken down into subthemes on the same pattern that they relate to prospects and challenges. These themes and subthemes address the principal question of the study and attempt to fulfil the objectives of this study.

To reiterate, the principal research question driving this dissertation is that of how soft power can transform the India-Pakistan conflict focusing on the prospects and challenges in the way of transforming this conflict through soft power. There are 4 secondary questions which are:

- I. How has the focus on hard power by both India and Pakistan perpetuated the conflict between both countries?
- II. What are the soft power resources of India and Pakistan which can be used for transforming the conflict between them?
- III. How can these soft power resources be deployed for transforming the India/Pakistan conflict?
- IV. What are the challenges of using these soft power resources to transform the conflict? And how can they be mitigated?

In order to set the direction of this and the next chapter dealing with findings, it is also appropriate to revisit the proposition of this study along with the concepts of conflict transformation, soft power and moral imagination. A revisit will also serve to put forth a

constructivist epistemological justification informing and guiding the selection of a qualitative research approach and methods for the study.

5.2. REVISITING THE CONCEPTUAL MATRIX OF THE STUDY

This study has been inspired by an abiding belief in hope and optimism for transforming the long outstanding conflict between India and Pakistan. Exuding this spirit, Misra (2010) wrote in the preface of his book on the India-Pakistan conflict that “This book is about transforming despair into hope, conflict into cooperation, mistrust into lasting understanding, and above all rivalry into partnership”. The main proposition of the study is that the ongoing multidimensional complex conflict between India and Pakistan can be transformed. Sardar (2007) approached the India-Pakistan conflict by using the conceptual framework of conflict transformation. That study, however, did not address the question of what can be done to bring about transformation in this perennial conflict, which pervades all aspects of interstate politics and inter-societal relations of India and Pakistan. This study attempted this answer by taking into account the potential of soft power for transformation of this conflict. It follows that after positing that soft power can transform this conflict, then the interrelated question to consider is how soft power can transform this interstate conflict. In order to buttress the proposition about the potential of soft power for the India-Pakistan conflict transformation, the concept of moral imagination has been explored. Moral imagination can imbue soft power resources and their actors with positivity, otherwise they can easily succumb to the conflictive discourse and mindset. Constructivist interpretivist epistemology enabled the research to focus on people along with governments and other state entities. It also helped to give primary consideration to people’s voices and feelings. The findings point to the fact that soft power can transform this conflict, albeit there are challenges in doing so. Therefore, on the one hand there is optimism for durable peace and reconciliation between the two nuclear neighbours, but on the other hand, one must not lose sight of the ground realities. So, the findings of this study under various themes highlight the prospects of conflict transformation and take into account the challenges for such a transformation.

The main thrust of conflict transformation is on the possibility of altering relationships, ideas, attitudes, emotions, identities, values, discourse, feelings and socio-political

environment of actors and structures which create, generate and sustain a conflict. Moreover, according to this approach of conflict, there is a positive side of conflict. There has to be positive interaction and communication among people locked in a conflict. When this happens, the matrix of conflict can transform. Soft power mainly resides in people who are at both ends using it and consuming it. Therefore, soft power and its resources are well within the grasp of people, contrary to hard power which lies in the domain of state apparatus. Moral imagination enables people to view one another in positive manner even though they are found trapped in conflict. Soft power imbued with moral imagination can have salutary effects on thinking and on the perception of people. In the case of India and Pakistan, soft power driven by moral imagination, can bring the people of the countries nearer to one another. Soft power divorced from moral imagination can render it to be a mere propaganda tool tinged by a negative and violence-oriented mindset. As explored and elaborated by this study, this is already happening in the India-Pakistan conflict. The military establishments of both nations are now extensively and overtly employing soft power for point scoring against each other. While doing so, they, by default, end up fanning more nationalistic sentiments furthering the process and tendency of otherisation. Therefore, moral imagination becomes integral to the use of soft power in a positive manner to build bridges instead of fomenting hostility by its negative use. This chapter will dwell on themes which highlight the existing prospects and discover new ones for transforming the conflict between these two South Asian nuclear neighbours.

5.3. RELIGION: A SOURCE OF HARMONY

This theme signifies the role of religion in forging communally friendly ties between Indians and Pakistanis. Religion, being the most powerful everyday resonating factor in both countries, is also strongly present in soft power sources such as cinema and other facets of the entertainment industry like music, theatre and TV plays. The two subthemes revolve around the importance of shared religious heritage and linked to them is the common religious population on both sides of the border.

Religion plays a pivotal role in intergroup conflict as it is one of the most recurring symbols of collective lives. Frazer and Friendly (2015: 3) enumerate 5 particular aspects which link religion with conflict. They include religion as community, a set of teachings, spirituality,

practice and discourse. Hence religion can play a transformative role in individual as well as collective life. They further argue that religion can be instrumental in escalating conflict or promoting peace. Participant 1 (civil society) states in this context, “Peace between India and Pakistan is possible if religious peace messaging is expanded”. In the case of the India-Pakistan conflict, religion has been used for warmongering and peacemaking. This section sheds light on religion as a source of long-term peace between the two countries by transforming their worldviews about each other.

Islam and Hinduism are two major religions in Pakistan and India respectively. But there are other religions which maintain a visible presence in both nations such as Sikhism, Buddhism and Christianity along with a host of smaller religions and sects. The significance of religion in the two countries can be gauged from the fact that it is interminably linked with their identity and *raison d’être* for existence. Religion is also a permanent social marker in both nations. In the day-to-day interaction people belonging to these various religions coexist and get along quite happily. Moreover, in case of India and Pakistan, a great deal of cultural commonalities are rooted in shared religious practices making culture and religion intertwined. That is why followers of Islam and Hinduism visit the same shrines irrespective of creed. In movies produced in both nations, religious harmony is exhibited and thematised. For instance, in a Bollywood movie “Zameen” (2002) translated as “earth” a Hindu man is depicted having a Muslim wife. Participant 3 (civil society) stated, “Religious considerations never come in my conscience when I am thinking of India or Pakistan and their bilateral relations”. This resonates with a view of so many Indians and Pakistanis who think religion is a positive influence on them or simply do not weigh it in their interaction. Participant 13, a sportsperson, while recalling his visits to India, stated that “I visited Hindu temples in India without having any second thoughts”. For him it did not threaten his own religion. “It helped me to see that how Hindus engage in religious rituals”, the participant stated. The researcher can personally relate to the experience of this participant as during his 2011 visit to India, he also visited a temple in India. This shows that religion can be used to transform perceptions and feelings of Indians and Pakistanis which can transform their conflictive mindset.

5.3.1. Common Religious Heritage

This subtheme brings to light the shared and common religious heritage which unites Hindus and Muslims of all shades. The positive influence of living side by side for centuries is that there are common religious heritage sites and shrines revered by Hindus and Muslims with the same zeal and zest. These religious heritage sites are located on both sides of the border. There are ancient Hindu temples in Pakistan and there are equally important Muslim shrines in India. Both countries provided for separate visa categories for visiting religious shrines in 1974 and this agreement was updated in 2012 (Hindustan Times, 08 September 2012). This also gave rise to the term “religious diplomacy” between both countries. Indian and Pakistani movies and dramas portray these shrines as sacred for followers of both religions.

Apart from this, Pakistan is a home to the ancient Sikh Gurdwaras. Pakistan also hosts holy sites of Buddhism whose followers are spread over India, Nepal and other South East Asian nations. The Government of Pakistan realises the importance of these holy shrines for non-Muslims and encourages religious tourism. In 2019 the Government of Pakistan introduced an online visa facility for promoting religious tourism among other categories of tourism. The visa procedure in the manual category has also been streamlined.⁵ The recently opened special visa-free religious corridor for Sikhs of India to visit the birthplace of the founding father of their religion speaks volumes of the powerful transformative impact of religion. If this visa-free travel arrangement is extended for all religious communities for the whole country by Pakistan and responded in kind by India, then Hindus and Muslims can directly interact and communicate, which is crucial for transforming a conflict. Underlining the importance of such face-to-face interaction in a conflict setting Rupesinghe (1995: 45) notes that trust can be developed by face-to-face interaction and psychological barriers can be overcome. It reduces misunderstandings, builds and enhances personal relationships. This is consistent with Lederach’s explanation of moral imagination which creates opportunities and extraordinary moments when conflict is transcended (Lederach, 2005: 71). In this sense, religion is a soft power attraction tool between citizens of both India and Pakistan and can be appropriated to transform the age-long conflict between both countries.

⁵ For new visa rules and regulations of Pakistan see www.moi.gov.pk and www.nadra.gov.pk.

One important feature of this common religious heritage, which though linked to culture and also has religious roots, is music. There are special songs, dances and lyrics performed at Muslim and Hindu shrines, mausoleums and other religious places. These musical performances and singers are famous in both nations alike. Participant 4, a musician himself and a frequent traveler to India stated, “Pakistani singers of religious songs like Abida Hussain, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and Rahat Fateh Ali Khan are quite famous in India”. This combination of music and religion infuses a spirit of tolerance and accommodation across religious lines and national boundaries. If states allow more religious festivals and gatherings, then more people would throng to these events having more communication. This can help alleviate the religious extremism and otherisation in the name of religion. Feelings can transform in this sort of direct interaction thus preparing the environment for overall conflict transformation at societal level in both India and Pakistan. As scholars of contact theory have argued, contact between conflicting groups can reduce conflict between them as it enables common ground of understanding which foster inter-group cooperation and the pursuit of shared goals (Everett, 2013; Isike 2017). This is so even though scholars such as Pettigrew and Tropp (2008) articulate conditions under which contact can produce friendship between opposing groups. Participant 14 (sports) stated, “I thought that India is another planet and its people strange creatures. But when I traveled to India and interacted with my fellow cricketers, it changed my hearts and I was able to build life-long friendships”.

5.3.2. Multi-Religious Populations Across Borders

This subtheme highlights the role of people of the same religion populating both nations. It is on this count that religion can play a transformative role in the India-Pakistan conflict owing to these multi-religious populations living across borders in the two countries. Fourteen percent of India’s population happens to be Muslim which is almost equal to the whole Muslim population of Pakistan. Similarly, Pakistan’s Hindu and Sikh minorities constitute 1 percent of the country’s population. This cross-border religious population between India and Pakistan fosters religious harmony and tolerance. There are cross-religious marriages in both nations although this tendency is more widespread in India. This assertion can be gauged from the fact that the most famous Bollywood movie star Sharukh Khan, a Muslim, is married to a Hindu woman. In another instance, another Bollywood star Ritik Roshan, is also married to a Muslim woman. These real-life examples demonstrate to the people in India and Pakistan that people

belonging to different religions can marry and happily live together afterward. Pakistani cricketers such as Shoaib Malik and Muhammad Abbas are married to Indian women and is appreciated on this account.

Common religious populations in both nations have the potential to bridge the religious gulf which is a main source of the conflict between them. Interfaith harmony underpinned by cultural events can ignite the moral imagination which otherwise may remain latent. Films and songs produced in both nations raise this consciousness among Muslims and Hindus. Participant 4 (music) wrote and composed a song which eulogises friendship between India and Pakistan by linking it up with religious sentiments. He recalled, “When I am in India, I don’t see myself in a country of Hindus. They are so nice to me that I feel that I am in my own country”. A Bollywood movie “Veer Zara” (2003) is based on a theme of Hindu-Muslim brotherhood and fraternal love. Love stories depicting Hindu male characters and Muslim female characters and vice versa are an oft-repeated pattern in the cinema industry of both countries. Religion can also play a role in constructing a South Asian identity between the two countries. As Wendt (1992: 409) argues, identity is constructed and not intrinsic. Identity is also relational and a learned process which can be transformed by social interaction. The religious interaction among Indians and Pakistanis can enable them to learn and construct identity based on religious harmony opposed to conflict which derives fuel from religious extremism.

5.4. HISTORY: SHARED PAST

This theme captures the shared communitarian bond between Hindus and Muslims in the pre-independence united India. The two subthemes then highlight the environment in which this bonding evolved and at the same time gave birth and currency to the common language and culture, which persists even today and show no signs of abating despite the perennial India-Pakistan conflict.

Hindus and Muslims, two predominant socio-religious communities of India and Pakistan, lived together for more than one thousand years. Living side by side for such a long period of time fostered an environment of mutual coexistence in all spheres of life. There were intermarriages which resulted in blood and ethnic ties between the two communities. This is

evident from the fact that there are people in the two religions that come from one ethnic stock. This is more common in the two Punjabs in India and Pakistan. For instance, the Jatt caste resides on both sides of the border. There are Muslim Jatts in Pakistan and Hindu and Sikh Jatts in India. It is on account of moral imagination that, despite religious differences, Hindus and Muslims lived side by side so peacefully. Referring to this aspect of community cohabitation motivated by moral considerations Appolloni and Hrynkow (2016: 114) note that “humans expand their moral imagination when they are engaged in mutual relationships”.

Participant 15 (sports) who hails from the Jatt caste in Pakistani Punjab, touched on this point and stated that “For me there is no difference between myself and Hindus and Sikhs belonging to my caste residing in India”. He reflected on very strong friendships with Hindus and Sikhs living across the border. There are several Punjabi movies produced in both countries which revolve around the theme of Punjabi brotherhood irrespective of national and territorial boundaries. In January 2016, the Ajoka Theatre in Pakistan scripted and performed a play called “Bhagat.” This play was about a mystic personality whose religious affiliation is contested by Hindus and Muslims alike. The play showed that this shared and contested claim emerged because of strong bonds between Hindus and Muslims. The play also sent out the message that unity among Hindus and Muslims is possible as it existed before the partition of India and Pakistan.

5.4.1. Living Together Under Benign Rulers of the Past

This subtheme focuses on the rulers who governed the Indian Subcontinent in the past in a way that they encouraged a multi-racial, multi-ethnic and multi-religious harmony. This environment went to construct an identity which trespassed all those differences. This fits with the constructivist discourse on identity which is a socially learned and constructed phenomenon germinating through social process and intersubjectivity (McLeod, 2008: 6). It is on this account that a shared past was peaceful through a mutually co-constituted identity among Hindus, Muslims and followers of other smaller religions. For transforming the conflict between India and Pakistan, this past can be relived. There are people who advocate that this enlightened past can be reconstructed via emulation for a bright future for permanent peace between the two nations. Holding on to this Misra (2010: 17) argues that if past conflict can affect conflict in the future, then past cooperation can also influence future cooperation. There

are movies such as “Mughl-e-Azam” (1960) translated as “great Mughal”, which depicted this theme of a benign ruling dispensation eradicating terrestrial differences among people. The movie was produced in India and was equally famous in Pakistan. There are people in Pakistan who fondly recalled watching that movie by travelling to India and mixing up with the Indian spectators there. In fact, there are songs which eulogise this inter-communitarian harmony in the past.

Taking a leaf from the past, both governments can create or construct an environment which can bridge the current divide among people. Participant 3 (civil society) is of the opinion that the governments in both countries can learn from these past rulers and then replicate these lessons. “In this way people will follow their governments. If this environment is sustained then it will end up producing more friendly discourses and representations in films, movies and songs,” stated the participant. Madiha Gauhar, founder of Pakistan’s largest theatre group Ajoka, narrates an incident in these words:

“In 2009 we were performing a play in Indian State of Kerala, a political leader along with his supporters tried to disrupt the show. The hosts convinced him to refrain. He however handed over a letter to me stating that this is in connection with the protest over Mumbai attacks. I took the letter and told him that we are here to spread the message of peace from Pakistan. When the play ended, I spotted that political leader who was there with his whole family. He walked up to me and said that although I did not understand the language of the play as it was in Punjabi, but I was really moved by the musical performances and also got the sense of what the play is about” (Gauhar, 28 March 2017).

She then went on to say that the same incident shows two sides, “That is why I am hopeful that relations between the two nations would improve” (Gauhar, 28 March 2017).

5.4.2. Development of Common Culture and Language

This subtheme assesses the role of culture being a soft power source which plays a great role in India-Pakistan overall relations. Both countries deploy it through numerous tools which mainly include film, song, TV and theatre plays, and popular social festivals. This common cultural milieu is the outcome of comingling and cohabitation among various communities of

South Asia for several centuries. This cultural commonalty binds people from both sides. It is on this count that Indians and Pakistanis do not feel alien in each other's countries. This feeling of familiarisation becomes even stronger when familial ties figure in. This is so because there are people of the same family and clan living on both sides of border. Pakistan's former Foreign Secretary, Arshad Hussain, recalls an incident when he interacted with his Indian counterpart, Mr. Aziz, who happened to be his cousin. Therefore, culture can change negative perceptions of Indians and Pakistanis towards one another which can transform the conflictive environment in the long term. Ajoka theatre performed a play in New Delhi, India in 1992, which was based on the real life story of two sisters who were separated by the partition in 1947 - one lived in India and other lived in Pakistan. More strikingly, both sisters happened to be in the show business world. So, the play was not only portraying their real stories, but both were performing in the play. Therefore, this is how soft power blends with the history of both nations and increases the prospects of peace.

Language similarity between Hindi and Urdu which are the lingua franca of India and Pakistan respectively, is a corollary for intermingling of the two countries for well over a thousand years. Despite the fact that Hindi has its roots in Sanskrit language and Urdu is a mishmash of Arabic, Turkish and Persian, the similarity between these two languages is striking. Speakers of both languages can easily understand each other. Regional languages also bear similarity. So, this language bond makes soft power even more effective for conflict transformation. Hindi cinema is the most popular in Pakistan outside India. And Pakistani songs and TV plays are most heard and watched in India outside the country. Participant 4 (music) narrated, "When I went to a passport office in India to renew my visa, the officer sitting there requested me to sing a song before proceeding further". This is owing to the language commonalty which antedates the partition of 1947. This can enhance the prospect of transforming the rivalry into friendship between the two countries. But this can be done when there is a conscious effort to magnify the positive elements of positive forces and factors and neutralise the divisive propaganda. Rupesinghe (1995: 247-248) discusses an initiative named "Field Day" in Ireland. This project was conceived by literary figures, singers and actors to bring about reconciliation through transformation of perception among the conflicting parties in Ireland. Their main slogan is that there were 4 Provinces in ancient Ireland. We are striving for the fifth province which is a province of mind, free from stereotyping and sectarianism.

Such initiatives between India and Pakistan can transform their relations through art, poetry and culture. Ajoka Theatre from Pakistan scripted a theatre play “border border” in 2003. The play was performed in Lahore, Pakistan and Amritsar, India. Children from both nations acted in the play and this performance was a hit in both countries. According to Madeeha Gauhar, the director of the play, such kinds of performances are facilitated by the language and culture commonality between the two countries (Gauhar, 2009: 93-94).

5.5. MAINSTREAM AND SOCIAL MEDIA AS BRIDGE

The theme captioned above and two subthemes below analyse the role and impact of conventional media and social media in transforming the India-Pakistan conflict. Both these media are employed to deploy soft power. Due to commonality of language, the impact of media is even greater in both nations. It is media which keeps the message of peace alive even in the most difficult times. Media can build what Rupesinghe (1995: 23) terms as “sustainable citizen-based peace building initiatives” and Faiz (2009: 13) describe as “citizen dialogue”. As it pertains to the current relations between India and Pakistan, the media of both countries can play a constructive role. Media is important for the communication environment of a country (Melone, Terzis and Li, 2003: 4). Participant 10 (retired diplomat) while highlighting the role of media to promote goodwill between the two nations noted, “It is media which can play the most significant role in conveying the soft image of Pakistan to India and vice versa”.

In conventional media the Indian TV channels are keenly watched in Pakistan. Especially their entertainment content is avidly watched and absorbed by Pakistanis across all social spectra and age groups. For instance, a famous Indian comedy show “Kapil Sharma Show” is liked very much in Pakistan. A special feature of this show is that it hosts Pakistani sports celebrities and show business personalities along with their Indian counterparts. Pakistani entertainment content is also liked in India. Tyagi (2016), in analysing the reasons for fame of Pakistani entertainment content in India, notes that it is the novelty of Pakistani TV dramas and cultural connections, which makes them popular in India. He points out the Pakistani TV dramas such as “Humsafar” (2011) translated as “companion” and “Zindagi Gulzar Hi” (2012) translated as “life is beautiful” were universally famous in India. Even at the height of tensions both countries, the media has voices that call for sanity. In terms of

projection of each other's films, songs and dramas, the media environment remains amenable to positive influences. The most recent example of this connection is the release of a Pakistani TV drama named "Churhail" (2020) translated as "witch" on an Indian TV network by a Pakistani playwright, Asim Abbasi (The News, 03 August 2020).

Social media has influenced the relations between India and Pakistan in a significant way. Combined with conventional media, the impact of social media has become more potent in shaping perception among Indians and Pakistanis. Social media has helped to improve communication between the citizens of both nations. In the wake of explosion of social media platforms, there are now virtual communities consisting of citizens of both nations. So, there is a dialogue going on among the citizens unhindered by the governments. Participant 5 (film) stated, "People to people contact has interesting dynamics. It connotes social defiance by people. People communicate to the governments that they can work for peace despite restrictions imposed by governments". This sort of interaction can go a long way in transforming the image about one another, hence transforming the bilateral relations in a positive manner. Participant 4 (music) stated, "It is because of social media that my friendships with the Indians have multiplied which was not possible back in 1980s and 1990s".

5.5.1. Image and Perception Transformation through Positive Media Coverage

This subtheme speaks to the fact that the conflictive environment between India and Pakistan has adversely impacted the image and perception of their masses with regards to one another. For conflict transformation between the two countries, it is essential that this negative image and perception are transformed. Underlining the importance of change in individuals in a conflict situation Ahmar (2011: 88) states that "in conflict transformation attempt is made at bringing about individual cognitive change before broader organisational change including bureaucratic, administrative, societal, community and subgroup change". In the context of India and Pakistan, this transformation can be helped a great deal if the media in both nations highlights the positive elements found in the culture of both nations. Films and dramas thematise such positive elements and media also steps in to convey and communicate this. For instance, whenever there is some cricket match between India and Pakistan, the TV channels of both nations co-organise related programmes. In these programmes, the famous sports persons of both nations jointly participate in these talk shows. Similarly, the stars of the

entertainment sector interact with one another on electronic and social media platforms. Since they have a following in both countries, their own camaraderie sends positive signals to the people in general. This is where conventional media becomes a vehicle to enhance the appeal of soft power, which is crucial for transforming perceptions. Referring to this salutary role of the media participant 6 (theatre) stated, “Media coverage of important events such as sports contests and notable personalities can be done in a way that it promotes unity and does not sow the seeds of division”.

5.5.2. Digital Communication and Relations through Social Media

The subtheme captioned above reflects on the role of social media, which has added an entire new dimension to the India-Pakistan relations. It has made personal communication quite easy and seamless among the citizens of both nations. Even governments rely on social media for sending their positive image to the rest of the world. For instance, while inaugurating a cross-border religious corridor for Sikhs in November 2019, the Pakistan Government invited 25 digital content creators who were doing live streaming of the event on Facebook and Instagram (Jahangir, 2020). Direct contact and communication are vital for transforming the perception of people and augment their friendly feelings and sentiments towards one another. Lederach (2015: 25), reflecting on the importance of personal relationships in a conflict situation, argues that the relations among individuals are a web of connections forming a larger context, which is essentially a human ecosystem. Indians and Pakistanis have discovered newer and stronger ways of connecting with one another digitally through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn and Skype. These communication channels can foster common interpretations of divisive events, facts and narratives among the citizenry of both nations. Participant 1 (civil society) had this to say, “Peace has now a greater chance between India and Pakistan as people can talk directly through social media and without the monitoring done by Governments”. Conflict between these two nations is partly fueled by opposing interpretations of historical, cultural, religious and political issues. So, the personal and group interaction enabled by digital media platforms can bridge this divide and get people of both states to agree on divisive issues. Participant 4 (music) spoke of his ongoing relationships with his Indian friends through social media which were not possible previously. He also admitted, “If social media platforms had not existed then I would

not have been able to gain so much popularity in India for my music, which I am enjoying currently”. This shows that soft power can be appropriated through social media platforms.

The influence of social media is more visible and far-reaching in the domain of soft power in India and Pakistan. The show-business fraternity and sports persons in particular attract more audiences due to popularity of these two soft power tools in both nations. But it does not mean that people from other walks of life such as politicians, media personalities, religious figures and civil society activists do not enjoy popularity on social media. They also have a large following on their social media profiles which connects the people in both nations. Thus, social media has enhanced the prospects of conflict transformation through direct communication among the citizens of both nations. This communication can break the vicious cycle of hatred and hostility among individuals. It can construct platforms for positive change, hence creating a new reality of peaceful relations between the two nations.

5.6. CITIZEN DIPLOMACY THROUGH PERSONAL RELATIONS

The theme discussed in this section highlights the element of personal relations among the Indian and Pakistani citizens despite the ongoing conflict between the two countries. The subtheme then contemplates at length on people to people contact and linkages in the two nations.

Human conflict is essentially rooted in relationships. Relationships in terms of their content, context and structure need to be positively altered in a conflict for its transformation (Lederach, 2015: 21). Personal relationships among Indians and Pakistanis can be built and sustained through soft power, examples of which can be found in the public as well as private domains. The friendship between a Pakistani cricketer Shahid Afridi and Indian cricketer Yuvraj Singh on digital media received publicity in both countries before it ended because of a political twist. Similarly, the personal relations among the show-business community also get a lot of public attention. So, this sends a message to the general public that friendship is possible between Indians and Pakistanis. This is also because of celebrity culture in both nations whose main drivers are sports and show business. Out of 18 interviewees for this study, eight highlighted their personal bonds with the Indian citizens. For example, Participant 14

(sports) stated, “some of my Indian friends even discuss their personal issues with me”. Participant 15 (sports) narrates his account of his friendships in India in the following words:

“I developed friendship with a Sikh customs officer in India during my hockey trips to India. Once during my visit, I went to his home and had food there. His 7 relatives came to Pakistan to visit Sikh shrines. I took them to Guru Nanak shrine. I also took them to my home. I informed the police officers of my area. I toured them to city. I took them to hasan abdal. Till today I have relations with them. It was in 1985. They still invite me on their weddings”.

This shows that personal relations among notable personalities as well as ordinary citizens can set an example of friendship despite living across conflict divides.

5.6.1. People to People Direct Contact and Communication

The previous section explained the role of digital media to improve and expand people to people contact between India and Pakistan. This section focuses on the theme relating to direct people to people contact, which can create more empathy, compassion and emotional bonding, which according to Thomas (2018: 68), is the sine qua non for moral imagination. People can have enlightened experiences about one another when they directly meet one another. The soft power interaction, such as in cricket and watching movies together, can promote direct contact among the people of India and Pakistan. Participant 14 (sports) touched on this point by stating, “When cricket is played, then public of both nations interacts, people visit each other’s nations”. In the past, people of both nations would travel to watch cricket matches on each other’s soil. This greatly facilitated the direct public interaction which is an important vehicle for conflict transformation.

Participant 13 stated, “I heard a lot of good things about India, but my image about the country and the people changed when I myself visited India in 1998 to play cricket there”. This is in line with one of the main pillars of conflict transformation, which is also espoused by contact theory, namely that direct interaction between people can alter their stereotypical mindset about the issues in a conflict. The impact of tourism on mitigating interstate conflict can be traced in inter-Korean conflict. The Mount Kumgang tourist project conceived and initiated by South and North Korea in 1998 introduced a series of actions and events which

allowed the travel and tourism between the two nations (Hur, 2017: 85). Pakistan and India signed a visa liberalisation agreement in 2012, which for the first time introduced group tourism and a separate category for pilgrim visas. It also allowed people above the age of 65 to get a visa on arrival. Academicians and businessmen have also been facilitated through this agreement (Hindustan Times, 08 September 2012). Therefore, this sort of free movement of people in each other's hinterlands has the potential create a positive image of one another, increase the exposure to soft power tools and prepare peace constituencies, which is in line with the vision of peace through conflict transformation. If people that are on opposing sides meet with one another and communicate, then they can be able to construct platforms for constructive change (Lederach, 2004: 16). The relations between India and Pakistan greatly hinge on relations among their citizens. Transformation of these relations is already there as demonstrated by some participants of this study, but it has to be widely occurring and acknowledged.

5.7. CULTURAL COMMONALITIES

This theme with its five subthemes brings to light common cultural elements in both nations. The role of culture in India-Pakistan conflictive relations was discussed in the section 5.4.2. This section, however, takes into account those cultural traits which span over the whole of India and Pakistan and recur in people's daily lives. They also enrich the tapestry of soft power in both countries, hence affecting the perception of people.

5.7.1. Common Culture and Heritage Items

This subtheme brings forth an important factor, namely that the outcome of past proximity and community interaction among various socio-religious people of united India, led to the birth and growth of a cultural heritage which cuts across geographical and religious lines. This has nurtured and preserved common cultural heritage in both nations, which manifests in mutually revered religious shrines, archaeological sites, monuments, and other relics of the past. Participant 2 (civil society) pointed to this shared cultural heritage which is preserved in the Pakistani and Indian Punjabs. Building on the same theme participant 16 (trade and business) not only highlighted this heritage, but went on to suggest that "Both governments should encourage this shared preservation of culture". Participant 5 (film) pointed out that "There are

folk stories which are understood in both countries. Movies and dramas are produced on such folk lore. So, they also bring the people of the two countries on a single and shared plane”. Further denoting this, Inayat (24 May 2013) asserts that despite being two separate nations, India and Pakistan practice similar culture under two different flags. Cultural heritage in both nations also exhibits social characteristics like hospitality, courtesy towards women, respect for elders and value of personal friendship. These traits arise out of moral imagination, which generates and sustain these humane sentiments. If utilised to improve India-Pakistan relations, these cultural aspects can be of critical importance. The following subthemes will specify the cultural areas which can transform the conflict between the two nations.

5.7.2. Tourism for Changing Perceptions

This theme focuses on the potential of tourism for transforming the bitter relations between India and Pakistan. Tourism is the most effective way for changing the perception of people about one another in both countries. Both governments are cognizant of this fact and in September 2012, allowed visas for group tourism ranging from 10 to 50 persons in a single group. Previously tourist visa was hard to obtain, and once a visa was secured, a person could travel to only one city. This rule was applied by both nations. But as per the new visa agreement, tourists are given visas for 5 cities. However, it is still desirable that tourist visas should have no restrictions on the number of cities that can be visited.

There is no language barrier and great physical distance between India and Pakistan. This also helps tourism to flourish. Tourist attractions mainly include religious sites along with a host of other site-seeing areas. Visiting each other’s countries also enables people to enjoy hospitality, food, shopping and making personal friendships. Participant 14 (sports) fondly recalls his trips to India and stated, “I went to India ten times. As a tourist I really had a good experience. When I go to India, I do shopping. I also visit some religious and historic shrines and monuments. I also take interest in Indian culture”. Sports persons and sports fans always get more opportunities to embark on travel for the purpose of watching and taking part in contests between the two nations. This can be replicated in the entertainment sector where both nations can allow people to visit cinemas and concerts in each other’s territories. In this way, tourism as a soft power source can supplement other soft power sources, hence enhancing the prospects for transforming the tense environment between the two countries.

5.7.3. Language Commonality

The subtheme here pinpoints the potency of sharing language to improve the relations among Indian and Pakistani citizens. Communication avenues and channels among the peoples of the two nations are quite strong and seamless. This is due to language bond which binds the people across borders together. This also helps soft power resources to be deployed more effectively. For instance, the Hollywood movies are not as popular in India and Pakistan as Bollywood and Lollywood. This is because an overwhelming majority of the citizens in both countries cannot speak and understand English. Most Hollywood movies are translated into Hindi and Urdu for the local audiences. The same goes for English songs. This hindrance does not exist in the movies and songs being produced in India and Pakistan. It is on this account that singers and actors of Pakistan and India have a massive fan following irrespective of territorial boundaries. Atif Aslam, a famous Pakistani singer, equally popular in India, in an independence-day concert organised by the Pakistan embassy in New York in August 2018, sang a few lines from his own Bollywood song. He was criticised for doing this. In response, he stated that music has no borders and doing so has not dented his patriotism (Dawn, 19 August 2018). Atif did so because there is no language difference in his Urdu and Hindi songs. This language commonality also makes it convenient for Pakistani artists to perform in India and Indian artists to perform in Pakistan. Ease and flow of communication has salutary effects on conflicting parties. It can help people to develop greater understanding around divisive issues. According to Galtung (2007: 143), peace must be organic i.e., it must develop from within. This point put forward by Emerson when he notes that “peace cannot be attained by violence; it can be attained through understanding” (2007: 89). Therefore, common language between India and Pakistan can foster communicative platforms which can create what Shafiq (2011) terms “cognitive structures for the construction of a new identity rooted in shared perception opposed to divisive narratives”.

5.7.4. Common Cuisine, Fashion and Self-Expression

This subtheme brings into focus the unifying potential of cuisine, fashion and getup across the whole social spectrum in India and Pakistan. Food is of vital importance in both nations. In Pakistan, this is mainly so because alcohol is legally banned in the country. So, food provides a partying atmosphere in Pakistan. Even in India where alcohol is legal, the situation is not much different because social stigma is attached to the use of alcohol. Therefore, food fills the

void for celebratory occasions. Like language, food habits are quite common in both countries. With similarity in taste, there are differences in the dishes of both nations. This attracts people of both nations towards each other's food. Participant 4 (entertainment) and participant 14 (sports) expressed their delight in enjoying Indian cuisine and used to bring famous Indian sweets on their journeys back home. The researcher himself during his visits to India found an element of commonality in the food of both nations. One expression highlighting this is the word "foodistan" out of Pakistan and Hindustan which is India's Hindi name. Therefore, food is another unifying aspect of the masses of both nations.

Fashion and getup, as well as other mode of self-expression, are another important common soft power tool in both nations. This also increases the appeal of Indian films in Pakistan and Pakistani TV plays in India. Costumes worn in these visual performances and style exhibited is imitated by people on both sides. A video uploaded on YouTube on 1 June 2020 shows famous Indian and Pakistani actresses putting on the same dresses. Participant 6 (entertainment) proudly mentions that she likes Indian artificial jewelry. She stated, "Whenever I travel to India, I always set my eyes on jewelry and saris". There is a good deal of similarity in the dressing habits and style in both nations, so this also acts to strengthen the bonds among the masses. This similarity is proudly demonstrated by the citizens of both nations no matter how tense the relations happen to be. Due to easy access to mainstream and digital media, this trend of copying each other's fashion and getup goes on without letup. This can solidify the prospects of transforming the perception at popular level.

5.7.5. Common Festivals and Festivities

This subtheme highlights that there are religious, social and cultural festivals and festivities which are commonly and jointly celebrated among the people in India and Pakistan. Movies and songs in both countries often depict these common occasions of happiness and togetherness. For instance, a Bollywood movie "Mamu", translated as "maternal uncle" produced in 1994, picturised a family reunion from India and Pakistan over a wedding festival. The movie not only depicted similarity in the wedding culture of both nations, but it also showed the yearning of people of both countries to get away from cumbersome visa procedures for travel.

These sorts of festivities and festivals are based around music, dance and storytelling in folk lore with musical performance. The Hindu festivals of Holi and Dewali and the Muslim festival of Eid are the most commonly observed in both countries. On these festive occasions, the political leaders and other notable personalities send out messages of goodwill cutting across national and socio-religious lines. This also brings people on a single platform transcending the political differences between both nations. These commonly held and observed socio-religious festivals stir the moral imagination in people which then alter their negative stereotyping about one another.

5.8. SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT SECTORS: CONSTRUCTING AND EXPANDING SHARED COMMUNICATIVE PLATFORMS

This section consists of one main theme and two subthemes and explains the role and power of sports and the entertainment sector in mitigating the impact of conflictive atmosphere between India and Pakistan. Nothing is as potent and powerful to bring the two people nearer as sports and show business. Even at the height of tensions, people in both countries appreciate and admire sports contests and films, songs and dramas. They praise their heroes regardless of their nationality, hence vindicating the catalytic role of these two fields in expanding the horizon of unity which breaks what Shafiq (2011: 18) terms as “cognitive barriers”. For transformation of conflict through soft power between India and Pakistan it is of utmost importance that people are free from negative perception about one another. This happens when they are able to communicate with one another. This communication is more meaningful when they have common things to discuss and sports and the film industry provides this substance to engage in discussion.

When we talk about sports in the context of India and Pakistan, cricket takes precedence over all other sports. But this does not demean the role of other sports such as Hockey and Kabadi (Free style wrestling); it is merely that cricket takes the lion’s share in terms of popularity in both countries. Similarly, the entertainment sector mainly consisting of movies, songs, dance and TV and theatre plays fires the imagination of the people on both sides. The two subthemes focus on the unifying appeal and force of these two tools of soft power which have the latent and overt potential to transform the relations between India and Pakistan in positive way. This will lead to what Smithey (2011: 225) describes as “building bridging social

capital”. Such a social capital has the inherent capability to transform the hearts and minds which is the epicenter of the conflict transformation processes.

5.8.1. Cricket: A Unifier

This subtheme sheds light on the popularity of cricket in India and Pakistan which can enhance the prospects for transforming the deep-rooted conflict between them. Highlighting the fame and love for cricket in Pakistan, Khan (2013: 3) writes, “cricket more than any other sport provides a mirror image of a nation and its people”. Bose (2006: 4), echoing the same views in the context of India claims, “Cricket is, to put it simply, much more than a game for Indians”. Therefore, cricket is one of the most powerful tools available for both countries to appeal to the popular imagination as both countries admire each other’s prowess in cricket. For example, Participant 13 (cricket), while suggesting the participation of Pakistani cricketers in Indian Premier League/IPL and Indian players in Pakistan Super League/PSL, stated that “It will be really amazing to see Indians cheering for Pakistani players and Pakistanis clapping for the Indian players. A current South African famous cricketer Imran Tahir in personal communication dated 13 February 2020, stated that Indian and Pakistani people yearn for watching cricketers of both nations in action on their home soils. His statement is important because he plays for both, IPL in India and PSL in Pakistan. Playing in both leagues is possible for him as both leagues are held separately in both nations at different points of time.

One striking feature of cricket in India and Pakistan is that it inducts players across all ethnic and religious backgrounds. In Pakistan, cricket teams include Hindu and Christian players. In the Indian cricket team, there are Muslim, Christian and Sikh players. So, the game of cricket also promotes interfaith harmony among individuals and at a wider level in society in both nations. This is another example of moral imagination which reflects in soft power tools and can foster attitudes, which are going to play vital role for transforming India-Pakistan rivalry.

5.8.2. Unifying Themes and Messaging through the Entertainment Sector

The subtheme under discussion signifies the shared culture and language, which have enhanced the power of different segments of the entertainment industry to improve the relations between India and Pakistan. Movies produced in both nations offer comprehensive packaging of soft power touching on all facets of life, be it politics, social customs, sports, religion or economic

conditions. Although currently both nations have stopped participation of actors in each other's movies, they cannot stop people from watching them as it is out of the physical control of both states. As aforementioned, citizens of both countries love and admire their respective entertainment industries and their products.

Themes and depictions of movies, songs and dramas have shown the positive side of India-Pakistan relations. According to Smithey (2011: 225), a “conflict transformation model of sustainable peacebuilding requires changes in collective subjective orientations or attitudes so that relationships can be built among groups of people that have developed mutually polarized identities”. In a group conflict identity is of primary importance. Since identity is socially constructed, it is not fixed and can change through social processes. Indeed, “While difficult to modify, identities 'are not carved in stone' and can change through 'social learning” (Shafiq, 2011: 5). The entertainment platforms can act as agent of change to transform collective conflictive identity among Indians and Pakistanis. Participant 6 (theatre) and participant 9 (government servant) claim more or less in similar words that there is a vast range of unifying themes available with the show-business community in both nations. If these themes are calibrated and applied with a purpose to reduce the animosity between the two countries, then India and Pakistan can live in perfect peace, claimed the respondents. Participant 8 (Censor Board of Pakistan) stated the following:

“I suggest that script writers, directors and producers in film, theatre, drama and other platforms of entertainment industry should conceive and propagate themes that can bring both people closer. They should try to find as much common ground as they can. People linked to show business in both nations need to optimise common grounds in both cultures.”

There are several movies produced on India-Pakistan unity such as “Veer Zara” (2003) and “Bajrangi Bhai Jan” (2010) translated as “selfless brother” in India and “Tiri Bin Laden” (2010) translated as “without you bin laden” in Pakistan. This shows that conflictive dynamics between India and Pakistan rooted in their societies can transform with the help of the entertainment sector whose themed messaging convey and help to conjure up the moral imagination required to transform the perennial conflict between both states. The reflection of such moral imagination can be seen in a theatre drama titled “Siachin” in 2019 by a famous

Pakistani writer, Anwar Maqsood. The play portrayed Indian and Pakistani soldiers sharing each other's feelings at the highest battlefield of the world.⁶ So, this was a bold theme in the context of current India-Pakistan tensions that soldiers are depicted as sharing sentiments for peace between the two nations. This script and performance also sync with the assumption that drama develops an alternative reality through reframing and deconstructing a dominant discourse (Burton et al., 2019: 63). Such plays and movies have been exercising liberating influence on the minds of Indians and Pakistanis who are trapped in the vicious conflictive atmosphere. Once the minds and hearts experience the liberation of thought and emotions, then a process of internal transformation of individuals can ensue, which is the basis of transforming group conflicts such as the India-Pakistan rivalry.

5.9. MILITARY ROLE: HARBINGER FOR PEACE

This theme underpins the role of the military in bringing the durable peace between India and Pakistan. One subtheme zeroes in on direct military to military communication between the two countries. Military forces can be powerful agents for transforming a conflict. Since they are directly engaged in conflict dynamics, hence their transformative role and potential can be of immense value for embarking on durable peace. The militaries of India and Pakistan share similar culture and language, so, they can easily understand one another which can lead them to tap into their moral imagination enabling them to humanise the other side.

Militaries in both nations are bearing the direct brunt of conflict. Hence their role is most crucial in transforming the bilateral relations from an all-encompassing ongoing rivalry to a mutually beneficial positive peace. In this sense, the role of the Pakistani military is even greater in setting things right with India. This is on account of the decisive political role taken by the military in the statecraft of Pakistan, also detailed in section 3.10. Participant 10 (retired diplomat) had this to say about the role of the military in Pakistan's foreign policy: "Pakistan's armed forces and intelligence agencies have an important role in Pakistan's foreign policy. Security aspect is the primary element of Pakistan's foreign policy. So, it's natural that besides foreign office our military has to give its input in our foreign policy".

⁶ For Siachin Dispute, see Misra 2010.

Differences apart, there are instances when Indian and Pakistani militaries engaged with one another in peaceful gestures. Recently, on 13 July 2020, an Indian naval boat rescued a Pakistani naval personnel member in high seas. He faced a cardiac problem and was taken to a hospital in India, treated there and then returned to Pakistan via the land border. A Bollywood movie “Tiger Zinda Hi” (2015) translated as “Tiger is still alive” presented a compelling account in which Indian and Pakistani militaries joined hands in combating the threat posed by ISIS/Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. These two examples prove the point that in real life, the militaries of both nations can work for bilateral peace. Moreover, soft power instruments such as movies show both militaries on friendly terms, which can fire the imagination of ordinary people to abandon hostile feelings and embrace the vision of peace.

5.9.1. Direct Military to Military Communication

The thrust of this subtheme is on direct communicative channels and platforms between the militaries of India and Pakistan. There are some formal channels for direct communication between the two militaries. But these channels are rarely invoked and whenever they are, it is only for operational domain restricted to the field posts and related issues. The example of this formal military to military communication between India and Pakistan is the hotline established at the level of director generals of military operations. In recent times, there is some change however, namely that communication takes place between the militaries through social media. If communicative platforms are constructed and expanded between the two militaries, then long-term peace can be achieved. The encouraging development in this regard is that the retired military personnel from both countries engage in track two and track three diplomacy. In 2000, some retired military officers from India and Pakistan formed a civil society platform named India-Pakistan Soldiers Initiatives. The IPSI is meant to persuade both Governments to agree for peace by settling outstanding disputes (Faiz, 2009: 40). Direct engagement in a friendly environment in this way transforms the image and perception of military officers which is an auspicious prospect for transformation of conflict.

Another significant avenue of direct communication between the militaries of India and Pakistan is their joint operations under the UN mandate. Both countries are among the top five contributors to the UN peacekeeping missions. In a personal communication with a military officer of Pakistan who served alongside the Indian forces in the Democratic Republic of

Congo under a UN mission, dated 24 April 2020, he stated that we used to exchange pleasantries and even shared food with one another on special occasions. These officers when going back to their respective countries, can spread the message of goodwill about their opponent. Thus, direct communication can enhance the possibility of sustainable peace between the two countries via their military forces.

5.10. EXTERNALIST ROLE AND INVOLVEMENT THROUGH ENLIGHTENED INTERESTS

This theme brings into focus the role and involvement of outside actors in helping transform the India-Pakistan conflict through soft power. Then the two subthemes highlight the role of the Indian and Pakistani diaspora and regional approach to transform this conflict.

The outside actors be it countries, multilateral platforms or different regimes governing sports, the entertainment sector or a number of other fields, have the potential to initiate a process of transformation in India-Pakistan relations. Mediation, arbitration and good offices by a third party to resolve disputes between India and Pakistan can transform their relations for long term. Arthur (2009: 370) highlighting Norway's role in the Israel-Palestine peace process states, "External actors could have a role to play in depoliticising extremely contentious issues and could be an enormous asset in assisting countries to make the transition out of conflict". The International Cricket Council can help India and Pakistan to resume their currently stalled cricket ties. In a personal discussion with Haroon Lorgat, former chairman of the ICC, dated 2 November 2019, stated "Cricket and Rugby unify the South Africans across the racial divide. Similarly, cricket can unify Indians and Pakistanis if it goes on uninterrupted".

In terms of movies and songs, there are forums outside India and Pakistan which organise concerts inviting Indian and Pakistani singers and performers. One such organiser in South Africa happens to be BluBlood, a tourist and concert organising firm. It invites Indian and Pakistani singers for concerts in South Africa which are invariably well-attended. The researcher personally attended two concerts in April 2018 and May 2019 in Johannesburg, South Africa where a famous Pakistani singer, Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, performed. The concert was keenly attended by Indian and Pakistani citizens stated by Osman Osman, the managing

director of BlueBlood and observed by the researcher in person. This accommodative sentiments among Indian and Pakistani diaspora springing from their moral imagination can break new grounds for transforming the conflict between their nations. One important element in this respect is the influence of these diaspora communities in the executive, legislative and other influential public and private sector positions in other countries. For instance, in the US and UK, people of Indian and Pakistani diaspora now sit in their legislatures. Therefore, they can extend their influence in terms of their own countries to live at peace with one another when sitting together in these government chambers.

5.10.1. Diaspora Living Peacefully

This subtheme reflects on the coexistence among Indian and Pakistani diaspora in countries where they are sizable in number. The shared culture, language, cuisine, love for cricket and passion for movies and songs bring them together on a single plane. Participant 16 (trade and business) resides in South Africa. He stated, “Whenever I want to eat Pakistani food, I go to some Indian restaurant without any hesitation”. Participant 2 (civil society) another Pakistani settler in South Africa stated, “Whenever India and Pakistan play each other, we sit in the same group and express vocal support for our respective teams”. These two responses are not stand-alone, rather it is a pattern which repeats itself in other countries in different ways. For example, a Pakistani student studying at Stanford University in the USA narrated his account in a personal discussion dated 2 January 2020. He stated that he shares a dormitory with an Indian student and there is nothing that causes issues between them on account of their nationalities.

The respondents referred to in above examples for the study are first generation Pakistani migrants whose stories demonstrate that personal connections and impressions can go beyond national conflictive discourse between India and Pakistan. Therefore, change of feelings about one another in individuals can take on a collective proportion if there is a well-orchestrated move in this direction. This personal warmth by the people of the two countries living abroad can be emulated at home, which in turn unleash the hidden potential for transformation of relations at community level between the two countries. In the examples quoted in this section, one can see the unifying element of soft power instruments such as cricket, cuisine, film and music among the diaspora. This unfiltered absorption of these

expressions of soft power can generate goodwill among the citizens of both nations, thus adding a popular dimension to the elite-negotiated peace.

5.10.2. Regionalisation of Problems and Solutions

The focus of this subtheme is those problems between India and Pakistan that are quintessentially regional and hence warrants a regional approach to tackle them. Among them, the most important ones are water sharing, environmental issues and food security. For instance, three rivers flow from India into Pakistan. Further, locust swarms travel from Pakistan into India. The issue of fog is also common to both countries and it travels back and forth between them causing life to come to a halt for few weeks at a time. Therefore, the permanent solution to these issues lies in mutual coordination. Both countries can gain popular support for this type of coordination by helping the popular imagination and viewing things beyond territorial boundaries. Kugiel (2012: 374) laments the fact that India's soft power initiatives pertaining to South Asia exclude Pakistan. He consolidates this assertion by noting that India offers no scholarship to Pakistani students, it has not opened any cultural center or academic chair in Pakistan. Doing so, would soften the attitude of Pakistanis towards India which is productive for bilateral peace. On the contrary, Pakistan has also not established any academic seat of learning and cultural centre in India. Participant 11 (politician) noted, "Soft power can prepare positive general opinion which can help to resolve bigger tensions". Cultural and academic exchanges can be used to unlock the hidden potential to improve the bilateral relations.

Pakistan and India are both members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation/SAARC and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation/SCO. These regional platforms facilitate face to face exchange among the governing elite and bureaucratic circles of India and Pakistan. Participant 10 (retired diplomat) stated that "My personal contact with Indian diplomats and citizens changed my feelings towards them which otherwise was not possible". At the level of SAARC, there are soft power platforms such as the SAF games, and the Asian Cricket Council, which can and have been used to promote sports contests between India, Pakistan and other countries of the region. This regional approach can help people of India and Pakistan to develop a common South Asian identity. According to Ahmar (2011: 101), in the case of Europeans, the construction of shared interests also transformed their identity as they

proclaim themselves Europeans. Outside their countries, Indians and Pakistanis feel no inhibition in declaring themselves Asians or South Asians. If regional identity is forged along common areas of interest and concern, then it can have a transformative influence on India-Pakistan conflictive relations. In the context of conflict in Northern Ireland, Smithey (2011) points to the model of community of interests which plays a significant role in transforming the feelings of conflicting sides. In South Asia, such a community of interests can be constructed around the issues affecting people and states irrespective of territorial boundaries. Once in motion, these community platforms can help transform the biases and prejudices of people into mutual interests.

5.11. POLITICAL WILL: FORCE-MULTIPLIER FOR CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION THROUGH SOFT POWER

This theme discusses the political will of state and government in transforming India-Pakistan conflict through soft power. Three subthemes in the section assess the need for track two and track three diplomacy, mutually beneficial trade relations and peace thinking through peace education and peace activism.

The role of government agencies and state institutions in conflict transformation venture is substantive. Although the transformational approach believes in what Rupesinghe (1995: 2) calls “grass-root peace building”, the political will of the ruling elite, other state and government institutions and political parties can multiply the chances of success. In the case of the India and Pakistan conflict, the role of Governments and other political elements has always been the driving force. But the transformation of elite leadership can prove to be of immense value for transforming their conflict. The ruling class in both countries is regularly exposed to soft power resources. In the past, the leadership of both countries met at the cricket venues to discuss their tense ties, hence giving birth to cricket diplomacy. For example, India’s former Prime Minister, IK Gujral, attended a theatre play in 1997 in the Indian city of Kolkata. The play was performed by the Ajoka Theatre from Pakistan and thematised the fraternal bonds of Indian and Pakistani Punjabs (Gauhar, 2009: 97). It is pertinent to note here that IK Gujral hailed from Pakistani Punjab and had to migrate to India after partition. In another instance, a Bollywood actor, Shatrogan Sinha, visited Pakistan in 1980 and met the then Pakistani

President, Ziaul Haq. Both these examples demonstrate that the highest leadership position holders in both nations willingly interact with the people active in the domain of soft power.

All 18 respondents for the study felt the need that Governments in both nations have to take the primary responsibility for peace. In fact, if people have to lead the march for peace, then this will have to be done with the Government support, opined some participants. For instance, participant 12 (politician) accepted, “If Governments in both countries are willing to engage, then they can make it even easier for their citizens to get into strong relationships”. In terms of Government patronage of soft power exchanges, participant 5 (film) noted, “If governments sponsor and encourage soft power interaction, then response would be overwhelming”. It is up to the Governments that the notable and well-placed people in the soft power domain are facilitated for travel and mutual coordination. This can augment the common good for both countries. Referring to the role of Governments in facilitating interaction among show business fraternity, participant 8, representing the censor board of Pakistan suggested that “Freedom needs to be given to producers so that they can play an active role in changing perceptions and feelings from negative to positive among common citizens through screen and story-telling”. The change of hearts on both sides can smoothen the way for cooperation in other domains such as trade and commerce.

In his inauguration speech in August 2018, the newly elected cricketer Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, declared that he would use trade to normalise relations with India. When it comes to normalisation of ties with India, the role of unofficial diplomatic channels differently categorised as track two, track three, multitrack and back channel diplomacy have always been invaluable. The former chairman of PCB/Pakistan Cricket Board Mr. Shehryar Khan, also a retired diplomat, was active and vocal in championing the utility of these sidetrack diplomatic channels. For long term peace and reconciliation between India and Pakistan, peace education is necessary. This will lead to peace constituencies being formed in both countries, which can instill moral imagination among people so that they can have humanising experiences and emotions about each other. Therefore, a reinforcing combination of trade, nongovernmental diplomacy and peace activism and peace education can go a long way for transformation of rivalry into reconciliation between these two hostile neighbours.

5.11.1. Mutually Beneficial Strong Trade Ties

This subtheme posits that the improvement in trade relations is contingent on Governments. For trade to be effective, it has to be mutually beneficial so that it can sustain positive momentum. In the case of India and Pakistan, there is more informal trade than formal trade. This means that the potential of strong trade ties does exist. If trade goes on, then it would be a boost for soft power resources. Pakistan exports sports products to India among other items, whereas India largely exports pharmaceutical products to Pakistan. According to participant 16 (business), “When an Indian cricket youth wears gloves with a label “made-in-Pakistan”, then definitely he will have positive thinking towards Pakistan”. In the same vein, Participant 18 (business) stated, “Imagine that Pakistanis have the knowledge that most of the medicinal component of life-saving drugs for them comes from India, then how soft their feelings would be towards India”. What is needed then is a human touch in bilateral trade between the two countries. This sort of feeling will create a soft image at popular level in both countries. In this manner, trade can become a soft power tool which can create momentum for peaceful relations by removing the biases and negative image.

Trade ties would also bolster soft power instruments in both nations. Cricket and hockey competitions would get more sponsorships if they are held on a regular basis. Participant 15 (sports) claimed, “Governments are preoccupied with so many other issues. That is why private sector in both nations can sponsor mega sports events attracting hundreds of thousands of people”. The big firms and companies can also sponsor concerts and co-production of movies crisscrossing both nations. This shows that trade ties can set in motion the process which leads to greater integration of people around sports and show business, which in turn holds positive implications for transforming the relations between India and Pakistan.

5.11.2. Track Two and Track Three Diplomacy

The subtheme in this section affirms that where formal diplomatic channels could not break the ice between the two countries, track two and track three diplomacy came in handy. For instance, at present, both countries have downgraded their diplomatic relations by withdrawing each other’s ambassadors. In these circumstances, retired officials (track two) and eminent personalities from various walks of life (track three) get engaged in discussion. They prepare

the turf for reengagement at track one or regular diplomatic channels. The synergetic orchestration of these tracks of diplomacy initiate discussions at several levels which Ahmar (2012: 56) terms as “polylogue”. Some of these second-tier diplomatic channels have a soft power component, with the recent striking example of participation of Indian former cricketer Mr. Sidhu and a famous Bollywood actress, Sani Dewal, in the Kartarpur corridor inauguration ceremony in November 2019. Prior to that, Sidhu also attended the oath taking ceremony of Pakistan’s cricketer Prime Minister, Imran Khan, in August 2018. Therefore, the unofficial diplomacy can get substantive input from celebrities in sports and the film industry in both countries for transforming their bitter enmity into an enviable friendship. Participant 10 (retired diplomat) pointed out, “At times the relations between the two countries reached a deadlock, but it was broken with the help of track two meetings and initiatives”.

5.11.3. Peace Education and Peace Activism Leading to Piece Thinking

This subtheme emphasises peace education and peace activism for unleashing and sustaining the processes and platforms for transforming the India-Pakistan conflict. For long-term and genuine peace grounded in the psyche of people of both countries, there has to be a concerted effort for peace education and peace thinking. Peace activism in this direction can be the first step. 17 out of 18 participants for this study believe that peace is possible between the two nations. Only participant 5 (film) ruled out the possibility of peace between the two nations. He stated, “Peace is not possible between India and Pakistan on account of increasing bitterness day by day”. But during the conversation he also stated, “Peace is possible between the two nations after 50-60 years”. For transforming the conflict between India and Pakistan, peace education needs to start at school level and culminate at higher education programmes. Soft power interaction can benefit both nations as schoolteachers and academicians can learn from one another by interacting at sports venues, cinemas and social festivals. This interaction can transform their own views about each other which can be a model for wider social transformation, hence augmenting the chances for lasting bilateral peace. For effective conflict transformation through peace education and activism Ahmar (2012: 14) states that in transformational efforts hostile relations are modified through peace education, advocacy and nonviolent activism and mediation.

There are civil society forums in both countries dedicated to peace and reconciliation at all levels. One umbrella organisation consisting of civil society groups and networks for peace in both nations is Pakistan India Peoples Forum for Democracy and Peace established in 1994 (Rid, 2014: 108). Prior to that, there was another group, the India Pakistan Friendship Society formed in 1987 (Faiz, 2009: 35). These platforms hold seminars, conferences, workshops and other forms of dialogue and discussion and connect numerous civil society members, researchers, academicians, and intelligentsia. Such contacts and networks can help build durable peace constituencies between both countries. One difficulty in transforming the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is that there is no broad-based peace constituency despite civil society networks and organisations on both sides. Israeli civil society groups want publicity for their peace actions whereas the Palestinian groups want to avoid such publicity as they may be seen as betraying the struggle (Jacobsen and Frithjof, 2009: 39). Any positive outcome in a conflict therefore requires a mutually reinforcing relationship between the civil society and people in general.

All three civil society members interviewed for this study agreed on peaceful steps to be taken by the Governments as well as public forums. The online communicative channels have connected peace activists and civil society platforms with one another across the territorial divide, which was previously possible only by visits or, at best, through snail mail correspondence. These civil society entities and notable individuals can mobilise popular support for peace, which can translate into deeply-entrenched and widely-respected peace constituencies. For transforming conflict between these two nuclear neighbours, peace is what Tharoor (2016: 7) terms as “moral urgency”. The transformation in public perception and official negotiating bureaucracies can get inspiration and legitimacy if there is political will behind it. This political will have more vigour if it is built on both sides with soft power as the vehicle.

5.12. CONCLUSION

The chapter presented and discussed the findings with regards to the prospects of conflict transformation between India and Pakistan. The themes and subthemes derived from the data were used to analyse possible soft power sources and instruments, which can strengthen the prospects

for this unresolved conflict. It was also evaluated how these soft power instruments have been deployed by both nations to spread goodwill and a favourable image towards each other as well as towards the world in general.

The soft power resources discussed in this chapter portray a scenario where it is shown that the people in both countries see one another in positive light, which is possible by fostering and demonstrating moral imagination. The findings also established the point that India has more such resources in the soft power domain. This is owing to the fact that India has a much larger population and financial resources, which gives it an edge over Pakistan. However, if both nations are willing to transform their relations through soft power, then India's advantage will not be perceived detrimental by Pakistan.

People are the main force behind soft power between India and Pakistan, but the role of Governments is still more decisive in this regard. Governments can facilitate people to people interaction by easing travel restrictions. People on both sides have shown that they are willing to embark on a shared peaceful future, but this public desire for peace is still to be matched by the elite structures and decision makers. This leads one to conclude that transforming the conflict between India is possible, but there are obstacles in its way. The next chapter will discuss and analyse these impediments and challenges in the way of conflict transformation through soft power.

CHAPTER 6

CHALLENGES OF SOFT POWER FOR TRANSFORMING THE INDIA-PAKISTAN CONFLICT

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter reflects on the challenges of transforming the India-Pakistan conflict by using soft power. The previous chapter shed light on the prospects to bring about this transformation, but conflict transformation is always beset with challenges and obstacles, which is the focus of this chapter.

There are 9 themes and 19 subthemes that highlight various obstacles posed in the way of transforming the India-Pakistan rivalry. These obstacles are mainly rooted in the conflictive perceptions of India and Pakistan about each other. Consequently, both nations pursue hard power and, in this pursuit, go to all lengths in trying to surpass each other. The conflict which spreads over seven decades is rooted in subjective factors such as identity, ideology, interests, culture, history and values. This then reflects in objective expressions such as the arms race, wars, propaganda campaigns, territorial disputes and intermittent border skirmishes. Hard power is maximised by both countries and it has resulted in creating toxicity in all walks of life. So much so, that the soft power tools are now being manipulated to pursue hard power ambitions. Therefore, the transformation of conflict through soft power is an arduous undertaking in the case of India-Pakistan relations. The identification and analysis of these impediments will enable the forming of a response to bring about positive transformation in the all-encompassing conflict between the two nuclear neighbors.

6.2. RELIGION AS REASON FOR DISCORD

This theme, along with two subthemes, brings into focus the role of religion in rigidifying and embittering the India-Pakistan conflict. The universal social role of religion in the two nations highlighted in the previous chapter, also casts it to be fuel for conflict. Attempts at transforming

this conflict through soft power face one of the biggest obstacles posed by religion. This assertion applies to both nations, which have religious groups acting to perpetuate this conflict.

It was pointed out in sections 3.2 and 3.3 of this study that religion became a factor in the creation of India and Pakistan. After that, religion extended its influence in levels of state power and everyday life, hence forging identity along overtly religious lines. According to Remi (2013: 5), conflicts over values such as religion and ideology are most difficult to understand and solve. People can die for these values. Conflicts like those in Israel-Palestine, North and South Sudan and Northern Ireland prove the assertion that religion becomes a potent force behind conflict.

The negative stereotyping in India and Pakistan denoting religious affiliations with Hinduism and Islam also reflects in films, dramas and songs. The depiction of Hindu characters as treacherous and deceptive is common in Pakistani films and TV plays. Conversely, the portrayal of Muslims as violent fanatics and terrorists is frequent in Bollywood movies and songs. Participant 8 (Censor Board of Pakistan) noting this tendency in the Indian film industry stated, “In India religious extremism coupled with jingoistic nationalism has also cast its long shadow on their soft power. This especially reflects through their cinema. Anti-Pakistan and anti-Muslim movies are being produced with more frequency”. Bollywood movies like “Angaar” (1992), translated as “fire”, “Ghulam-e-Mustafa” (1994), translated as “slave of Mustafa”, “Sarfaroosh” (1997), translated as “rebellious”, “Qurban” (1999) translated as “dedicated” and “Hindustan Ki Qasam” (2009), translated as “swearing for India” depict Muslims as militants, terrorists, and underworld dons. All these movies, therefore, had a patent religious tone and tenor targeting Pakistani Muslims. These movies are watched in Pakistan and available on YouTube. Participant 2 (civil society) pointed out there is an “Entire Bollywood drive anti-Pakistan narrative not only in India but also export their politically motivated and anti-Pakistani movies to the overseas media houses”. Similarly, in Pakistan, TV plays have been produced centering on the theme of Hindu Muslim enmity. For instance, a TV serial named “Angaar Wadi” (1994) translated as “valley of embers” depicted the tyranny of the Indian security forces in Kashmir. Another such TV drama named “Lag” (1998) translated as “rein” portrayed Hindus as deceptive traders representing India, which is bent on destroying Pakistan by the means of covert spy wars. Both these plays became an instant hit in Pakistan. Thus, this is how religious hatred pervades in the society in both nations through soft power platforms such as movies and dramas.

In India and Pakistan, there are religious groups which want to paddle their own narrative through media and the entertainment sector. They also ensure that anything aimed at creating religious harmony is throttled. Participant 8 (censor board of Pakistan) referring to this powerful negative impact of religious zealots in Pakistan stated, “Taliban and other religious extremist groups and political parties undermined soft power in Pakistan”. Haqani (2005: 25) notes that the influence of religious extremism affects all spheres of social life in Pakistan. In India, the RSS-driven social movement and the BJP-led Government is avowedly anti-Muslim. The reflection of this trend is the enunciation of an anti-Muslim piece of legislation of citizenship in the shape of the Citizenship Amendment Act put into force in December 2019. The purpose of this legislation is to deprive the Indian Muslims in the country of citizenship. This action is countered by Pakistan, hence there is a religious tussle going on between both nations at present. In this scenario, religion drives politics which makes the conflict harder for transformation.

6.2.1. Politicisation of Religion

According to this subtheme, the outcome of the ubiquitous social role of religion in India and Pakistan is that it affects political discourse and gets politicised in the process. Political demagoguery and gimmickry manipulating religion for short term political gains leaves a long-term polarising trail behind. This puts the masses of both countries in confrontation around values and identity. This also fuels and sustains the conflict along religious lines making its transformation difficult. This pernicious religious propaganda also affects soft power tools and platforms. For instance, whenever there is a cricket match between India and Pakistan, people in both countries term it the war between Islam and Hinduism or war between believers and nonbelievers. Therefore, the defeat of one team and victory of the other goes beyond the domain of sports. Participant 14 (cricket) stated, “Anti-Muslim sentiments in India are sponsored by Indian government. The Indian media also tows the Modi government’s line against Muslims. Peace is difficult to be introduced unless Modi Government is there”. This assertion is grounded in the fact that at present India is being ruled by BJP, which is an avowed Hindu nationalist party. Its leader and the incumbent Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, was the Chief Minister of the Indian State of Goojrat in 2002 when some two thousand Muslims were massacred in religious riots (Powers, 2009: 59). Participant 10 (retired diplomat) asserted, “The current extremist Modi Government in India is changing the names of places and monuments bearing Muslim traces. This is being done to erase Muslim identity, but it is not possible”.

Political populism coupled with religious extremism is visible in today's India. This has also influenced the film industry of the country. In 2016, Bollywood banned Pakistani actors to perform in India. In response, Pakistan also slapped a ban on the screening of Indian films in its cinema houses. It also banned the travel of Indian actors into Pakistan. In India, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad/World Hindu Council, a Hindu militant group, dug out the pitch in New Delhi in 1999 when the Pakistan cricket team was visiting India. The purpose was to disrupt the match between the two teams. Later on, in 2012, when the Pakistan cricket team visited India, the VHP opposed the tour and called it a "national shame". It also criticised the cricketing authorities of India and accused them of "betraying the national cause for the sake of money" (Dawn, 02 November 2012). It is because of this poisoned political environment generated by Hindu extremism that in last eight years (2012-2020) there is no bilateral cricket tour between India and Pakistan. This politico-religious extremism is also at an ebb in Pakistan. The outcome is that any saner voice asking for rapprochement with India is dubbed as a traitor. The civil society in Pakistan is bearing the brunt of this hostile religious environment where peace with India is branded as anti-Pakistan proposition. Perception rooted in religion is the key to transform the India-Pakistan rivalry. Both nations will have to foster religious harmony based on interfaith dialogue. Such initiatives have been taken in the past such as Pakistan's famous religious leader Molana Fazlurrehman's visit to India in August 2003 and his engagement with the Indian religious leaders (Chengappa and Zaidi, 2003). Both governments can promote religious harmony through encouraging interfaith dialogue and interaction, which can alter the popular perception of hostility and suspicion about one another.

6.2.2. Religious Nationalism and Militancy

This subtheme is centred around the fusion of religion and nationalistic sentiments culminating in militancy. The consequence is a combustible mixture of religion and politics hence causing the rise of religious nationalism in India and Pakistan. This religious nationalism, when pushed further, results in violence and deep-seated biases. Furthermore, this sort of religious bigotry also affects the religious minorities in both nations.

The religiously motivated political party, BJP, has governed India for the last six years (2014-2020). Even before that, it ruled India for six years in 1998-2004. For participant 7 (Government servant), "Any prospect and venture for India-Pakistan peace is destined to fail till the time the Indian state is being governed by the right-wing political forces". There are cricketers

and movie stars in India who have joined BJP. A famous Indian cricketer, Gautam Gambhir, won the election ticket for BJP in 2019. He declared Pakistan's former cricketer Prime Minister Imran Khan as a role model for terrorists. This type of conduct from a celebrity cricketer turned politician can spread further polarisation along religious lines.

Bollywood actors and writers who show courage to speak up against religious nationalism face tough resistance. Fazli (22 May 2020) explains this trend by noting that those Bollywood actors and producers who call for Hindu-Muslim unity are deprived of brand endorsements and advertisements. So much so, that there is call for boycotting their movies, resulting in financial trouble. In Pakistan, Indian songs and singers are treated with disdain dubbing them anti-Pakistan. Participant 4 (music) said, "I witnessed people attacking cinemas displaying Indian movies and shops selling recordings of Indian songs". Violence in the name of religion is common both in India and Pakistan. In India, Muslims are targeted on account of eating beef as it is forbidden to eat in the Hindu religion. Recently, in Pakistan, in the capital city of Islamabad, the issue of constructing a Hindu temple became controversial (Dawn, 04 July 2020). This uncontrolled growth and spread of religious nationalism and violence will have to be tackled. It is so because if it continues without any letup, then the conflictive atmosphere between India and Pakistan can lead to catastrophic confrontation. Transformation of religious perception and respect for different values can be undertaken through various means where soft power instruments like songs, cinema and tourism can be used to change perceptions. This can help resolve the India-Pakistan differences leading to the conflict transformation between them.

6.3. HISTORY STILL DRIVING CONFLICT

In this section, the theme pertaining to the influence of history over the India-Pakistan conflict is discussed. Three subthemes then focus on the colonial roots of this conflict, the impact of partition on the collective memory, and forging of conflictive identities arising out of this historical narrative and causes.

When a conflict is rooted in history, then, according to Rupesinghe (1995: 227), "it develops its own meaning, language, discourse and structure". One reason accounting for the difficulty in resolving or transforming the conflict between Israel and Palestine is that it carries more than two thousand years of history behind its formation and evolution. Similarly, the India-

Pakistan conflict carries the history of more than one thousand years predating their independence and after independence, it's been seven decades and they are still locked in a conflictive mindset and relations. Referring to this historical nature of conflict between the two countries, Pakistan's former Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, stated that we fought the Hindu India for one thousand years in the past and we can fight them for one thousand years in the future (Wolpert: 1993: 113).

If a conflict is rooted in history driven by religious disharmony, then its resolution or management becomes hard. The viable way-forward is the transformation of such conflict as it goes into the psyche of people. In this way, conflict shapes the identity and such an identity affects the conflict of opposing peoples, which is the case in India and Pakistan. At least some of the root cause of a conflict lies with the identity of those living inside it (Smyth, 2005: 8). Hindu versus Muslim identity developed over time, which was further polarised by the British colonial experiment in the Indian Subcontinent. This colonial tinkering with the religious mosaic of the British India, casts its shadow even today in the India-Pakistan conflict. According to Habib, a Pakistani educationist, due to this unending colonial influence, Pakistan is a post-colonial state making it difficult to overcome its past (personal communication, dated 23 March 2020)

The bitterness of the past affects the interaction of both nations in sports as well as influencing themes and representations in films and other facets of the entertainment industry. Yuvraj Singh, a frontline Indian cricketer (2013: 37), expresses these sentiments in these words, "There is always a feeling of history when we play Pakistan because of our bloody Partition history. In both the Punjabs, this side in Mohali and that side in Lahore, when we play against each other the emotions get more serious because Punjab itself was partitioned when Pakistan was formed". The bloodletting accompanying the partition is represented in literature in both nations and the same themes are depicted in movies and theatre plays. Hence this is what perpetuates the effects of colonial era darkness and memories of traumatic partition in India-Pakistan relations. Participant 3 (civil society) opined, "The entertainment channels in both countries popularise the dark memories of partition and in this way the bitterness goes on".

6.3.1. Colonial Clouds Still Linger

According to this subtheme, the conflict between India and Pakistan in its present shape dates back to the British colonial era discussed in section 3.2 of this study. This subtheme sheds light on how post-independence politics in India and Pakistan is affected by the colonial past and how it pushes

both nations to increase their hard power at the cost of social development. Participant 11 (politician) claimed, “The British colonial administration created the conditions of permanent conflict between India and Pakistan and now it is affecting their human and social development”. The biggest dispute between India and Pakistan on Kashmir has arisen out of flawed colonial approach to set free the nations of India and Pakistan. Participant 12 (politician) referred to the Kashmir dispute and the British role in these words, “But the departing British administration committed a crime. They left Kashmir dispute unresolved. Rather they created the Kashmir dispute”.

In India and Pakistan, the Kashmir issue often gets thematised in movies, TV dramas and theatre plays. There are Bollywood movies like “Kashmir Ki Kali” (1964), translated as “flower of Kashmir”, “Mission Kashmir” (2005), “Fana” (2006) translated as “destroyed” and “Lamhaa” (2010) translated as “moment”, which exclusively focus on the Kashmir dispute. In Pakistan, TV plays like “Angaar Wadi” (1994) translated as “valley of embers” and “Lag” (1998) translated as “rein” centre around the theme of the Kashmir conflict. This representation of the Kashmir dispute on big screens portray India and Pakistan deeply opposed to each other because of bitter British legacy. In doing so, both nations end up whipping up more communal and religious sentiments, thus resulting in more hatred and hostility. This also results in more militarisation of the film industry in both countries, so much so, that now military establishments are investing in this sector to paddle nationalistic propaganda in the guise of patriotism. This situation can be redeemed if both militaries can resort to peaceful gesturing towards each other and avoid using the popular media of communication for point scoring. Participant 5 (film) stated, “The first step in my view for peace is to eradicate hatred and hate propaganda in both countries. We have to get rid of conditioned narratives created through popular media”. The Colonialist hangover also negatively impacts Pakistan’s bureaucratic organisations and military institutions. Both these institutions have stamped their writ on the Pakistani society and then shape the narrative on important national issues including conflict with India. This results in skewing the facts and stifling the debate. In this way, anti-Indianism and anti-Hinduism remains the dominant lens through which the common masses in Pakistan see and perceive India. This is currently being perpetuated by the right-wing Hindu extremist Government, which fuels anti-Muslim and anti-Pakistan feelings among the ordinary masses. Both countries will have to shed the colonial mentality in their civil and military institutional ethos so that they can become a positive force in the enlightenment of their people. In

this way, the people of India and Pakistan can perceive and see one another without the overriding influence of deeply-entrenched civil-military bureaucratic organisations. The last shock of the colonial period i.e., the partition of 1947 left a bitter trail, which refuses to be extirpated from the collective as well as individual memories in India and Pakistan. This also sustains their conflict rooted in that bitter historical episode.

6.3.2. Partition Wounds and Memories Still Not Healed

The partition, which left a bloody trail over the formative phase of India and Pakistan, fueled subsequent disputes between both nations. Participant 7 (Government servant) responded, “The partition memories and episodes pass from generation to generation and in good part determine the attitude of Indians and Pakistanis towards one another”. The bloodletting at an unprecedented scale in the history of India and Pakistan has also been documented and fictionalised in literary pieces equally famous on both sides of the border. Khushwant Singh, hailing from India, in his famous novel *Train to Pakistan* (1956), details the abduction and killing of Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims in the border towns of the two nations. Similarly, a well-known short story writer from Pakistan, Saadat Hassan Manto, presents graphic accounts of horrendous partition events and incidents. Incidentally, there is a Bollywood movie based on Khushwant Singh’s novel, whereas in Pakistan, the Ajoka theatre staged plays on Manto’s stories. Ajoka staged a theatre play on the theme of partition as late as 2013 depicting the violence of partition.

The above two instances demonstrate that despite the passage of seven decades, the memories of bloody partition are etched in the consciousness of people in both nations. What makes them more emotive is that they are shown and even exaggerated in films, theatre and form part of the literary corpus in both countries. This unsubiding event in the history of both nations also casts an influence on identity formation in both nations. Both states developed their national identities in opposition to each other, basing it on violent birth in 1947.

6.3.3. Identity Development in the Opposing Direction

This subtheme focuses on the point that identity as a nation in India and Pakistan developed diametrically opposed to each other. In Pakistan, religion was the most easily available instrument to forge a national identity among various ethnic and linguistic groups. In India secularism was used to forge identify in numerous ethnic, linguistic and religious segments of population. Since identity is constructed on the basis of human interactive processes and affiliations, so both

countries' conflict provided contradistinction, the basis on which conflictive identities took shape. In a personal communication with Habib, dated 23 March 2020, he stated that as early as 1947 Pakistan's first educational policy relied on religion for the identity construction in Pakistan. In doing so, it generated a holistic thought process putting Hindu India as bent on opposing and destroying Pakistan. With the passage of time, this identity construction was furthered through film, drama and songs. The all-pervasive influence of religion in Pakistani society resulted in adversely affecting the soft power tools and bent them to produce themes and representations which conform to the national identity. Consequently, India became a convenient scapegoat for show businesspeople to produce anti-India plays and films. For instance, a widely watched TV serial in Pakistan "Nishan-e-Haider" (2017) translated as "emblem of the lion" eulogised the bravery of Pakistan military and coloured India with the broad brush of a conspiracy attempting to harm Pakistan by all means. Such anti-India representations on popular media make it tough to transform the perception towards India among Pakistanis. Participant 8 (Censor Board of Pakistan) noted, "Anti-India stuff is easy to make people famous and same is true in the Indian film industry for Pakistan". Referring to this tendency Khan (2012: 128) notes that making negative films about enemy is perceived to be bringing more profit from purely market pointofview and this is what currently drives themes and productions in India and Pakistan.

In India, the secular fabric began to be undermined when the BJP began to rise to prominence. This process of erosion of secularism in India is now on a sound footing owing to the current Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi's policies. There is a feeling in Pakistan that the BJP Government led by Modi is trying to erase Muslim identity from within India, but also trying to negatively affect it inside Pakistan. Participant 13 (sports) stated, "The Modi Government in India is anti-Muslim and anti-Pakistan". Therefore, Indian citizens are negatively viewed in Pakistan". This identity clash between India and Pakistan bodes ill for their already tense situation. The conflict around identity gets more fuel from the conventional as well as recently exploded social media. Now people of both nations engage in direct confrontation, which was not possible before the onset of easily available channels of communication.

6.4. BARRIERS POSED BY MAINSTREAM AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Changing perception and image is the key for transforming the bitter relations between India and Pakistan. Mainstream media and social media platforms can play this role by positive projection of soft power, but they at times foment discord and fan divisions by igniting religious extremism and whipping up nationalistic jingoism. This theme, along with two subthemes, analyse how the media exacerbates the conflict between India and Pakistan.

The media has emerged as powerful vehicle of interaction among the enemy population in the recent past. It not only acts as a vehicle of communication, but it also constructs reality and frames narratives (Shendurnikar, 2015: 7). In the case of the India-Pakistan conflict, the mainstream media often acts in tandem with state policies. In doing so, it reinforces the existing stereotypes based on divisive historical discourse, clashing religious ideology and prejudicially constructed cultural practices. Especially during times of crisis, the media virtually becomes a tool in the hands of both Governments leading to solidifying the hostile perceptions held by both populations, this tendency is termed as “media-fed nation talk” (Udupa, 2019: 225). According to Galtung, who coined the term “peace journalism”, the media can shape perceptions and manipulate cognitions. The role of the media during conflict becomes even more crucial. Hussain (2009: 77) terms this the “outsized role”. The conflict between India and Pakistan is so bitter and deeply-entrenched that the media often becomes a second fiddle to the dominant hostile atmosphere and sustains what Sardar (2007: 14) describes as “enduring divergent perceptions”.

The media in both nations spoils the friendly environment generated by films, sports contests and art and literary pieces. For instance, whenever there is a cricket match between both countries, some media outlets give coverage to those people who use abusive language, thus creating a warlike atmosphere. Referring to this tendency participant 13 (sports) claimed, “The people of both nations are already peace loving. It’s the media/politicians that may create an impression otherwise”.

The media’s role is to build and communicate narratives. These narratives can promote harmony if they are positive and rooted in moral imagination. They can create a new reality and, in the process can help develop a new identity. But in India and Pakistan, the media is now used for counter narrative building and paddling. That is why Aggarwal (2013: 15) believes that for

negotiations between India and Pakistan to be effective, citizens must be shielded from the military in Pakistan and the media in India. This negative media role has been augmented further with the onset of social media. Combined together, both mainstream and social media are creating barriers of hatred and mistrust between the two nations hitherto unseen and unheard. This makes the conflict more societal and popular, rendering its transformation harder with every passing day. This negative exchange of information and views can be remedied if both states encourage positive media interaction and coverage. One praiseworthy initiative in this regard is the special visa category for journalists accredited with SAFMA/South Asian Free Media Association. This arrangement can be expanded by facilitating interaction among journalists of vernacular media in both nations to spread the message of goodwill deep into the rural areas of both nations.

6.4.1. Narrative Building and Spinning through Media

This theme discusses how the media has become a collaborator with the state machinery, heightening the conflict in the last few years. If there is some independent voice calling for an alternative to conflict, then it is either muzzled on various pretexts or simply dubbed as treasonous. Case in point is the termination of the joint media project between India and Pakistan called “Aman Ki Asha” translated as “hope for peace” in 2014 by Pakistan. The co-executor of this project from Pakistan, the Jang Media Group, the largest media house in Pakistan, was suspected of undermining the country’s position vis-à-vis India. This suspicion was primarily raised by the military in Pakistan and it mobilised public opinion against this project via other media houses, which were competitors to the Jang Group. The crux of allegations for ending the project is that it weakened Pakistan’s narrative about conflict with India. Participant 3 (civil society) believed, “Media frenzy between India and Pakistan does more harm than military weapons”. Pakistan enacted the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act in 2016 in order to contain hate speech and online harassment. But there is a sweeping proviso which is used to curb freedom of expression and subsequently, journalists were targeted by state agencies (Hashmi, 2019: 248). In fact, between May 2019 and April 2020, 91 journalists were attacked in Pakistan and eight were killed (report by Freedom Network quoted in Dawn: 15 May 2020). The consequence of this tightening state grip on electronic and other media, is that one has to be very careful when discussing India.

In India, the right-wing elements have pressured the media to frame the agenda of peace with Pakistan. Such voices are sidelined, and even scorn is heaped on them if they are perceived

to be soft towards Pakistan. Stories are spun and facts are twisted to silence pro-peace groups and activists.

Soft power tools are also bent and made subservient to the conflictive national narratives. The media, as the platform for executing soft power, also succumbs to this tendency generated by religious extremism and war rhetoric. Participant 4 (music) stated, “I composed a song for India-Pakistan friendship. When I contacted media channels for the release of this song, they declined responding that this will land them in trouble”. This feeling of mutual suspicion and hostility is now easily exchanged and expressed on digital media platforms. Government policies that create conflict outcomes lead to social media wars among the people of both nations. Participant 18 (business) while responding to a question stated, “It is all right to have people to people contact, but look at social media, the way people of both countries are insulting each other”. Therefore, if Governments of both nations desist from fueling discord at state level, then it can translate into a better exchange on social media forums, helping to mitigate the bitterness and paving the way for transforming the relations.

6.4.2. Social Media and the Personalisation of Nationalistic Discourse

The much-publicised friendship between a Pakistani cricketer, Shahid Afridi, and an Indian cricketer, Yuvraj Singh, came to a bitter end. Both these players represented their national teams and played against each other several times. Their camaraderie was visible on social media. But they faced criticism in their respective nations in the wake of current tensions between India and Pakistan. Participant 5 (film) referred to this incident and stated, “There is a limit to the influence of soft power improving India-Pakistan relations”.

Social media has indeed bridged the void among people all over the world transcending geographical boundaries. But in conflict situations it can produce the reverse impact. This is evident in the case of India and Pakistan. Digital media platforms are being used to hurl slurs and abuses. In this way, the intersubjective domain of shared understanding and perception are negatively affected. Hence the construction of enemy image is further cemented in the minds of people on both sides of the equation. People to people contact can be counterproductive if the underlying conditions of conflict are not addressed. The next section explores to what extent public interaction is influenced by official policies and how it perpetuates conflict between the two nations.

6.5. PERSONAL RELATIONS CAUGHT IN ELITE-DRIVEN DISCOURSE AND POLICIES

This theme focuses on the impact of discourse and policies shaped by the elitist entities in both nations. Here, mainly Government institutions, political parties, news media and eminent persons are brought in to focus as part of the elite having a bearing on people to people links. The two subthemes then turn the spotlight on propaganda and barriers, which are visible and invisible. There is ongoing propaganda that distorts perception and hampers imagination. Barriers in the way of people to people contact and communication are becoming more stringent despite policies and pronouncements to the contrary. Participant 9 (Government servant) recalled, “Despite possessing an official passport, I was denied a visa to India”.

People on both sides have narrated harrowing accounts of their travel and stay in each other’s countries. Whenever an Indian visits Pakistan or vice versa, intelligence agencies and law-enforcement apparatus often keep a close tab on him or her. Bearing out this trend, the founders of the Ajoka Theatre, Madeeha Gauhar and Shahid Nadeem (2009: 89), lamented that intelligence agencies would often visit their office once they returned from India after performing their plays. Even family reunions and visits are becoming difficult in such an environment. In a personal communication with a Pakistani citizen of Indian origin, Abid Ali, dated 02 April 2020, he revealed that family intermarriages between Indians and Pakistanis have now virtually come to an end. He ascribed this trend to the challenges for uninhibited travel across borders. This also adversely affects the soft power of both nations as matrimonial ties across borders could result in adopting and exchanging fashion and cuisine trends and habits.

Tourism can transform perceptions of Indians and Pakistanis towards one another, but is avoided by people on account of being harassed and questioned by the Government agencies. Noting this, participant 14 (sports) a frequent traveler to India, stated that “When some Pakistani goes there, Indian Muslims avoid him lest they are suspected of treason”. Religious tourism also suffers from this tendency. Movies show that spies disguise themselves as religious figures and stay at religious shrines. Therefore, people to people contact becomes difficult and generates negative stories reinforcing skepticism and distrust. When Pakistan inaugurated Kartarpur Corridor for Sikhs in India on 9 November 2019, there were some views in India that this corridor would be used to foment terrorism in India by Pakistan in the garb of religious tolerance. So, this

is how propaganda in the media and other modes of communication poses an obstacle in the people to people communication.

6.5.1. Propaganda and Realpolitik an Obstacle to People to People Contact

“He immediately blocked me on WhatsApp. So, our very good relationship came to a sudden end. This happened on 28 February 2019 when India and Pakistan were fighting on the border. So, this is how relations among individuals on both sides are disrupted by the action of ruling elite,” stated the participant 4 (music) as he recalled the abrupt end of a friendship with an Indian friend in the wake of the border skirmish between the two countries. The tension and tussle between the two nations reflects in their films, songs and sports. When a common man sees treatment meted out to a visiting person at the hands of law-enforcement personnel, then he is discouraged to make contact with the person belonging to an enemy country.

Whenever there is an incident of terrorism or violence inside India or Pakistan, the blame game starts. India blames Pakistan and Pakistan blames India. This accusatory warfare is started by the Governments on both sides. This affects people to people contact the most. For instance, in the wake of the Mumbai attacks in November 2008, both countries cut off trade and travel links, which were partially restored in the subsequent years. In February 2019, as a result of a highly publicised border skirmish, both countries once again stopped all trade and travel links. Therefore, this lack of public communication and contact reduces coordination in the domain of soft power. Sports teams are not able to travel and collaborative projects among the show business fraternity come to an end. Reacting to a question, participant 4 (music) noted that despite invitations from India to perform there, he is not willing to go there. “The reason is that right now atmosphere is not favourable to go there for me”. Similar sentiments were expressed by participant 14 (sports) and participant 17 (business) citing the security situation and political tensions as discouraging them to travel to India. This lack of motivation for tourism and travel does not augur well for a creating conducive environment to transform the mindset and feelings of people of both countries in positive way. Apart from this overall politically charged environment, there are other visible and invisible barriers posing a hurdle in the public interaction among both countries.

6.5.2. Visible and Invisible Barriers

This theme is based on the premise that travel and tourism can be a great soft power asset for both countries. As neighbouring nations, India and Pakistan share border points and coastal

areas along the Arabian Sea. Both nations also established direct rail and road links, but travel is at a minimum and usually comes to a sudden halt due to sporadic tensions. Referring to this travel-restrictive environment, Nadeem and Gauhar (2009: 90) wrote that the neighbouring cities of Lahore in Pakistan and Amritsar in India are farther from each other than the planet Mars.

There are a number of visible as well as invisible barriers in travel and other forms of contact and communication among people. Telephone calls are still recorded between the two nations by their spying agencies. In a personal communication with a Pakistani citizen, Irshad, dated 04 February 2020, he stated that in the 1980s and 1990s he was always afraid of calling his relatives in India. “This fear was caused because we knew that our telephone calls were recorded”. It is pertinent to note here that in those days mobile phones were not there. Only direct landlines were working and there was only one state-owned telephone company in Pakistan called the Pakistan Telephone Company Limited/PTCL. The situation in India was similar. Thus, these apprehensions were not without grounds as communication through telephone and postal correspondence was under direct state control and surveillance. The situation is different today, but the mindset remains more or less the same when it comes to communication and contact among Indians and Pakistanis. This also poses an obstacle to the exchanges in the soft power domain. Participant 13 (sports) stated, “Traveling to India is always an exciting but a challenging experience”. Impediments to travel mean decrease in tourism leading to the widening gulf among the citizens. For instance, when there is a cricket match in either country, people do not get visas to watch the match. Similarly, cinemas in border cities remain inaccessible for the people of both nations. Participant 8 (Pakistan Censor Board) suggested, “On the pattern of Kartarpur Corridor both countries should establish a cinema corridor to enhance the joint projects in the film industry”. This would also motivate and facilitate people of both nations to visit the entertainment venues. Kumar (2016) recalls that in the 1960s, people from a Pakistani city of Lahore would travel across the border to an Indian city of Amritsar to watch Bollywood movies and return the same day. In order to transform the conflict, contact among people in a physical space needs to be augmented parallel to enhancing the digital track. This comingling of people can foster a culture of tolerance across all segments of society. For Kriesberg (2016: 29), durable constructive accommodation in a conflict is helped by social and cultural interactions. Such interaction is lacking between Indians and Pakistanis and as a consequence, their cultural differences overshadow their cultural commonalities and sustain the conflictive environment.

6.6. CULTURE WIDENING THE GULF

This theme along with one subtheme reflects on the cultural factors keeping the India-Pakistan conflict alive. Despite cultural similarities between the two nations, there are dissimilarities which provoke conflict tendencies. Culture, as a soft power tool, can soften the people's attitude towards one another. However, culture can also harden a conflict by legitimising and popularising violence and hatred. In India and Pakistan, culture has been a source of tension, which also reflects in films, movies and songs. Cultural stereotypes are reinforced when shown on TV and the big screen. For instance, a Pakistani TV play "Nishan-e-Haider" (2017) translated as "emblem of the lion" showed Hindus physically weak vis-à-vis Muslims on account of vegetarian food preferences. In the same play, Muslims are portrayed as having greater physical vigour as they eat beef. So, it is easy to overpower Hindus. An Indian movie "Fiza" (2005) translated as "wind" depicted Muslims as violent because they eat beef. These kinds of themes and messages in movies resonate powerfully with the public, hence generating negative perceptions. They also create what Nye (2003: 44) terms "warrior ethics" in both nations resulting in continued reliance on hard power.

Culture according to Joseph Nye can dampen soft power if there are no willing receivers. In India and Pakistan, this is evident from the fact that Indian soft power is perceived as cultural invasion in Pakistan. According to these circles, India is trying to strike at the core of Pakistan's social fabric by spreading immorality through its films and other forms of screen productions. Participant 10 (retired diplomat) believed, "Indian cinema deliberately creates an environment which goes against the social norms of Pakistan". In this scenario, the underlying conditions of conflict between the two countries remain unaddressed. The elite leadership in both nations also weighs in to cause hostility along cultural lines. If both nations encourage cultural cooperation and cultural exchange, then they can foster a shared culture. The blueprint for such a cooperation does exist between the two countries in the shape of a cultural agreement signed in 1988 by Indian Prime, Minister Rajev Gandhi, and Pakistan's Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto. In this way, the politicians can lead the way for creating a conducive cultural milieu for conflict transformation. But more often than not, the ruling elite and celebrities end up fomenting cultural clashes between the two nations by accentuating the differences.

6.6.1. Political Exigencies and Showmanship Fomenting Cultural Hostility

“I am not supposed to be in good health. But I can assure you no matter how poor my health is, it is sufficient for India” (quoted in Jalal and Hasan, 1970: 10). This is how Pakistan’s former Prime Minister addressed a group of Pakistani students in Britain in 1966. The utterance was meant to communicate the physical vigour of Pakistanis over Indians. This is how the ruling elite in Pakistan used anti-Indianism to score political gains. But in doing so, they exaggerated the conflict and weaved it with cultural tapestry.

The situation across the border is not much different. Indians often quip referring to their large population vis-à-vis Pakistan; that if the whole of India urinates together, then Pakistan would submerge and will be wiped out of the map. Thus, due to this showmanship there is an ongoing cultural war between the two countries. The soft power instruments and platforms are susceptible to this cultural warmongering and themes in this connection are oft repeated. Shoojit Sircar an Indian film director, once stated that balancing truth with drama is a challenge but in the case of India and Pakistan it assumes entirely different proportions (Business Standard, 02 September 2013). This hostile atmosphere reflecting and being promoted through cultural stereotypes also affects sports and the entertainment sectors between the two countries. Participant 14 (sports) claimed, “Cultural differences between India and Pakistan do not exist, they are invented and then exaggerated by those who do not want to see peace between the two countries”. If there is positive cultural interaction among the citizens of both nations, then they can build a shared understanding about the common issues. This can enhance the potential of soft power in transforming the mindset of people around the divisive issues. Sports contests and collaboration in the entertainment sector can resume and continue without hiccups if there is an element of tolerance and mutual accommodation by cutting through the shibboleths of the past.

6.7. THE POISONOUS ASPECTS OF SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT SECTORS

This theme and two subthemes explore the challenges in sports and entertainment domains with respect to fueling rivalry. In sports, the interference of politics has always posed trouble. At present, all sports linkages are frozen due to ongoing tension. Similarly, in the entertainment sector all sorts of collaborative ventures have been suspended indefinitely. Political considerations and exigencies often disrupt sports and cinema linkages between the two countries. It creates an overall

environment to the effect that somebody calling for thaw in the relations in these spheres faces backlash in terms of accusations and insults. Participant 2 (civil society) revealed, “Once I developed an argument with a friend on India-Pakistan relations. While disagreeing with me my friend declared me a traitor as for him, I was having pro-India sentiments”. This stalemate has resulted in deepening the negative mindset about one another in both societies.

Cricket, being the most popular game in the two countries, has become a victim of politics. It is also used as a political tool by India against Pakistan by denying its players to participate in the Pakistan Super League and banning Pakistani cricketers from the Indian Premier League. Moreover, India is also using its clout with the International Cricket Council in a manipulative manner against Pakistan. Similarly, in the show business world, politics has spread its tentacles. This has also caused a split among people who were once friends with each other. There is now a widespread tendency to enliven the content of screen productions with nationalism in the garb of patriotism. This causes further divisions and hardens and poisons the perceptions of Indians and Pakistanis about one another. Therefore, both Governments need to agree to unfreeze sports ties and allow free movement of people from such walks of life. This will generate an environment of mutual respect and will allow further easing of travel. Participant 3 (civil society) stated, “Soft borders would result in softening of hearts on both sides”. Soft power can be instrumental in the softening of politics and pave the way for resolving disputes between both nations. To begin with, both states should avoid politicising sports and entertainment sectors otherwise, a situation of conflict will persist.

6.7.1. Politicisation of Sports

“I feel the mindset needs to change about bringing politics into Sports, it should not be allowed no matter what!” stated participant 13 (cricket) who has traveled to India several times and played high profile India-Pakistan cricket matches. The political sloganeering has badly affected India-Pakistan sports ties. Not only cricket, but other team sports like hockey, Kabadi and individual sports like Tennis have suffered from the political tensions between the two countries. Cricket is of pivotal importance in both countries as it is the most liked and loved. It is because of this reason, that it is politicised. There is an unusual hype whenever an India-Pakistan cricket match takes place. The researcher personally observed this tendency during the under-19 cricket semifinal between India and Pakistan in Potchefstroom, South Africa. The crowd of both nations was

exchanging insults and political slogans. Several times, the security personnel had to halt the contest and pleaded with the people to calm down. This is a common trend in India-Pakistan sports contests.

Whenever there is some cricket match between the two nations, the most commonly used phrase is “archrivals”. In fact, there is a war hysteria around the cricket contests. Participant 14 (sports) recalled, “While playing against India the feeling is that it is not a sports contest, rather it is a battle to death. Even if players do not want to have this feeling, the media and public generate the environment which creates such emotions among players, and this is true for both teams.” This happens because there is less cricket played between the two teams. Pakistan’s former cricket captain, Javed Miandad, titled a specific chapter in his autobiography (2003: 131) as “war with India”. This shows that even players feel the impact of politics while playing against each other. It is due to this politicisation that India and Pakistan do not allow their players to play for each other’s franchises in IPL and PSL. More sports mean more travel resulting in an increase in people to people contact. It can also generate more tourism connecting the people of both nations directly and letting them enjoy each other’s hospitality. Such interaction, arising out of sports, can bolster the prospects of transforming the rivalry between the two countries.

6.7.2. Divisive Themes in Screen Production

According to this subtheme, the outcome of unrelenting bitterness between India and Pakistan is that their cinema industry and other screen entertainment outlets throw up divisive themes. Cinema can and does play an important role in conveying and constructing an image of own selves and others. Construction of an enemy image is common in Indian and Pakistani cinema and related entertainment platforms. Prevalent tension between the two countries has created a willing audience for saber rattling themes and productions. Referring to this, participant 3 (civil society) noted the following:

“In the current scenario, such platforms play less positive role. For example, the Indian TV channels portray Pakistan as an enemy state and Bollywood action films establish the negative characters belonging to Pakistan. In the same way, Pakistanis consider “Hindu” as a metaphor of non-piousness. The black-magic practitioners, Djinn with negative energies and demonic figures are usually considered non-Muslims and especially Hindus”.

This also increases religious bigotry, which already poses a big hurdle in transforming people's mindsets and feelings in the two countries.

Indian Bollywood is more resourceful than Pakistani Lollywood and can, therefore, set the right direction in conceiving common and unifying themes. The current ban on Pakistani actors and singers needs to be lifted so that they can travel to India and participate in various cinema activities. Participant 4 (music) frankly admitted, "I always feel better while performing in India. This is so because there is a large audience and even commercially it is more profitable". Pakistani actress, Ms. Saba Qamar, who performed in the Indian cinema, stated in an interview that she would like to go back to India whenever there is an opportunity to do so (2017). Pakistani show business personalities fondly remember their memories and friendships in India. Another Pakistani actress, Ms. Zeba Bakhtiar, expressed her sentiments on the death of an Indian actor, Rishi Kapoor, in these words, "I felt like the Kapoor family is my family" (Daily Times, 06 May 2020).⁷ If these personal connections among the people in these walks of life sustain the ups and downs of India-Pakistan relations, then it is a glimmer of hope for altering negative perceptions. Sports and movies can bridge the gap, which otherwise will widen and resultantly legitimise the militarisation of bilateral relations. This militarisation is already denting the prospects of positive peace between the two nations. It also undercuts the appeal of soft power in the region and blocks alternative discourse and policies away from hard power.

6.8. MILITARY DOMINANCE OF STATECRAFT

The role of the military in interstate conflict is invariably decisive. But in the context of the India-Pakistan conflict, this role is even more critical. This theme along with four subthemes discusses various dimensions of the military's role and its related domain of hard power. In Pakistan, the military has been crucial in shaping the overall foreign policy of the country, but in India, although military has a limited foreign policy role, it nevertheless plays a more proactive role in foreign policy issues pertaining to Pakistan. Participant 7 (Government servant) stated, "India and Pakistan do not have foreign policies towards each other, rather they have security policies". This resonates

⁷ Zeba Bakhtiar performed in the Indian cinema alongside Rishi Kapoor. Rishi Kapoor died in May 2020.

with Stephen Cohen's assertion that both countries primarily view each other with a security lens, ignoring political and economic aspects (2013: 48).

The tangible impact of the militarisation of foreign policy in both countries is that they have incorporated soft power in their hard power pursuit. The term hybrid warfare or fifth generation warfare is commonly used by India and Pakistan. This type of warfare incorporates all aspects of hard and soft power alternatively termed as smart power. India and Pakistan, in continuing their hard power, have stockpiled nuclear weapons to the extent that they can, within minutes, exterminate each other. Nowhere in the world is the threat of nuclear war so real and imminent as it is in South Asia. If both countries do not resolve and transform their conflict, then this threat will remain constant.

The continued arms race in the conventional as well as in nuclear arsenal is draining the resources of both nations. As a result, the much-needed resources for social development are being diverted to continue the conflict. Participant 17 (Business) stated, "It is a lamentable fact that people are dying of hunger in both nations, but they still build nuclear weapons". If people are illiterate and downtrodden, then the impact of soft power will not bear dividend. On the contrary, in such a society soft power tools can easily turn into a propaganda machine. Poor and uneducated people are liable to succumb to the conflictive environment generated by the state-centric war narrative. The military buildup and accompanying war mongering also results in proxy wars by both countries in each other's territories. Covert and sub conventional war through intelligence agencies is also thematised in movies and TV plays in both countries. Movies show heroics of soldiers and spies to inflict damage on the enemy and protect the homeland. Hero and villain depiction popularises the conflict on both sides. This situation can be mitigated by agreeing to reduce military expenditure jointly and initiate joint social uplift programmes. The nuclear dimension of the conflict makes it urgent to end the rivalry and transform the conflict dynamics through reconciliation.

6.8.1. Nuclear Stalemate: An Ultimate Challenge

The subtheme in this section emphasises that the nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan cannot be ruled out if their tensions persist. Although there are views that war is unlikely between the two countries because of nuclear weapons. Participant 10 (retired diplomat) raised this point: "Both states would not go to war due to the prospect of annihilation from nuclear weapons". But

this calculation can result in complacency causing one side to start nuclear war and prompting the response. Debunking this myth, Paul (2005; Bidwai (2009) argue that nuclear weapons have hardened the positions of both sides in the belief that now conventional war would not be fought. Bidwai (2009: 156) notes that during the Kargil war in 1999, both countries brandished the nuclear threat at least 13 times. This shows that during actual war either of the two nations can use nuclear weapons provoking response from the other side, thus resulting in the first nuclear war in the world. A study by the International Physicians for Prevention of Nuclear War painted a scenario that if both nations use 100 nuclear weapons the size of the nuclear bomb dropped on Hiroshima, then there would be unimaginable consequences. Some 21 million people would die, and half of the Ozone layer would be destroyed. It would also destroy agriculture all over the world, causing some 2 billion people to die from drought (Rehman, 2019).

The biggest harm of having nuclear weapons is that huge sums of money and technological ware withal are being spent for the upkeep, safety and upgrade of these destructive devices. If both nations persist in a nuclear weapons race, then they would continue their conflict. Soft power in this environment of unabated conflict will remain subservient to hard power. This will harden the conflict and transformation of people's opinions and feelings will remain difficult. Nuclear related confidence building measures are in place between the two countries. But they are doing this to show to the world that they are mature nuclear powers. But their continued conflict also keeps the world on edge. Both nations will have to agree to effective nuclear disarmament. This is possible only when they are able to come out of a conflictive environment by transforming their attitude and policies towards each other. Hard power pursuit in the age of digital communication is likely to manipulate soft power. The militaries of both countries are already doing this as they are increasingly using soft power tools to wage and win image battles.

6.8.2. Soft Power Incorporated into Hard Power

Terminologies and phrases like hybrid warfare, fifth generation warfare, irregular warfare, cyber warfare, psychological warfare and smart power, bespeak volumes of soft power being subsumed by hard power. India and Pakistan, being in a conflict situation, are keener to use these concepts and absorb them into their military doctrines and strategic culture. Movies and TV plays are being sponsored by the public relations wings of both militaries. Section 3.10 of this study has detailed the forays of military establishments into the social and conventional media domains. The outcome

of this outreach of the military is that now it can influence the minds of populations directly. Previously, there was no direct communication between the masses and armies. But with the onset of new media technologies, this communication has reached another level. This has resulted in soft power tools being used for hard power agendas and outcomes. Participant 11 (politician) claimed, “Now military in Pakistan is at par with the civilian agencies when it comes to using media and other channels of information”.

Since soft power is meant to co-opt people, its use by the armed forces is likely to cause divisions among people. Militaries are trained to fight, so it is natural that they use culture, values, religion and other soft power instruments to aggrandize their power pursuit. There are computer war games fictionalising the real enemies. For instance, Indian computer wizards invented a game featuring the Indian pilot Abinandhan heroically fighting the Pakistan military. Abhinandhan was the pilot who was captured by Pakistani forces on 28 February 2019 during an air battle in the border town of Kashmir. The remedy to this situation is that in the first place both militaries should reach an understanding that they would not spread propaganda about each other. There has to be an irrepressible desire for peace between the militaries. Then, there has to be a match between deeds and words of the militaries once they agree to peace among themselves. This can neutralise the challenge of the abuse of soft power for war ends. Understanding between the military forces of India and Pakistan can also result in reducing the arms race. This decrease in weapon acquisition would spare more resources for social development in both countries, which can prepare a conducive environment for the productive and result-oriented use of soft power for conflict transformation.

6.8.3. Development and Human Capital Expenditure Compromised

This subtheme puts forth a discussion surrounding the fact that the conflict between India and Pakistan has taken a huge toll on their development expenditure. Both states are neglecting millions of poor citizens because of spending priorities in favour of security. They justify this spending in the name of defence of motherland. These two words “defence” and “motherland” are often employed to emotionalise the people by whipping up patriotic fervour leading to nationalist triumphalism. Calculating the cost of nuclear arms and missiles of the two countries Lavoy (2002: 266) notes that in India some 13 thousand healthcare units could have been built with the cost of one Agni missile and 3 thousand housing units could have been constructed with

the cost of one nuclear warhead. Similarly, in Pakistan, nearly all children could have been educated and fed with the resources which have been spent on building nuclear weapons and their delivery systems.

Any conflict to be transformed through soft power inevitably requires an informed and educated citizenry. In India and Pakistan, the level of education and quality of information reaching people is not adequate enough to affect such transformation at present. Uninformed and uneducated individuals are easily impressed on by the spoilers who have vested interest in seeing the conflict continued between both nations. Participant 4 (music) stated, “Peace between India and Pakistan in this scenario is near to impossible. There are vested interests in both nations which do not want peace between the two countries. If peace prevails, then these vested interests would be unhappy”. Moral imagination among individuals locked in conflict can transform them through education and information. In order to surmount this challenge, both states have to prioritise social development. For this, defence spending will have to be cut to a great degree. Participant 2 (civil society) noted, “If military in Pakistan allows more budget for human and social development, then Pakistan can achieve 100 percent literacy rate and universal health coverage”. People can visit cinemas and sports venues if they can afford doing so. Moreover, they can appreciate these types of entertainment in positive spirit when they are free from conflictive stereotypes. India and Pakistan will have to solve their domestic conflicts for generating positive energy among their citizens. These domestic conflicts also fuel proxy wars between the two countries and give birth to suspicions and vicious cycle of accusations and counter-accusations. Reflecting this trend between the two nations participant 10 (retired diplomat) stated, “India wants to weaken Pakistan. In order to do so India is fomenting terrorism in Baluchistan and is engaged in subversive activities in other parts of Pakistan”.

6.8.4. Proxy Wars and Domestic Conflicts

Currently, there are domestic conflicts going on in both countries. According to this subtheme, this environment spawns more conflict tendencies at state and societal level. As discussed in section 2.3, domestic conflicts get internationalised, especially among neighbouring countries. Chapter three analysed the India-Pakistan equation in terms of their domestic conflicts casting a shadow on their bilateral relations.

Bollywood movies portray Pakistani spies operating in India and the Pakistani entertainment media brings up themes about Indian covert warfare in its territory. For instance, two Bollywood movies “Phantom” (2015) and “Baby” (2015) depict the role of Pakistan in orchestrating Mumbai attacks. Both movies show the Indian premier spy agency RAW handling both operations successfully.

Apart from entertainment platforms, there is always a serious commentary on domestic interference by India into Pakistan and vice versa. This undermines the prospects of positive peace between the two countries. It also provides more fuel for nationalistic themes and sentiments in films and songs. Participant 8 (Censor Board of Pakistan) stated, “In the name of patriotic songs both countries end up creating hyper nationalist feelings”. Sports ties also fall prey to this hostile narrative. Both countries need to resolve their domestic conflicts so that they can remove this irritant of proxy war. This can also foster peaceful interaction among the citizens within and across both countries. Once at peace with themselves, both nations can embark on a new journey of cooperation and mutual trust. This trustful relationship would also make both nations amenable to the positive outside involvement in their relations, which will otherwise remain nonproductive.

6.9. ROLE OF EXTERNAL ACTORS

The theme headlined above along with this subtheme assesses the role of outside players and powers in terms of challenges for transforming the India-Pakistan conflict. The internationalisation of this conflict has always remained a potent element in this rivalry. The conflict has in some part hardened because of the expediency of some outside powers for promoting their own ends. Distrust of these players in India and Pakistan makes their involvement uncalled for at times. Despite some positive measures for promoting peace between the two nations as discussed in section 5.10, the image of these powers suffers from lack of altruism and selflessness. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, Pakistan’s former ambassador to New Delhi, Washington and Beijing and the head of the UN peace mission in Iraq and Sudan, claims that cynicism, indifference, self-interest and the realpolitik of big powers contributed to the worsening of the India-Pakistan conflict (Qazi, 2020). Furthermore, as this study expounded in section 3.5, these outside players engage with the elite state structures ignoring the wider and deeper social landscape of India and Pakistan. This reduces the appeal of sincerity of foreign actors in terms of making genuine efforts for improving India-

Pakistan relations. “The international community definitely can play an important role; there had been many attempts in the past but failed due to the trust deficit and geopolitical alignment”. This was the response from participant 2 (civil society) regarding the challenging role of the outside actors in this bilateral conflict. The perpetuation of the India-Pakistan rivalry has always been enmeshed with the currents and counter currents of global politics having a profound impact on the South Asian regional environment. This renders the perceptions of people to be negatively moulded about these actors. Reflecting this pessimistic view about the externalist role in the India-Pakistan conflict participant 12 (politician) stated the following:

“Big nations have their own economic and strategic interests all around the world. They have their selfish pursuits in India and Pakistan. That is why they are disinterested in India-Pakistan peace. These powers give importance to their own economic interests and they ignore the issues of peace and justice”.

The faith in the UN has diminished to a considerable extent. The latest example is Pakistan’s Foreign Minister, Shah Mehmood Qureshi’s statement that the UN is a talk shop (Dawn, 24 September 2020). In sports, the real and perceived partisan role of international sports bodies has also complicated the sports ties between the two nations. In this regard, the role of ICC is of particular significance. India has undeniable clout in the ICC due to its large commercial footprint in the body. Thus, the ICC is constrained to play a constructive role in nudging and persuading both countries to resume their cricket contests. The selfish interests of outside powers sustain the conflict, hence pushing both nations to enhance their hard power.

6.9.1. Selfish Interests of Outside Players

This subtheme focuses on the point that the feeling in Pakistan is that outside players have their own interests in the India-Pakistan conflict. They even ensure that this conflict remains alive so that they have a thriving weapons market there. Participant 2 (civil society) went to the extent of saying, “Major powers intentionally create and prolong conflicts in the developing world so they can sell their weapons. The conflict between India and Pakistan also holds a commercial benefit for big powers which are constantly exporting their arms to these two nations”. The shifting geopolitical global and regional scenario also contributes to the pursuit of narrow selfish interests of the countries like China, Russia and the US. The conflict between India and Pakistan figures in the competing and clashing regional as well as global interests of these powers. They also render

multilateral forums such as the UN ineffective in solving the disputes between India and Pakistan. Similarly, other multilateral forums and international civil society organisations and peace advocacy networks are also adversely affected by the selfish behaviour of these big powers. But in this situation of despair, hope lies in the facilitation role of NGOs dedicated to promoting track two and track three diplomatic initiatives between the two countries. In this regard, the role played by The Hans Seidel Foundation of Germany, US Institute of Peace, Arsenault Foundation of Canada and Regional Centre for Strategic Studies based in Sri Lanka, is praiseworthy. These entities have been organising conferences, workshops, seminars, round tables and informal sittings of retired diplomats, military personnel, academicians, media circles and youth.

The partisan role of outside countries makes them unacceptable for both India and Pakistan in crisis situations. That is why for the Kashmir dispute, a mediation offer made by the US, Russia and the UK have been rejected several times by India. But this situation can be redressed by outside countries with their enlightened national interests which dovetail with the transformation of bitter the rivalry between these two South Asian neighbours. In a recent example of a positive outside role, a conflict between the UAE and the US played a critical role in helping Ethiopia and Eritrea in resolving their long-standing bitter border dispute. In direct prolonged border war and indirect proxy clashes, some 80 thousand people were killed on both sides. Both these countries kept the conflicting sides engaged through the thick and thin of their peace process culminating in the peace deal (Gebrekidan, 2018). This resolution of conflict can act as a fillip for transformation of overall divisive relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea enabling them to overcome past bitterness. Here one can see the example of moral imagination, which transformed the Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to conclude peace with Eritrea as he fought as a soldier 20 years ago in the border war with Eritrea.

India and Pakistan are also using foreign soils to settle scores against each other. For instance, in the US, UK and UAE there are banners and billboards trying to tarnish each other's image around the issues of Kashmir and Baluchistan. Thus, this is how the role of outside actors gets politicised in both countries. This leads to the lack of trust for outside actors among the people of both states. The Governments also exaggerate this mistrust with their actions and intent. For transforming the conflict between these two nations, the outside powers have to establish trust with both of them. The nuclear twist in the conflict necessitates the active and positive role to end this

dangerous rivalry. Trust is the key for which there has to be a plurilateral dialogue. For any dialogue and engagement to be sustainable, there has to be official patronage positively defined by political will which lacks continuity and vigour in India and Pakistan. Even soft power exchanges and interactions suffer from this deficit of government attention posing a challenge to transform the conflict.

6.10. LACK OF POLITICAL WILL THWARTING THE POTENTIAL OF SOFT POWER

This section is based on the theme of the Pakistani and Indian ruling elite's preoccupation with hard power, which neglects and even undermines soft power. The subtheme then lays emphasis on lack of official sponsorship and patronage of soft power interactions by both states. This mainly results from the lack of critical political will from the state-level institutions and leadership.

South Asia is still lagging the rest of the world in terms of movement of people and goods across borders. Trade between India and Pakistan stands at mere 2 billion dollars although it has the potential to go up to 37 billion dollars a year if there are no artificial barriers (Kathuria, 2018: 1). The main hurdle in smooth and seamless travel and trade is the unwillingness and inability of state ruling elites in both nations. This naturally stagnates the soft power interactions at best and at worst pollutes them with negative propaganda. The diversion of resources to maximise hard power comes at the cost of empowering people who then can pile on the pressure on Governments to move for peace. When people are empowered, they chart their own course of action and conceive conversations on their own. Channels of communication as the paramount source of conflict transformation can forge new relationships across the divide. For example, participant 16 (business) stated, "I thought that I can never trust an Indian person. But once I personally interacted with some Indian businessmen, then I concluded that I was wrong, and I was able to create good business contacts as well as cherishable friendships".

The sports and film fraternity in both countries can break new grounds in their respective fields. Participant 13 (cricket) suggested that not only should the national cricket teams of India and Pakistan play each other, rather cricket contests should take place among the regional and local townships, schools and university teams of both countries. The same sentiments were expressed in terms of hockey by participant 14 calling for club hockey between the two countries. But the

problem is that Governments of both nations have frozen sports contacts and contests. There is a whole lot of activity connected with the sports sector in India and Pakistan. As neighbouring countries, there can be greater opportunities of travel and tourism coinciding with sports festivals. Trade can also benefit from this easy cross-border engagement. The critical push in this direction can come from official circles motivated by political will, which at present remains a distant prospect. But if the past is a guide, then both nations can resume cooperation in soft power domains thus enhancing the citizen dialogue among their populations cementing the prospects of transforming their conflict through bottom-up peace building. The lesson in this regard can be drawn from the reconciliation experiment between the Second World War foes France and Germany. In 1963, both countries signed the Franco-German Friendship Treaty. This treaty established a full spectrum of institutional ties involving respective heads of state, ministers and bureaucracies. Ever since, both countries are holding consultations and moots under this arrangement and the result is there for all to see (Koopmann, 2009: 67).

6.10.1. Lack of Official Patronage for Soft Power Interaction

The focus of this subtheme is that for soft power to be of practical utility for transforming the India-Pakistan conflict by improving their relations, the official state patronage holds immense importance. Participant 5 (film) stated, “For soft power to be meaningfully employed, the support of Government departments is essential. This Government support has to come from both India and Pakistan, otherwise any venture from one country is bound to fail”. Governments in both countries exercise decisive influence on soft power platforms and resources. Although digital technology has enabled people to communicate without the state oversight, their communication is subject to the larger national narratives. Komireddi (2019: 126) writes, in the context of Indian Government control over public discourse, that if any Indian citizen is soft towards Pakistan, then he is subjected to “Modi’s digital hounds”. The situation in Pakistan is not much different as the prospect of demonisation prevents people from uttering peaceful words vis-à-vis India. The example in this context is of a civil society group in Pakistan called Pakistan Peace Coalition/PPC. The members of this civil society group, in unison with an Indian civil society group Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace/CNDP, called for nuclear disarmament in South Asia. They were dubbed as traitors by the authorities in Pakistan and India (Bidwai, 2009: 149).

At present, both states have restricted travel in the wake of tensions that was set off in 2019. Whatever little travel is going on, it is for religious purposes and that too comes with stringent requirements. The atmosphere of suspicion and hostility is so pervasive that even academic and literary events are disrupted or not allowed altogether. One such instance is Muneeza Hashmi's aborted trip to India where she was supposed to attend a literary event and recite the poetry of Faiz Ahmad, a famous poet in India and Pakistan (The News, 13 May 2018).⁸ The same disruption was faced by the Ajoka Theatre from Pakistan in 2013 when they traveled to India to perform a play. This behaviour is more common in India than in Pakistan. The reason is that there are more soft power platforms with more resources and opportunities in India. As a consequence, more Pakistanis travel to India than the other way around. It is, therefore, necessary that both Governments remove the barriers impeding the exchange in the soft power domain. If the current deadlock persists, then it will foster a single dimensional and exclusivist mindset in both nations (Salim, 2009: 58). This grim scenario can be redressed by opening the travel conduits between the two countries. Participant 4 (music) stated, "I want to travel to India, but there are so many procedural difficulties that despite my strong urge I prefer not to think of traveling there". The Governments should take the lead in organising the events for sports, culture and show business. The symbiosis between official patronage and common citizens would generate and solidify what Faiz (2009: 34) calls "self-sustaining networks." People of India and Pakistan have demonstrated in the past that they can make peace with one another, but the political will and state patronage were found missing.

An Indian journalist, Kuldip Nayar, quoting his interaction with Pakistan's former Prime Minister, the late Benazir Bhutto, recalled that she stated that Governments would not lead anywhere but people should carry on their interaction (Nayar, 2009: 12). People to people contact itself is a soft power instrument holding a host of other soft power instruments. For transforming the conflict between India and Pakistan, their Governments will have to encourage and facilitate more popular exchanges and avenues of interaction instead of choking them. This will enable the people of India and Pakistan to see one another in a positive light and unleash their latent moral

⁸ Muniza Hashmi is the daughter of late poet Faiz Ahmad Faiz, a famous Pakistani poet whose poetry is also liked and recited in India due to language commonality between India and Pakistan. This event occurred in May 2018.

imagination. This is how positive employment of soft power can generate peace constituencies in both countries and transform their unresolved conflict.

6.11. CONCLUSION

This chapter shed light on obstacles and issues affecting the India-Pakistan conflict and their reliance on hard power. These challenges range from individuals to the Governments, domestic to global and national to regional. Individuals are influenced by the propaganda and hostile narrative created and sustained by the ruling elite. The regional structures are stagnant and global powers engage in the conflict to forward their own agendas and interests. The outcome of these obstacles is that the role of soft power is sidelined in the overall India-Pakistan conflictive relations. Whole gamut of bilateral relations be it diplomatic, political or economic is affected by the underlying as well as overt causes of conflict. Both nations have developed conflicting identities and competing values entrenching them in peoples' minds through religion, culture and history. Conventional and digital media become a tool to use soft power by security establishments to aggrandize hard power. Outside powers are primarily interested in the South Asian region for their own economic and strategic gains leaving the conflict alone.

These challenges are formidable but still not beyond the grasp of solution. The chapter also recommended the solving of these challenges to transform this conflict through soft power. These recommendations are further refined and expounded in the next chapter. The crux of these recommendations is that both states will have to empower and trust their citizens for peace making. But the main role is in the domain of state policies. Soft power can be effective in changing peoples' perception towards if there is positive state patronage. The militaries of both countries will have to jettison the enemy image of each other. They can get motivation to do so from their own forum created in 2002 called the India Pakistan Soldiers Peace Initiative. Political leadership will be required to depoliticise the sports and entertainment sectors to bring citizens in contact. This will promote tour and travel, thus enabling both countries' citizens to interact with one another and equip them with moral imagination, which can eliminate the perceptual divide.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will conclude this study and also summarise findings. The chapter also discusses the main conclusions arrived at through findings by answering the principal research question and fulfilling the research objectives. The chapter puts forth few recommendations in the light of this research for transforming the most difficult and dangerous contemporary conflict between India and Pakistan. Scope for further research is also discussed.

7.2. RESTATING THE ARGUMENT AND SUMMARY OF THE MAIN STUDY

The main argument developed and presented in this study is that the long-standing unresolved conflict between India and Pakistan has reached a point where both countries cannot force a settlement on each other. This is due to the fact that both have achieved nuclear weapons and possess their delivery systems. Attempts at managing and resolving their conflicts have not addressed the underlying causes and conditions of their rivalry. Therefore, the conflict transformation approach is more relevant for bringing durable peace between them. This transformation can be brought about by soft power which can alter the perception of people about one another given the relational basis of conflict. Soft power and conflict transformation focus on people as active agents of change and progress. The study also argues that moral imagination has to be a driving force behind the use of soft power to transform the India-Pakistan conflict. Soft power without moral imagination will simply result in popularising the hatred and hostility among the people.

The core of the research on the India-Pakistan conflict deals with managing tensions and resolving disputes. But very few studies have assessed the possibility of transforming this conflictive bilateral relationship between both countries by addressing its underlying causes. This thesis took up this question and applied the concept of soft power as a plausible instrument for

transforming this conflict. The concept of soft power has been synthesised with moral imagination in order to ensure that there is positive interaction among the people and the ruling elite from both countries. A constructivist epistemological framework guided the research for applying a qualitative approach and selecting the semi-structured interview technique for interviews across six categories of participants. The data, which has been collected through primary and secondary sources, was analysed by employing the technique of thematic analysis. The main themes were then categorised according to two broad discussion areas viz. prospects and challenges pertaining to transformation of the India-Pakistan conflict. Then, there were subthemes within each main theme shining a light on various aspects of the study.

The research has been able to prove the proposition that the conflict between India and Pakistan can be transformed by using soft power. Prospects to bring about this transformation exist on account of shared religious heritage, cultural commonalities, interaction and information through conventional and social media, sports ties and access to commonly understood and liked entertainment content. This results in enhanced people to people contact and communication, which generates positive mutual feelings enabling them to discover the positive side of one another. Therefore, this contact and communication generate moral imagination among people that can lead to the transformation of hearts and minds, which is the key for transforming the conflictive mindset in the two nations.

There were four key objectives of the study: examining how a focus on hard power perpetuates the India-Pakistan conflict, exploring how soft power can lead to conflict transformation between the two nations, exploring the soft power tools which both countries can utilise for transforming their conflict and analyzing the challenges in the way of soft power to bring transformation in this long-standing conflict including how these challenges can be mitigated. The study in line with its first objective found that there are challenges rooted in hard power pursuit which pose a barrier for transforming the conflict between India and Pakistan. The unending pursuit of hard power generates conditions and factors which affect imagination and perception of people in both countries. As for the second objective of the study, it has been found that both–India and Pakistan possess soft power instruments which can be used for transforming peoples’ mindset and feelings. Once people feel positively about one another, then both states can come out of state-driven hostile policies. The findings in line with the third objective point to the

fact that both countries have platforms to deploy soft power tools and resources. Sports, music, film industry, cultural festivals and cuisine are some key soft power tools which have proved to be useful in establishing channels of communication among the masses of the two countries which is the key for transforming their conflict. Findings related to the fourth objective of the study demonstrate that any attempt at conflict transformation between these two nuclear rivals must not lose sight of the ground realities of this conflict, which are rooted in religious nationalism, a bitter divisive history, cultural stereotypes, propaganda through mainstream and social media, prejudicial entertainment themes and depictions and an outsized role of the military in statecraft and security issues. All these factors pose an obstacle in the way of transforming people's emotions and feelings about one another and block the way for moral imagination to take root in people's hearts. As a result, soft power instruments are used to foment more hostility. But these challenges and obstacles can be overcome if the peace constituencies continue to thrive in both countries. This study has discovered that there are forums and platforms at the public level on both sides that want peace to prevail. They are regularly interacting directly as well as through digital channels of communication. This is where this research reaffirms the proposition that the transformation of conflict between India and Pakistan is possible by the use of soft power instruments and tools.

7.3. CONCLUSIONS

Stanley Wolpert (2010: 100) aptly commented on the India-Pakistan conflict by stating that "Arms alone, no matter how modern or powerfully remote, will never solve problems deeply buried in the hearts and minds of hundreds of millions of people". Indeed, this conflict lies deep in the hearts of people of both nations and solutions need to be people-focused and tailored to change hearts and minds. The leaders and masses of both states speak the similar languages, participate and enjoy the same festivals and above all suffer from the same pain of poverty, underdevelopment, violence and acquired/manmade prejudices and biases. The central premise of this study is that this deep-rooted conflict can be transformed if people's views and perceptions are altered through the use of soft power tools.

This research has concluded that India and Pakistan, as nuclear powers, cannot subdue each other. They have also failed to resolve their conflict whereas management of their conflict has only temporarily resulted in cooling down tensions. Therefore, long-term and durable peace between

the two nations is possible when there is a change of heart on both sides. This change of heart will have to be among the ruling elite as well as the masses. According to this study, people of India and Pakistan have the latent potential to view one another in a positive light, which can be made patent through moral imagination. Soft power exchanges and projects can foster moral imagination among the citizens of both countries. The transformation generated by moral considerations will create conditions preparing the ground for durable and positive peace in South Asia. India and Pakistan also share moral responsibility to save millions of lives and improve the lives of millions of their poverty-stricken citizens, and this can be done if they can transform their hostile relations into mutually beneficial ties rooted in a humane conception of interstate politics.

This research has some policy relevance as, for any long-term peace between the two countries, Governments have the most crucial role to play. The official discourse between India and Pakistan mentions the terms of conflict management and conflict resolution. In fact, both countries undertook some measures in managing their conflict through the UN facilitation and their own bilateral accords, discussed in section 3.6 and section 3.7 and has resolved some of their disputes under the rubric of conflict resolution as discussed in section 2.4 and section 3.5. But the concept of conflict transformation is yet to secure a hold in the official communication and exchange of views in the context of India and Pakistan. Kriesberg (2016) notes that conflict transformation is finding its place in academia, non-governmental organisations and governmental institutions, but it still has much ground to cover. Since both nations have peaked in hard power by acquiring nuclear weapons and are not anywhere near resolving their disputes, conflict transformation will be helpful to come out of what Misra (2010) terms as a “mutually hurting stalemate”. The transformational approach can open up new avenues for improving the relations with the help of bridging the perceptual divide among people. What both countries need is that the citizens can see one another in positive and humane way. This would help Governments in both nations to legitimise peace agreements to the domestic audience. It will also reduce the appeal of spoilers who exercise disproportionate influence in both nations towards thwarting any move towards peace.

Once transformation of conflict is discussed between the respective government officials, then its reverberations would be felt across various segments of both societies. The leadership structures and actors in both countries have to realise that if they want to resolve their current

conflicts and embark on a path of reconciliation, then the real dynamism would come from people. In the words of Galtung 2016: 143), “Peace is fueled by the creativity, dedication and vision of those who live in conflict”. This dedication, vision and creativity in a conflict situation can spring from moral imagination. Soft power resources create interactive patterns which give birth to dedication and creativity sustained and positively communicated and interpreted with the help of moral imagination. The culmination of transforming a conflict can lead to sustainable peace which is rooted in people’s perceptions across the conflict divides. For that, Governments of India and Pakistan have to take solid steps with sincerity of purpose and abiding belief in peace and harmony. It is only then that the South Asian region which is mired in violence, intolerance, poverty, illiteracy and backwardness, can uplift itself for the collective welfare of one fourth of the world’s population.

7.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study puts forth the following recommendations to bring about conflict transformation between India and Pakistan by using soft power. These recommendations are made in light of the findings of this study.

1. The concept of conflict transformation needs to be advanced at official level of engagement between India and Pakistan. For this to happen, negotiators from the foreign offices of both countries should be apprised of the utility of broadening the dialogical toolkit to include the transformational approaches to resolve disputes by peaceful exchange of views and positions. Such a venture would also expand what a former US diplomat, Goodby, and a political historian, Weisbrode (2020: 95) call “diplomatic imagination” of bureaucratic establishments of both nations. In the same way that both foreign offices have setup separate sections dealing with public diplomacy, they can also establish exclusive sections dealing with peace and conflict.
2. Peace education ought to be imparted at all levels ranging from elemental to tertiary institutions in both countries. Special importance in this regard must be given to religious seminaries whose students are more vulnerable to hate material emanating from religious bigots. The institutions of higher education, research centres and think tanks should give priority to peace research. In this regard, joint collaboration can be undertaken between the

academic communities of both nations. The Regional Centre for Strategic Studies/RCSS based in Columbo, Sri Lanka comprising all South Asian countries can provide a way forward in this direction. Also, the South Asian University based in New Delhi, India can be reinvigorated by honing the research skills of the youth to conceive and carry out joint research on various dimensions of the India-Pakistan conflict. India can establish academic chairs in Pakistan like it has done in Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh. Pakistan can also setup academic chairs in India. This can promote direct academic exchanges between the two nations.

3. India and Pakistan, as the two largest countries of South Asia, can discuss establishing a moral community in the region patterned after the economic community in Europe and security community between European countries and North American countries. This can give a fillip to moral considerations in executing interstate relations where issues of conflict can be seen through a moral lens. This can be done at the level of a South Asian regional organisation i.e., SAARC/South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation as India and Pakistan are both members. The moral imagination can be a motivating force behind such a regional moral community where member nations can engage with each other with a view to promote peace.
4. Visa-free corridors linking up the border cities of both nations would enhance travel and tourism. If border towns and villages are well-connected, then this can be replicated for connecting the hinterland metropolitan cities of both nations. This is doable, as in the past both nations had relaxed visa regimes for unimpeded cross-border travel.
5. Cultural centres can be a great vehicle for unleashing and cementing shared cultural heritage between the two nations. India does not have a single cultural centre in Pakistan and the same applies to Pakistan. Thus, this is an area where both countries can break new grounds. This will also facilitate people from show business to interact easily and undertake joint ventures.
6. Sports contests between both countries in all types of sports need to be promoted. Cricket ties which are frozen at present, should resume with the provision that both teams would be playing in each other's venues.
7. Youth and children interaction ought to start again and care must be taken that they are not disrupted. Initiatives like "exchange for change" at school level, "border border", a theatre

play by the Ajoka Theatre involving the Indian and Pakistani children and a pen pal initiative between the children of the two countries initiated by an advocacy group Friends Without Borders are illustrative examples in this regard. Currently, all these initiatives have been stopped, but they can resume as their originators and executors are still around and keenly engaged in the peace process.

8. For any effective conflict transformation undertaking between India and Pakistan, the role of middle tier i.e., strategically connected individuals and groups of people is immensely critical. In this regard, the role of sports persons, civil society activists, show business celebrities and religious leaders can play a pivotal role. This middle track can be a bridge between the top-level official entities and the masses at grass root level. These groups and networks can foster peace constituencies in both nations. They may be in the minority, but they can exert positive influence in line with the concept of minority influence propounded by Homan and Lantis (2020: 34). The authors posit that minority opinions may not prevail, but they can stimulate innovation and divergent thoughts. Keeping this assertion in mind, well-placed individuals and civil society groups may be able to herald a new beginning for peace between India and Pakistan.
9. Both India and Pakistan should strengthen regional integration under the umbrella of SAARC. South Asia is the least interconnected region in trade and travel. There are issues and challenges such as water, climate and pandemics, which can only be overcome through regional cooperation. This will have a softening effect on hard conflictive positions and views not only between India and Pakistan, but the other countries of the region will also benefit from this friendly and frictionless regional milieu.
10. The media has a critical role and responsibility to mitigate conflict in South Asia. It can shape perceptions and mold opinions in both nations to the effect that the people and ruling circles can view their relations through a conflict free lens. Consensus about conflicting positions can be forged through joint media collaborations such as “Aman Ki Asha” which was terminated in 2014. Not only can this joint project be revived, many other such joint ventures can be replicated across print, electronic and digital media.

These recommendations can go a long way to transform the hearts and minds of Indians and Pakistanis towards each other. Positive transformation at popular level can be generated by the use of soft power. Moral imagination can be a motivating element for positive use of soft power

by the Governments as well as people. If continued to fester, then this conflict can spell unspecified consequences for both countries living under the nuclear shadow.

7.5. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This research has evaluated the prospects of transforming the India-Pakistan conflict by using soft power. While doing so, the study also took into account the obstacles in attempting this transformation. The study came across some limitations discussed in section 4.8. Here, some suggestions are made to fill this void by conducting more research on different dimensions of this conflict.

Since this research mainly presents a Pakistani perspective, it is imperative that an Indian perspective weighs in on the debate about transforming this unflinching interstate rivalry. This research selected 18 participants from six categories. The number of participants can increase, and the number of categories can also increase in order to bring in more voices and narratives.

Apart from soft power, other concepts and theories can be analysed with regards to providing a conceptual input for altering the India-Pakistan conflictive relations. Within soft power instruments, the role of cricket, film, religious diplomacy and a number of other such tools can be studied individually and exclusively. Terms like cricket diplomacy, religious diplomacy, and Bollywood diplomacy are frequently referred to describe India-Pakistan relations. Therefore, more focused research can discover new dimensions and reinforce the existing ones to bring about transformation in this stalemated conflict.

Research needs to be done with more resources, conceptual foundations and methodological frameworks about bridging the gulf between grass-root peace activism and the official cum bureaucratic procedural peace process between India and Pakistan. Both these essential elements will have to be synchronous for any sort of long-term durable peace between the two countries. A comparative case study of India and Pakistan with other interstate conflicts in terms of a transformational approach can also be conducted. Since the conflict between these two nations is going on, so different avenues for research will remain open to be explored for its resolution and transformation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter of Ethical Clearance



26 April 2019

Dear Mr AM Abbasi

Project Title: The role of Soft Power in transforming the India -Pakistan Conflict: A Pakistani Perspective of Prospects and Challenges
Researcher: Mr AM Abbasi
Supervisor: Prof CA Isike
Department: Political Sciences
Reference number: HUM011/0319
Degree: Doctoral

I have pleasure in informing you that the above application was **approved** by the Research Ethics Committee on 25 April 2019. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should the actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

Prof Maxi Schoeman
Deputy Dean: Postgraduate and Research Ethics
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail: PGHumanities@up.ac.za

Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Lefapha la Bomotheo

Research Ethics Committee Members: Prof MME Schoeman (Deputy Dean); Prof KL Harris; Mr A Bizo; Dr L Blokland; Dr K Booys; Dr A-M de Beer; Ms A dos Santos; Dr R Fassel; Ms KT Govinder; Andrew; Dr E Johnson; Dr W Kelleher; Mr A Mohamed; Dr C Putterall; Dr D Reyburn; Dr M Soer; Prof E Taliard; Prof V Thebe; Ms B Tsebe; Ms D Mokalao

Appendix B: Letter of Informed Consent



Letter of Informed Consent

I, Arshad Mehmood Abbasi (Student no 18388958) am currently enrolled for a PHD in International Relations at the Department of Political Sciences at the University of Pretoria. I am doing my thesis entitled: “The Role Of Soft Power In Transforming The India-Pakistan Conflict: A Pakistani Perspective Of Prospects And Challenges”. For the purpose of this study I need to complete certain field research which will take the form of semi-structured interviews with individuals with first-hand knowledge of events relevant to my thesis. This will form part of my primary research and complies with the accepted standards within the discipline of Political Sciences. I hereby wish to obtain permission to interview you.

Your input will be acknowledged according to the footnoting system prescribed by the Department of Political Sciences. If specifically requested, participants may request to remain anonymous. Your interview will be recorded in writing / Dictaphone / tape recorder and will be stored in electronic format for a period of 15 years in compliance with the policy of the University Faculty of Humanities. This material may also be used for other research by the candidate. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may choose to withdraw from the interview at any stage.

I would also like your permission to use this information for possible further research in the future.

Yours sincerely

I, _____ (The undersigned) agree to participate in the PHD research project of Mr. Arshad Mehmood Abbasi (Student no. 18388958) at the University of Pretoria.

I have read his letter of introduction and agree that my information may be acknowledged according to the prescribed Departmental footnote reference system.

<input type="checkbox"/>	I give permission for my name to be used in this research.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I wish to remain anonymous in this research.

Yours sincerely

Signed _____ Date _____

Building and Room no	21-21.1	Tel: Number	012 420-5182	Email address	siphamandla.zondi@up.ac.za
University of Pretoria		Fax: Number	012 420-2693	www.up.ac.za	
Private bag X20, Hatfield 0028					
Republic of South Africa					

Appendix C: Letter of Recommendation from Supervisor to Access Archival Sources

Private Bag X20, Hatfield 0028
Republic of South Africa
Tel (012)420-4965; Fax (012) 420-4965
E-mail: christopher.isike@up.ac.za

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Political Sciences

To Whom It May Concern:

Pretoria, 15 November 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Mr. Arshad Abbasi

I am Christopher Isike, Professor of African Politics, International Relations and Development in the Department of political Sciences, University of Pretoria in South Africa.

This serves to confirm that Mr. Arshad Abbasi is a registered doctoral candidate with Student Number 18388958 in the Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria, South Africa, and I am his supervisor/promoter. His approved research topic is titled "The role of soft power in transforming the India-Pakistan conflict: a Pakistani perspective of prospects and challenges".

I can also confirm that Mr. Abbasi's study which has been approved by Department's Research Committee and Faculty Ethics Committee requires him to do field research in Pakistan where he shall collect primary data from relevant stakeholders and soft power actors including national and international governmental and non-governmental actors in Pakistan.

The Department of Political Sciences would therefore appreciate your support in granting Mr. Abbasi access to the archives dealing with India-Pakistan relations over the period of last 7 decades to enhance the quality of his studies. The archival material will be used only for this study and will be cited according to the prescribed format by the University of Pretoria

Please do not hesitate to contact me should your require further clarifications on this.

Many thanks and kind regards,



Prof Christopher Isike, PhD

Appendix D: Interview schedule

Questions for semi-structured Interview

1. Why does the India-Pakistan conflict seem intractable?
2. Is peace possible between India and Pakistan?
3. If yes, is war and militarization the solution to sustainable peace between India and Pakistan?
4. If not, are there alternative approaches to peace and security in India and Pakistan?
5. Is people to people relations a vehicle to create peace constituencies in both countries?
6. Is soft power a viable approach to transforming the conflict between India and Pakistan?
7. What are the soft power resources of India and Pakistan which can be used for transforming the conflict between them?
8. What role cricket can play in enhancing goodwill between India and Pakistan?
9. What is the impact of the film industry on public opinion of Indians and Pakistanis towards each other?
10. How can these and other soft power resources be deployed for transforming the India/Pakistan conflict?
11. What are the challenges of using these soft power resources to transform the conflict?
12. How can these challenges be mitigated?

Appendix E: Verification of Interview Transcripts

Dear Participant,

I am really thankful for your precious time to respond to the question for this research. Your responses have helped me a great deal to include a Pakistani perspective about the research.

I have transcribed your responses. I am mailing you the transcribed interview for your perusal. Please after going through the interview transcript, let me know if any change is to be made in any of your response. Moreover, if there is anything which was not correctly transcribed, or you want to change it, please feel free to tell me. You also have the option to edit the interview transcript where you see relevant.

Arshad Abbasi,

University of Pretoria student Number: 18388958,

PhD in International Relations,

Department of Political Sciences,

Faculty of Humanities,

University of Pretoria.