



Social Sciences Spectrum

A Double-Blind, Peer-Reviewed, HEC recognized [Y-category](#) Research Journal

E-ISSN: [3006-0427](#) P-ISSN: [3006-0419](#)

Volume 05 Issue 04, 2026

Web link: <https://socialsciencespectrum.com/index.php/sss>



Check for updates

Achieving Sustainable Peace Process between India and Pakistan through the lens of Conflict Transformation Theory

Dr. Khurram Maqsood Ahmad¹ Waqar Hussain² Maryam Siddiq Baba³

Article Information [YY-MM-DD]

Received	2026-08-01	Revised	2026-09-04	Accepted	2026-10-01
----------	------------	---------	------------	----------	------------

Citation (APA):

Ahmad, K, M., Hussain, W & Baba, M, S (2026). Achieving sustainable peace process between India and Pakistan through the lens of conflict transformation theory. *Social Sciences Spectrum*, 5(4), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.71085/sss.05.04.602>

Abstract

Conflict is natural to the social system of states. However, conflict between states can seriously hamper their progress and development. While conflict resolution may be able to bring peace yet the innate acrimonious behaviours weaken the sustainability of peace and conflict tends to return back. Alternatively, theory of conflict transformation does not only seek to resolve the conflict but it goes a step ahead to root out the basic cause for the conflict. India Pakistan conflict is a unique and perfect example of protracted conflict based on religion, culture and societal differences deep rooted into behaviours of both the states. A sustainable peace process has never been able to develop between the two states owing to the mutual mistrust and acrimonious behaviour developed over the history of relations. The standard modes of conflict transformation; (i) personal, (ii) relational or contextual, (iii) structural, and (iv) cultural, cannot be applied to India Pakistan case in entirety. The contours of conflict transformation theory are challenged by the underlining behavioural and strategic frameworks in case of the conflict between India and Pakistan.

Keywords: Development, Sustainability, India Pakistan Conflict, Mistrust and Acrimonious, Transformation Theory.

¹ National Defence University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

² Independent Analyst, Islamabad, Pakistan.

³ Doctoral Student, School of Politics and International Relations (SPIR), Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Corresponding Author: Dr. Khurram Maqsood Ahmad, **Correspondence through:** kma_sk@live.com



Content from this work may be used under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-Share-Alike 4.0 International License](#) that allows others to share the work with an acknowledgment of the work's authorship and initial publication in this journal.

Introduction

Conflict in any society is considered to be a natural phenomenon. If humans do not have conflicts among themselves, it would render it dormancy and little chances of progress. However, the conflict among states has different dynamics. While the inter-state conflicts can be cause of war and destruction, the presence of conflict helps in unifying a society against the external threat and brings innovation and creativity in warfare tactics and strategies which ultimately leads to the build-up and progress of societies. The conflict of interest may take birth because of financial interest, territorial gains, high or strong position in the society etc. It could be a perceived conflict of interest as well.

On the other hand, societies and states do cooperate and build cordial relations for the sake of strength against rival and economic benefits (Lederach, 2014, pp. 21–22). These are some of the reasons why the history has seen a ‘clash of interest’ and peaceful co-existence between states and societies. The mis-match of interests exists at individual, societal, cultural, national and international levels.

Conflict Transformation in Essence

Since the inception of conflict into the lives of humans, scholars and academicians have anticipated it according to their learning, experiences and understanding and have tried to develop theoretical construct to explain the phenomenon of conflict and its resolution. Scholars of Peace and Conflict Studies have produced theories like Conflict Management, Conflict Resolution, and Conflict Settlement with an aim to transform relationship of two adversaries from enmity to amity. Although a great amount of research work has been done in the field, yet the explanation of finding possibilities of transformation of relations of two adversaries has remained a major challenge for these theoretical concepts.

As the evolution of ideas is a never-ending process, John Paul Lederach has developed and introduced a rather newer terminology in the field of Peace and Conflict Studies named as “Conflict Transformation”. The Theory of Conflict Transformation seeks to transform the relations of adversaries by trying to address the root causes or the perceptions of the root causes of a particular conflict. It is particularly suited for intractable conflicts, where deep-rooted issues remain in the backdrop and are fuelled by episodes of protracted violence. Lederach & Maiese have suggested three lenses through which the theoretical constructs of Conflict Transformation (Lederach & Maiese, n.d.) can be seen:

- i.** the immediate situation
- ii.** underlying patterns and context
- iii.** a conceptual framework

Firstly, the imminent situation that explains the political situation and the relationship between the states needs to be analyzed. Secondly, the deeper relationship patterns be analysed that goes beyond finding a quick solution to the problem at hand and seeks to address what is happening in human relationships at a deeper level. Lastly, it needs to build a framework that creates a platform to address the content, the context, and the structure of the relationship. It practically brings the two parties at the negotiation table with the aim of resolving conflict and transforming the relation.

Conflict Transformation is defined as:

To envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change process that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationship. (Lederach, 2014, pp. 21–22)

Lederach has focused four central modes in which conflict impacts situation and changes things, which are; (i) personal; (ii) relational; (iii) structural; and (iv) cultural.

Similarly, Varynen has linked conflict transformation with changing dynamics of conflict and its associated factors. According to him, conflict transformation analyzes the issues between the actors and the corresponding interests of both the actors through the protracted conflicts as a consequence of social, economic, and political dynamics of the societies.

The bulk of conflict theory regards the issues, actors and interests as given and, on that basis, makes efforts to find a solution to mitigate or eliminate contradictions between them. Yet the issues, actors and interests change over time as a consequence of the social, economic and political dynamics of societies. (Austin et al., 2004).

His approach for transformation of conflict focuses on transformation at four levels: (i) actor transformations; when the actors involved in the conflict change (ii) issue transformations; when the issue responsible for conflict transforms positively (iii) rule transformations; when the rules of engagement transform in such a way that conflict is no more needed and (iv) structural transformation; leading to the change in structure of conflict. Moonis Ahmar has also discussed these approaches in his work on the subject as essential analysis for the positive transformation of inter and intra-state conflicts of protracted nature (Ahmar, 2012).

Conflict transformation does not stop at managing the conflict by peace-development and resolution of conflict. Rather it goes beyond that and focuses on the psychological and attitudinal aspects related to the conflict. Positive transformation of conflict is established once the negative energy of conflict is transformed to positive one which is done by changing the behaviour of states towards each other i.e not only the conflict has ended but also the causes of conflict have also ceased to exist and the relative state behaviours have also transformed. Adding to the debate, Riffat Hussain has enumerated five types of transformation; (i) actors; (ii) context; (iii) issues; (iv) rules; and (v) structures, focusing upon contextual aspects of conflict as well (Hussain, 2012).

Although, a lot of work has been done in the field of conflict transformation and conceptual clarity has been drawn theoretically yet practically, its application has not been analysed especially dealing with the conflicts between the states. This paper applies this construct to the situation in South Asia. Two major rivals of South Asian Sub-Continent i.e. India and Pakistan have history of protracted conflicts. The theory of conflict settlement, management and resolution have been defined and applied by many scholars and both states have used the contours of these theories very well either in a mutually agreed manner or by the intervention of a third party.

The introduction of the nuclear weapons in South Asia has reduced the chances of direct war; however, they have not been able to completely transform the rival relationship between them. In fact, nuclear deterrence has further complicated the situation between India and Pakistan (Ganguly & Hagerty, 2012). In the following paragraphs, the approaches of theory of conflict transformation will be applied to India and Pakistan case and effort will be made to analyse why both states have

not been able to transform their relationship from enmity to amity? and how the contours of theory of conflict transformation may be practically used to transform their protracted conflict?

Anomaly of Indo-Pak Conflict

The partition of 1947 is not only confined to creation of two separate states but separation of two ideologies. The Muslims and Hindus of the subcontinent represented stark differences in their ideologies and social practices. These differences were the main drivers for the Muslims to demand a separate state to exercise their cultural and religious freedom out of the influence of status based Hindu society. Furthermore, the demographic situation favoured Hindu majority which created problems for protection of Muslim rights in united India.

The creation of India and Pakistan on the map of the world has actually given birth to the two rivals, whose enmity is deeply-rooted and mainly base on religion and culture. The history of partition has left lasting psychological impact that has been reflective in the relative state behaviours of India and Pakistan. This rivalry has translated in the form of multiple incidents of conflicts between the two states involving armed forces with the right to seek self-determination.

The immediate cause of tension since their inception in 1945 was the bloodshed of millions of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, moving across the new borders to settle either in India or Pakistan. The communal violence, at the time of independence, set the stage for a permanent future rivalry between Pakistan and India (Paul, 2005). Territorial dispute over Muslim majority state of Kashmir has been the biggest bone of contention between the two states. Sporadic episodes of wars and conflict and across the border skirmishes over the time have deepened the enmity further and have not helped in managing the conflict at lower level of escalation.

The moments of acute tensions have also been followed by joint efforts for peace as well. Third-party involvement has been more successful model of conflict resolution as two sides signed the historic water accord of 1960, which is still in-force. However, efforts made by both sides to resolve the problems either produced limited results or did not last long. Even the role of most influential and strong international organization i.e. UN was not able to bring the two states to resolve the major territorial conflict of Kashmir as its resolutions regarding Kashmir have never been honoured (Qadeer, 2017, p. 65).

The conflict over Kashmir started with the unjust accession of the state with India despite the wishes of its majority population by Maharaja Hari Singh, the Prince of Kashmir at that time (Khokhar, 2019). It led to an uprising by the local residents of Kashmir joined by the tribesmen of Pakistan to liberate Kashmir. Subsequently, on request of Maharaja, India landed its forces in the state to crush this rebellion. In May 1948 Pakistan also sent its troops to Kashmir (Jaffrelot, 2004, p. 120). Interestingly, India turned to UN for ceasefire. Resultantly, UN resolutions were put in place by which Kashmiris would have been given right of self-determination through plebiscite. Both the countries agreed to it but later India refused to hold plebiscite after Pakistan and US struck a defence deal in May 1956 (Ziring, 1980, p. 221).

The situation further aggravated by the defeat of India by China in 1962 and Pakistan's receiving military hardware from the west made the context of 1965 war slightly different. The unrest in Kashmir increased due to the death of Jawaharal Nehru and made a power vacuum in the political system of India. India launched her ignominious, undeclared and blatant aggression on Pakistan (Mehdi, 1998). The international community intervened and ceasefire agreement was signed but this also could not ensure lasting peace as both the countries were again at war in 1971. This time the peace agreement resulted in dismemberment of Pakistan into West and Eastern parts.

Another significant aspect of this war which made a huge contribution to relative mistrust and acrimonious behaviour was exacerbated by more than 90,000 Pakistani soldiers taken as Prisoners of War by India. The Simla peace Agreement was the most significant outcome of this war by which the doors of multilateral peace building were opened in a manner that as per the agreement, both the states would resolve their issues bilaterally including Kashmir (Zaidi, 2019). But the Peaceful Nuclear Explosion by the India in 1974 put the two countries on the path of nuclearization (Mehmood, 1999).

The era of 1980's was considered to be an era of false alarms as India blamed Pakistan for Sikh insurgency in Indian Punjab (Singh, 1986). Also, Indian forces occupied Siachen glaciers in 1984 for which Pakistan also sent troops to counter and stop further ingress of Indian forces towards Pakistan (Sattar, 2007, p. 193). A similar situation happened in 1986-87, when India launched military exercises code named Brasstacks and moved massive military near the Pakistan border. In reaction to which Pakistan also moved the forces but the situation was de-escalated in February 1987 (Sattar, 2007, pp. 185–192). Furthermore, situation in Kashmir continued to worsen when in late 1980s with the rise of second intifada (armed uprising) in Kashmir resulted in further escalation of India Pakistan conflict. However, during 1980s, US played important role in back-door diplomacy and kept the conflict to a lower level (Chari et al., 2007, p. 80).

The nuclear tests by both India and Pakistan in 1998 established nuclear deterrence in South Asia which lessened the chances of direct hot war but the conflict continued at a limited level. During the Kargil crisis of 1999, both states were near to the war but had to de-escalate under immense international pressure which paved way for opening up of dialogue between the two states in the form of Lahore Declaration (India & Pakistan, 1999). However, the process could not sustain for long. Post 9/11, International terrorism has assumed a new version of conflicts. India massively mobilized its troops in 2001 along the Pakistani border as a consequence of attack on Indian Parliament when India assumed that this act was carried out by Pakistan. However, prompt response from Pakistan and international pressure restricted both sides from escalation (Nuclear Threat Initiative [NTI], n.d.). This did not do any good to the stumbling peace process in the wake of Agra Summit July 14-16, 2001, between India and Pakistan. Rather it badly hurt the mutual trust which is essential for conflict resolution.

The Composite Dialogues started in 2004 were promising a lot for the continuation of peace process including resolution of Kashmir issue between both the states. However, Mumbai attacks of 2008 served as spoiler in the peace process (Ghosh, 2009). As a result, India suspended the ongoing Composite Dialogue while blaming Pakistan for the incident, again without conducting any investigation. This suspension still continues showing no signs of improvement till yet.

The victory of Narendra Modi in 2014 changed the scenario of India- Pakistan conflict as the focus on behaviours has increased. The continual clashes on the LoC and Working Boundary have increased and as both the states battle with terrorism, the mutual mistrust and acrimonious behaviour have strengthened. The Uri Incident of September 18, 2016 in which 19 soldiers were killed in a terrorist attack on an Indian military facility was associated with Pakistan in an effort to justify the conduct of a military strike on terrorists inside Pakistani territory. India eventually claimed surgical strike in Pakistan on September 29, 2019, claiming to destroy 'militant infrastructure' (Ramachanran, 2019). These developments have transformed the nature of conflict and conflict resolution in South Asia.

In 2025, Operation Sindoor by India represented another watershed event in its military strategy where India claimed to strike militant targets inside Pakistani territory following the April 2025

terrorist attacks in India. This strategy brought about the most serious crisis between the two in decades. The Pakistani air force claimed to shot down 6 modern Indian aircrafts was a major set-back to India along with other damages to its military installations.

Achieving Sustainable Peace Process between India and Pakistan

The India Pakistan peace process has not been able to achieve sustainability. It has been stumbling and characterized by the mutual mistrust and acrimonious behaviour. However, in order to analyze the sustainability of this peace process, its dynamics must be taken into account. The very first initiative was made in 1950, when Liaquat-Nehru Pact was signed to protect the rights of minorities after partition. In 1953, another bilateral effort was made to resolve Kashmir conflict by Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra and Nehru in New Delhi with the aim to settle it peacefully. All went in vain when India suspended the process after Pakistan reached US for alliance and military assistance in 1954 (Ijaz, n.d., p. 204). In 1958, Feroz Khan Noon and Nehru once again agreed to resolve the eastern border between India and the former East Pakistan.

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the then Foreign Minister of Pakistan and Swaran Singh had six detailed rounds of negotiations on Kashmir but no result was achieved. Both remained unsuccessful in reaching to an agreed formula to settle Kashmir instead of committing to resolve future issue bilaterally (Jaffrelot, 2004, p. 124). These were the first comprehensive talks.

The first successful bilateral talks were held between the Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and his counterpart Indira Gandhi at the end of 1971 war. The result of the meeting was Simla Accord, July 3, 1972, according to which all differences, including Kashmir to be resolved through bilateral means. It also made the release of 90,000 PoW of 1971 war. It is the only peace agreement that has been successfully implemented and followed. However, this agreement closed the way of third-party involvement in the peace process. This condition is a major set-back to conflict transformation between India and Pakistan. The agreement over Siachen conflict also could not be implemented although it was endorsed by Prime Minister Rajiv Ghandi in 1989 (Sattar, n.d., p. 190).

The era of 1990s had witnessed multiple rounds of Track II diplomacy. One such initiative called Neemrana Process started in 1991. Further a top-level meeting was held between Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Prime Minister IK Gujral in the Maldives in 1997 at the side lines of South Asian Association for Regional Corporation (SAARC) Summit (Paddar, 2012). Later, Vajpaae also visited Lahore in February 1999 resulted Lahore Declaration, whereby both committed to resolve the issues bilaterally. However, amidst nuclear tension and subsequent Kargil crisis these meetings did not produce visible results.

The next progress was made by the Agra Summit in which multiple high-level meetings were held on July 15-16, 2001 between Musharraf and Vajpaae (Noorani,2013). Kashmir issue was the core concern during the one-on-one meeting but it also resulted in failure as India backed out at the last minute.

During 2000s, comprehensive process of dialogue was held in which issues of concern for the two were divided into eight groups and assigned to different experts to come up with justifiable solutions. More than five years of extensive efforts have been made, but the process suspended due to the Mumbai Attacks in July 2008. The incident cast a long shadow at any fresh dialog initiative (Chari et al., 2007, p. 212). The efforts were made at Sharm al Sheikh and SAARC Summit during the meeting of Yousaf Raza Gilani and Manmohan Singh but no progress was made.

In May 2014, the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's presence at the oath taking ceremony of Narendra Modi was a clear signal of peace but the elections in Kashmir were around the corner and the Modi government wanted to exploit the Pakistan factor for winning the elections, so no solid outcome was achieved. Later the visit of Sushma Swaraj to Pakistan in December 2015 and Modi's dash to Lahore on December 25, 2015 created ray of hope to resurrect the peace talks. However, Pathankot attack in January 2016 again served as spoiler in talks and eventually India backed-off.

Furthermore, the incidents of Uri attack and supposed surgical strikes by India inside Pakistani territory are factors that do not help resolving the conflict any further. The escalation of conflict is always on the cards with the sporadic skirmishes at the border. Going through the history of peace process, it is clear that both the countries have not been able to cross the level of trust building which is essential to achieve sustainability in the peace process.

Hypothetical Testing of Contours of Conflict Transformation in South Asia

Lederach has suggested that in order to analyze transformation of a conflict there are three lenses that play an important role, these

are: (i) a lens to see the immediate situation, (ii) a lens to see past the immediate problems and view the deeper relationship patterns that from the context of the conflict, and (iii) a lens that helps us envision a framework that holds these together and create a platform to address the content, the context, and the structure of the relationship. Analysing these conditions in South Asia in the existing atmosphere, the current Kashmir situation under a lockdown of several months and involvement of no international community including UN, have escalated into a major humanitarian crisis not only India Pakistan crisis. The settled issue of water distribution, which is being disturbed by the India's plan of building dams on the rivers allotted to Pakistan. The Citizenship Amendment Bill (BBC News, 2019) passed by the Indian Government against the non-Hindus community of India especially the Muslims is another step that reinforces behavioural differences between the states. Added to this is the case of Kulbushan, an Indian spy caught by Pakistan. A further complication is India's stance of resolving all types of conflict bilaterally and Pakistan wanting third party involvement especially in the case of Kashmir where the passed resolution still needs to be implemented. The situation had been further worsened by the COVID-19, which affected whole world and both India and Pakistan were going with a mixture of open and close systems in their countries to counter it.

In the current context, both countries require its policy makers need to see the past in details especially the success and failure. It would help to bring forth any new dimension for the resolution of any type of conflict. Both the states have the history of peace efforts either bilaterally or through the involvement of third party. The historical relationship has also witnessed the success of peace agreements as few are still followed by the both states in true letter and spirit. To move ahead, past has many lessons for both the states to achieve success in the future.

Last lens is actually dependent upon the previous two lenses. In order for any progress towards peace in future the understanding of historical context needs to be made so that future effort for peace can be made. Both India and Pakistan need to draw a framework which help to envision the peace and creates a platform to address the content, the context and the structure of the relationship. From this onwards, India and Pakistan's policy makers can begin to find creative response and solutions for the transformation of their relationship from enmity to amity. Resumption of communications is the key for future progress.

Once the platform for the communication between the rivals is established then four central modes in which conflict impacts situation and changes things should be followed. These are: (i) personal, (ii) relational and contextual, (iii) structural, and (iv) cultural. Lederach is of the view that working in these four areas made the relations transformed permanently. The conflicts are social phenomenon and are evolving with the passage of time, producing changes in the above mentioned four central modes. For the constructive process, it seeks to promote them either individually, combined or altogether.

Personal: It seeks to minimize the destructive effects of social conflict and maximize the potential for personal growth at physical, emotional and spiritual levels.

The Hindus living in Pakistan as a minority do not face any threat to their lives. They are residing as the nationals of Pakistan either they are in Pakistan since birth or migrated from India in 1947. But the case of India is very different, starting from Kashmir, which is the major bone of contention between the two countries. The territory of Kashmir is a different issue but the handling of people of Kashmir by the Government of India has forced them to raise slogan for an independent state or to be a part of Pakistan. If the Indian policy makers changed the strategy regarding handling the people of Kashmir, then there is a possibility of changed scenario in favour of India. Indian Government has tried to suppress minorities living in India which always add fuel to the fire. The major target is Muslim community either living in Kashmir or anywhere else in India.

This type of tactics needs to be revised by the policy makers and all communities living should be treated as one. The potential for personal growth at physical, emotional and spiritual level may be enhanced for the betterment of relations between people and government of India and Pakistan.

Relational or contextual: The mechanism of communication needs to be strengthened and maximize understanding. This is one of the most important parts of conflict resolution or further towards conflict transformation. Individuals, societies, states or any conflicting party when indulge in any type of conflict, they terminate the mode of communication, which aggravated the situation. Similarly, India and Pakistan needs to enhance this mode to the maximum level. It is not compulsory that the communication between high level officials be established but its level can vary. Common citizen to celebrities of TV, film, sports etc to officials of India and Pakistan may be facilitated to communicate messages from one party to another. It would help in reducing misunderstandings and clarity of minds and hearts can be done.

Structural: After establishing the communication network, the root causes of the violent conflict could be addressed. Maximum public participation would be the major part of it. The official and un-official professionals working in the relevant field have combined meetings, seminars, conference and address the basic hurdles in the development of peace and draw conclusion with logical and practical solutions suitable to both the parties.

Cultural: Identify and understand the cultural patterns that contribute to the rise of violent expressions of conflict. Also identify cultural resources for the understanding and resolution mechanisms. Although the cultural identity is mainly based on religion and Hindus and Muslims have historical rivalry over it. Bringing the cultural source for peaceful transformation of relations, both the religion speaks of peace and harmony, respect for other, and abiding national laws. These are the basis which establish peaceful societies. So the pundits of both states should bring and highlight those elements from their religion which ultimately result in peace and stability in the societies.

Analysis

The contours of Theory of Conflict Transformation proposed by the proponents are based on theoretical approach which have limitations in practical application in all the conflicts. The application of the theory is possible to some extent at the state or national level where executive body is present for the enforcement of any decision taken by the judicial or legislative body. The absence of executive along with judicial and legislative at the international level posed serious question to the implementation of the procedures given by the theory at the inter-state level. Although the three bodies are presented at international level in the shape of UNSC, International Court of Law and United Nations but their role towards resolution of conflict between states has been limited and influenced by powerful countries. The major problem with these organizations is economics, they cannot go against the states whose money is the main source of running their day to day affairs.

The case of South Asia is unique because both the states have history of protracted conflict before and after becoming nuclear states. Pre-nuclear era has witnessed full-fledged wars between them and Post-nuclearization peace has not affected the behaviour of both states either. Secondly, both have history of successful and failed peace processes because the acrimonious behaviour transcends to the mutual mistrust towards each other.

The lenses of conflict transformation proposed by Lederach loses its relevance in case of India and Pakistan when the conflict is analyzed as the current situation remains at the same point where it was at the time of partition; i.e. Kashmir problem is still there, border skirmishes still continue, relative state behaviour influenced by religion and culture is still hampering the positive communication between both the countries. However, the contextual analysis of history of successful peace processes suggests that there are intangible spoilers of the peace process, which, if eradicated, can lead to positive dialogue for a more stable peace.

Despite knowing all the above factors, the state's politics is run and governed by the anarchic international politics. Where the states analyse situations and circumstance through power. India and Pakistan always view the situation according to their capability as India intends to discuss issue being a powerful state and Pakistan want to have negotiations base of equality and justice. The overt nuclearization of South Asia even could not affect the asymmetry of capabilities. For any peace process to succeed, positive engagement is essential leaving behind all the negative energy of mistrust and acrimonious behaviour. In case of India and Pakistan, the conflict transformation stops at this essential point.

Conclusion

Conflict transformation is the most idealistic outcome of a conflict where all the negative energy associated with the conflict is transformed into positive energy. The conflict is not only resolved but the mere cause of conflict ceases to exist and the negative behaviour of the states is also transformed into friendship and tranquillity. Conflict transformation is most challenging to achieve in protracted conflicts where issues are deep rooted and are reflected in the acrimonious behaviours of states. India Pakistan conflict is a unique and perfect example of protracted conflict involving religious, cultural, and societal differences which could not be resolved over long time despite living together for centuries. Mutual mistrust and relative acrimonious state behaviour have resulted in failure of dialogues and non-achievement of a sustainable peace process. To deal with such religion-cultural deep-rooted conflicts is a major challenge for the theory of conflict transformation.

Conflict of Interest

The authors showed no conflict of interest.

Funding

The authors did not mention any funding for this research.

References

- Ahmar, M. (2012, July 18). *Conflict transformation: A new approach to peacebuilding in South Asia* [Paper presentation]. Meeting jointly organized by the Center for International Strategic Studies (CISS) and Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF), Islamabad, Pakistan.
- Austin, A., Fischer, M., & Norbert, H. (Eds.). (2004). *Transforming ethnopolitical conflict: The Berghof handbook*. Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden GmbH.
- BBC News. (2019, December 11). *Citizenship Amendment Bill: India's new anti-Muslim law explained*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-50670393>.
- Chari, P. R., Cheema, P. I., & Cohen, S. P. (2007). *Four crises and a peace process: American engagement in South Asia*. Brookings Institution Press.
- Ganguly, S., & Hagerty, D. T. (2012). *Fearful symmetry: India-Pakistan crises in the shadow of nuclear weapons*. University of Washington Press.
- Hussain, R. (2012, July 18). *Conflict transformation techniques in changing paradigms of conflict in South Asia* [Paper presentation]. Meeting jointly organized by the Center for International Strategic Studies (CISS) and Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF), Islamabad, Pakistan.
- Ijaz. (n.d.). *Kashmir dispute*.
- Jaffrelot, C. (Ed.). (2004). *A history of Pakistan and its origins*. Cambridge University Press.
- Khokhar, F. U. N. (2019, September 8). Abrogation of Article 370 and 35A by India. *The News*. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/523898-abrogation-of-article-370-and-35a-by-india>
- Lederach, J. P. (2014). *The little book of conflict transformation*. Good Books.
- Lederach, J. P., & Maiese, M. (n.d.). *Conflict transformation*.
- Noorani, A. G. (2013, September 27). Bilateral negotiation on Kashmir: Unlearned lesson. *Criterion Quarterly*. <https://criterion-quarterly.com/bilateral-negotiation-on-kashmir-unlearned-lesson/>
- Paddar, S. (2012, February 2). *The composite dialogue process between India and Pakistan: Structure, process and agency* [Paper presentation]. Meeting for South Asian and Comparative Politics, South Asia Institute, Department of Political Science, Heidelberg University, Heidelberg, Germany.
- Ramachandran, S. (2019, February 28). India and Pakistan on the brink. *The Diplomat*. <https://thediplomat.com/2019/02/india-and-pakistan-on-the-brink/>
- Sattar. (n.d.). *Pakistan*.