

Cooperative Rivalry

Understanding Indo-Pakistani Ties Using Treaty Networks

MICHAEL O. SLOBODCHIKOFF
AAKRITI A. TANDON

Introduction

The number of ceasefire violations (CFV) between India and Pakistan has risen dramatically over the past few years. While the increased number of CFVs are a result of the heightened tensions between the two rivals, none of these CFVs has escalated to a full-blown militarized conflict or war between the nuclear-armed neighbors. An analysis of CFVs provides an incomplete picture of Indo-Pakistani relations. The bilateral treaties between India and Pakistan are also important indicators of the status of their relationship. This article argues that the increased levels of cooperation through treaties and the use of treaty nesting in their relationship may be serving a conflict management function by preventing CFVs from escalating into militarized conflict. *Treaty nesting* is a technique that states use to tie treaties to previous treaties, thus institutionalizing efforts at cooperation between states. Using network analysis, we examine all (N=44) bilateral treaties between India and Pakistan and analyze the relationships between those treaties and the impact of treaty nesting on Indo-Pakistani bilateral ties. We also analyze and discuss the most important treaties to the relationship. A continued attempt by India and Pakistan to tie future cooperation to prior successful treaties may serve to avoid potential disputes from escalating into militarized conflict.

Setting

Indo-Pakistani relations have been a hot topic in the media as well as in policy circles since the 14 February 2019 terror attack in Pulwama, Kashmir, which led to the death of 44 Indian paramilitary soldiers.¹ The Pakistan-based terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammed claimed responsibility for the attack; India blamed

*The authors would like to thank Alicia Rodriguez Castillo and Billy Hines for their help in reading and coding all of the treaties between India and Pakistan.

Pakistan for providing funding, training, arms, and resources to Kashmiri rebels responsible for the attacks. India retaliated with airstrikes on a militant training camp in the Pakistani province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on 29 February.² Pakistan then responded to the Indian airstrikes by conducting its own airstrikes against Indian military installments in Kashmir. In addition, Pakistan downed an Indian fighter jet and captured the pilot.

This conflict in early 2019 was important since it was the first time that either side aerially crossed into the territory of the other since the 1971 war that resulted in the liberation of Bangladesh. While both sides continue to be involved in numerous militarized disputes near the Line of Control (LoC) in the disputed territory of Kashmir, the launch of airstrikes constituted major escalation between the nuclear-armed neighbors. Despite the escalation, the crisis did not devolve into war between the states as has often happened in the past.³ In fact, in a surprising move, Pakistan returned the captured Indian pilot to India, leading to rapid de-escalation of tensions between the rivals. This was a completely unexpected action on Pakistan's part, largely returning the situation to the status quo between the two states.

The two states have provided contradicting narratives of the events leading to the February conflict. India claims that it downed a Pakistani F-16. However, Pakistan and the United States deny this. US officials stated that the United States' completed inventory of Pakistani F-16s found none to be missing.⁴ India also claims that it raided the terrorist training camp in Balakot, resulting in the deaths of a "very large number" of militants. Pakistan not only denies the presence of a terrorist training camp in the Balakot region but also argues that India missed its intended targets and only caused damage to forest areas. Further, India has been unable to provide substantive proof of the successful raid on the terrorist training camp.⁵

India has endured several terrorist attacks in the Kashmir Valley, many of which are attributed to cross-border terrorism supported by the Pakistani military and intelligence agencies.⁶ The United States has also accused Pakistan of supporting terrorist groups and failing to thwart cross-border terrorism aimed against India.⁷ In 2016, India witnessed another major terrorist attack against a military base in Uri, Kashmir, leading to the death of 29 soldiers. India responded by launching "surgical strikes" against Pakistani militants in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK), claiming to have destroyed safe houses used by guerilla militants. Pakistan denied the occurrence of the strikes and argued that there was only increased firing at the LoC.⁸



Image courtesy of Tauseef Mustafa

Figure 1. Keeping a watchful eye. Indian Army soldiers stationed near Uri, Baramulla district, Jammu and Kashmir look toward Pakistan-occupied Kashmir

The above episode confirms that the danger of an accidental war between nuclear-armed rivals in South Asia is ever-present and real. In addition to air-strikes and a ground battle, India and Pakistan are also fighting a media war, where each side is seeking to portray itself as rational, moderate, and a champion of mutual peace. To further signal its rationality, Pakistan announced another goodwill gesture toward India by offering to release 360 Indian prisoners in April 2019.⁹ Most of these prisoners were fishermen caught in the Arabian Sea, which lacks a clearly demarcated maritime border between the two countries.

Some scholars of bilateral security ties find Pakistan's unilateral goodwill gestures to be puzzling. Pakistani prime minister Imran Khan's announcement that the captured Indian pilot would be swiftly returned to India provided the governments of both states with a face-saving measure and helped to de-escalate the rapidly rising tensions on the subcontinent. In this article, we first examine existing

arguments for why Pakistan actively pursued de-escalation vis-à-vis India: the deterrence effects of nuclear weapons, the rationality argument considering the cost-benefit analysis of the conflict, pressure from external actors, and the timing of domestic electoral politics. While these arguments are crucial in understanding the Indo-Pakistani rivalry, they do not discuss the impact of institutions on the onset as well as recurrence of conflict. As a result, we examine the effect of existing institutions on the Indo-Pakistani bilateral relationship and show how such institutions help states manage their conflict. This argument explains the current de-escalation pursued by India and Pakistan at different points in the rivalry, which has prevented the outbreak of war since 1999.

Possible Causes of De-escalation

There are several plausible explanations for why India and Pakistan have not gone to war in two decades. In this section we examine nuclear deterrence, the high cost of war, external influence/pressure, and domestic electoral politics.

Nuclear Deterrence

Both India and Pakistan became nuclear powers in 1998. The two countries fought three major wars prior to this; they were also involved in a limited war in Kargil, Kashmir, in 1999, after becoming nuclear powers. While the presence of nuclear weapons did not prevent the 1999 conflict, both states exercised restraint and avoided the nuclear option. The nuclear-armed rivals have not fought a major conflict since 1999. The concept of mutually assured destruction prevented a major war from breaking out even as the two neighbors continued to be involved in cross-border disputes and conflicts, many of which have resulted in civilian and military casualties. While the presence of nuclear weapons has deterred potential escalation of conflict between the rivals, the nature of nuclear stability on the continent is rapidly changing.

Ian Hall argues that nuclear stability in South Asia from 1998 onward was largely a result of India's (military) weakness, but he also pointed out that India is unlikely to remain weak for much longer.¹⁰ In 2018, India was the world's largest arms importer, and New Delhi has successfully developed the nuclear triad, heavily investing to transform India's armed forces to meet the nation's domestic and international security challenges.¹¹ India is also dramatically altering its nuclear posture vis-à-vis Pakistan. India has maintained a doctrine of no first-use with respect to nuclear weapons, whereas Pakistan has never espoused the same. India has now called Pakistan's nuclear bluff and is retaliating against Pakistan's sponsorship of

cross-border terrorism with use of force in an unprecedented fashion. Thus, deterrence alone fails to explain the lack of escalation of current crisis.

Cost-Benefit Analysis

All major conflicts between India and Pakistan have led to a decisive Indian victory and Pakistani defeat. Pakistan has usually attempted to deal with this power asymmetry by sponsoring cross-border terrorism in India as well as supporting the armed separatist struggle in Kashmir. At present, India has a clear military advantage over Pakistan, so it would be in Islamabad's best interest to avoid an all-out war. A war would be very costly for Pakistan, which is currently facing a severe economic crisis and is ill prepared to engage in conflict with India.¹² While a war would be costly for India, it is in a much better situation than Pakistan to withstand the economic costs of war.

External Influence / Pressure

Bhumitra Chakma argues that the United States, as the global hegemon, has played a crucial role in assuring deterrence prevails in South Asia: "More than is commonly realized, the United States was integral in the crisis strategies of both countries. It played a pivotal role preventing crisis escalation and the outbreak of large-scale conflict between India and Pakistan in both confrontations. And the American role was instrumental in the termination of those confrontations, particularly the Kargil conflict. Without America's effective deterrence diplomacy, any of the past South Asian crises could have escalated to the nuclear level."¹³

The United States has played a much less significant role in ensuring the de-escalation of the current conflict. The Trump administration remains engulfed in domestic scandals and has vastly scaled back America's efforts to police the international system. Also, the United States no longer enjoys the position of dictating policy to Pakistan; China has replaced the United States as Pakistan's largest benefactor after America pulled back foreign aid to Pakistan due to Islamabad's failure to clamp down on terrorist networks operating from Pakistan.

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF), a global financial watchdog, has rebuked Pakistan for not doing enough to curb terrorism financing and money laundering. The group has threatened to blacklist Pakistan if it fails to make serious improvement by May 2019, which would have dire consequences for Pakistan's ability to borrow money from international markets, further jeopardizing its slowing economy. Being blacklisted by the FATF could also lead to sanctions by Western countries, including the United States.¹⁴

Domestic Electoral Politics

Indian air strikes against Pakistan provide a rally-around-the-flag effect to the Modi government in New Delhi, which likely factored into his recent reelection in a competitive political environment. As a result, India, which typically demonstrates restraint vis-à-vis Pakistan, retaliated aggressively to the terrorist attack in Pulwama. The timing of the crisis just prior to the start of the national Lok Sabha (legislative) elections made it difficult for the Modi government to pursue de-escalation of the conflict. The civilian-led, democratically elected government in Pakistan has often found it impossible to pursue de-escalation and normalization of ties with India even if it so desires. This is because the government lacks control over the Pakistani military establishment and the Inter-Service Intelligence agency, which is allegedly responsible for sponsoring cross-border terrorism in India. As a result, it seems extremely puzzling as to why the Pakistani prime minister, Imran Khan, was able to demonstrate diplomatic statesmanship and return the captured pilot and Indian fishermen cum prisoners to India, dramatically lowering the probability of conflict escalation. In another recent display of diplomacy, Islamabad has taken steps toward allowing Indian Sikhs to make pilgrimage to a holy shrine located inside Pakistan.¹⁵

None of the above mentioned factors help explain this sudden turn in the Pakistani disposition toward India. We argue that institutional factors in the bilateral relationship between India and Pakistan are responsible for managing the conflict, de-escalating, and preventing war. We contend that India and Pakistan are on the cusp of “institutionalized cooperation,” and this served a conflict-management function within this rivalry. We term their bilateral relationship a *cooperative rivalry*, since while they remain rivals, India and Pakistan have developed sufficient cooperation to be able to avoid war. Below, we explain the concept of *treaty nesting* as an institution and its impact on the bilateral relationship between India and Pakistan. Next, we provide a network map of all bilateral treaties in the relationship, followed by a discussion of the lodestone treaties. We end with a discussion of the consequences for the future of Indo-Pakistani ties and the prospects for peace and security on the subcontinent.

Treaty Nesting

Scholars of treaty design contend that international actors design treaties to maximize their own preferences, and therefore, those treaties are a reflection of their interests.¹⁶ While examining the rational design of individual treaties and focusing on treaties as institutions is important, the problem with such an approach is that it assumes that individual treaties are negotiated in a vacuum and

are not constrained by prior treaties. In reality, each new treaty is a product of previous treaties in some manner and often builds upon prior treaties. Further, treaties constrain states' behaviors. All the treaties that a state has signed constrains that state. Therefore, it is logical to examine individual treaties as institutions but also to understand that *groups of treaties* constitute an institution. A bilateral relationship between states is an institution in the same way that a bilateral treaty between states is an institution.

We now examine the ways in which treaties can be grouped to form an institutional relationship between states. Specifically, treaties actively build upon and constrain prior treaties, meaning that treaties are nested within prior treaties. However, it is difficult to determine which specific treaties are nested in other treaties and which treaties are merely stand-alone treaties. As one of our authors has argued before, treaties specify their own classification of nestedness. Specifically, treaties that explicitly refer to prior treaties within their text are nested within those referenced treaties.¹⁷

We use network analysis to further understand the relationships between treaties and to determine which treaties are the most central to a specific relationship. To do this, we must read and code each individual treaty to determine if and where it is nested. Using nestedness to show how treaties are related to one another, it is then possible to use network analysis to visualize the relationship between the treaties as well as determine the degree of centrality and relative importance of certain treaties.¹⁸ Treaty network analysis allows scholars the opportunity to not only identify how the treaties interact to create a regional order, but also to identify specific treaties which are the most important treaties, further referred to as *lodestone treaties*. These lodestone treaties are significant because they serve as the foundation for all the other treaties within the relationship.

Treaty networks can also help illuminate the strength of a bilateral relationship and the likelihood that the relationship between two states would devolve into conflict. For example, the stronger the treaty network between two states, the less likely it is for them to engage in bilateral conflict against each other.¹⁹ Thus, by examining the relationship between treaties, we can analyze the strength of the bilateral relations between states and their levels of cooperation. To determine the degree of nesting within the bilateral relationship, Michael Slobodchikoff divides the number of treaty ties in the relationship by the number of treaties. This allows a comparison between dyadic relationships. Specifically, he argues that there are three categories for determining the quality of a bilateral relationship. If the ties divided by treaties is greater than 1, then the relationship is a cooperative relationship. The reason for this is that each treaty is an attempt at cooperating. Tying a treaty to another treaty institutionalizes the cooperation. Thus, a higher

level of institutionalized cooperation than attempts at cooperation is considered to be a cooperative relationship. The second level of cooperation is where the number of ties is less than the number of treaties. This means that there have been attempts at cooperating over specific issues but no real attempts to institutionalize that cooperation, known as *ad hoc cooperation*. Finally, the third level of cooperation is where the number of ties and the number of treaties are equal. This is the breakeven point, where a relationship is neither cooperative nor *ad hoc* cooperation.²⁰

We conduct a systematic analysis of the 44 bilateral treaties between India and Pakistan between 1947 and 2017.²¹ To provide some context, in the same period, India signed 168 bilateral treaties with its close ally Russia, 163 treaties with China, and 58 with the United States. Thus, the total number of treaties between India and Pakistan is not an anomaly in either direction. States may become party to multilateral agreements for a multitude of reasons; unlike bilateral agreements, multilateral agreements do not necessarily represent cooperation within a dyad. India and Pakistan are a part of several multilateral frameworks, but they do not always interact or agree on issues under consideration. As a result, bilateral treaties are a better indicator of a state's intentionality toward another, and we limit our analysis to all bilateral treaties signed between India and Pakistan. Multilateral treaties are included in the network map (fig. 2) only when a bilateral agreement explicitly references them: i.e., when a bilateral treaty is nested within a multilateral one.²²

As mentioned above, Treaty A is considered to be nested under Treaty B if it explicitly makes a reference to the earlier treaty. A tie between two treaties is considered to be present when one explicitly references the other: i.e., when a treaty is nested within the other. A relationship is considered to have institutionalized cooperation when the total number of ties in the relationship is equal to or greater than the total number of bilateral treaties between the two states. It is considered to have *ad hoc* cooperation when the total number of ties is less than the total number of bilateral treaties between the two states. Thus, by dividing the number of treaty ties by the number of treaties, one can determine the level of institutionalized cooperation between the dyads. Table 1 provides a comparison of the levels of cooperation based on treaties between India and Pakistan. As in any bilateral relationship, the Indo-Pakistani relationship starts with a score of 0, which suggests the absence of any cooperation. However, over the next few decades, the total ties/total treaties score quickly jumps, finally crossing the threshold of 1 in 2011. As explained above, states with a ties/treaty score of <1 are considered to demonstrate *ad hoc* cooperation and states with a ties/treaty score >1 are

considered to demonstrate institutionalized cooperation. Interestingly, India and Pakistan are currently in a transitory phase between ad hoc and institutionalized cooperation. They barely crossed the threshold of 1 in 2011, suggesting they are on the cusp of being able to become *cooperating rivals*.²³

As suggested by table 1, since the 1980s, India and Pakistan have been attempting to link new treaties to existing bilateral or multilateral arrangements, thereby creating a dense network of ties. States that violate a nested treaty are not only violating a single treaty but also all other treaties that are linked to that treaty. By nesting treaties, states increase the costs of violating a single treaty, thereby reducing the probability of treaty violation. By enhancing the probability of cooperation, treaty nestedness is likely to build trust in a bilateral relationship. It is worth noting that while India and Pakistan are considered to be enduring rivals that regularly participate in militarized disputes against each other, they also continue to abide by many of the treaties they have signed.²⁴

As noted in table 1, the Indo-Pakistani cooperation score was 0.4 in 1970 and jumped to 0.96 in 1980. The score hovered at the 0.88 level for a few years, before climbing again in 2010 and crossing the threshold of 1 in 2011.²⁵ Thus, we see a significant shift in the overall levels of treaty making and nesting between India and Pakistan in the 1970s. In 1971, India's support for East Pakistan's quest for independence led to India and Pakistan fighting a war. India's support for the successful Bangladeshi liberation movement soured diplomatic ties between New Delhi and Islamabad. After the end of the war, the India and Pakistan created a series of treaties to address bilateral relations, including the landmark Simla Agreement of 1972 (discussed below). The two countries also signed treaties for the resumption of trade, reset visa requirements, and resumed telegraph and postal exchanges. Many of these treaties made explicit references to each other as well as previous existing treaties. Thus, as India and Pakistan attempted to restore diplomatic and functional ties in the aftermath of the second war between them, they created a number of nested treaties.²⁶

Table 1. Cooperation Scores in the Indo-Pakistan dyad

Year	India-Pakistan Cooperation Score
1950	0
1960	0.4
1970	0.4
1980	0.96
1990	0.87
2000	0.88

2010	0.94
2011	1.02
2017	1.02

While the network of treaties has not reduced or eliminated cross-border violence between India and Pakistan, it does demonstrate the ability of states to find pockets of cooperation that can eventually spill over into other issue areas, thereby enhancing cooperation. Table 2 provides information on the total number of CFVs between India and Pakistan that have taken place between 2002 and 2018, which rose sharply in 2017 and 2018.²⁷ This is attributed to the increased terrorist activity in the Kashmir Valley. The government of India informed the Indian parliament that 881 CFVs took place in Kashmir in 2017. At the same time, the Pakistani army reported 1,299 violations in 2017, which is the highest number of CFVs of any year since 2003, when the last ceasefire agreement was signed between India and Pakistan.²⁸

Table 2. Ceasefire Violations (CFVs) Between 2002 and 2018²⁹

Year	Number of CFVs – India	Number of CFVs – Pakistan
2002	4,134	N/A
2003	5,767	N/A
2004	4	N/A
2005	6	N/A
2006	3	N/A
2007	21	18
2008	86	30
2009	35	46
2010	70	113
2011	62	104
2012	114	252
2013	347	464
2014	583	315
2015	405	248
2016	449	382
2017	971	1970
2018	1,432*	1,400**

*As of 30 July 2018; ** as of 9 August 2018

Lodestone Treaties

Based on the treaty network map provided below (fig. 2), we find that India and Pakistan have been able to find clusters of issue areas in which they can cooperate and even institutionalize their cooperation. It is important to note that one issue area in which the two states have been able to institutionalize their cooperation is communications (see far right cluster on fig. 2). Further, certain treaties serve as

key building blocks in the Indo-Pakistani bilateral relationship; these treaties that are referenced by multiple future treaties are referred to as *lodestone treaties*, which are the most central treaties in the bilateral relationship. In figure 2, the individual treaty node size is set according to degree centrality—or its importance to the overall relationship. Thus, the larger the treaty node, the more central a treaty is to the bilateral relationship. Further, we can use network measures of degree centrality to determine how important each individual treaty is to the bilateral relationship. Table 3 shows each treaty and its relative importance to the relationship. Below we discuss some of these lodestone treaties and how they contribute toward building trust and institutionalizing cooperation in this fragile and tense bilateral relationship.

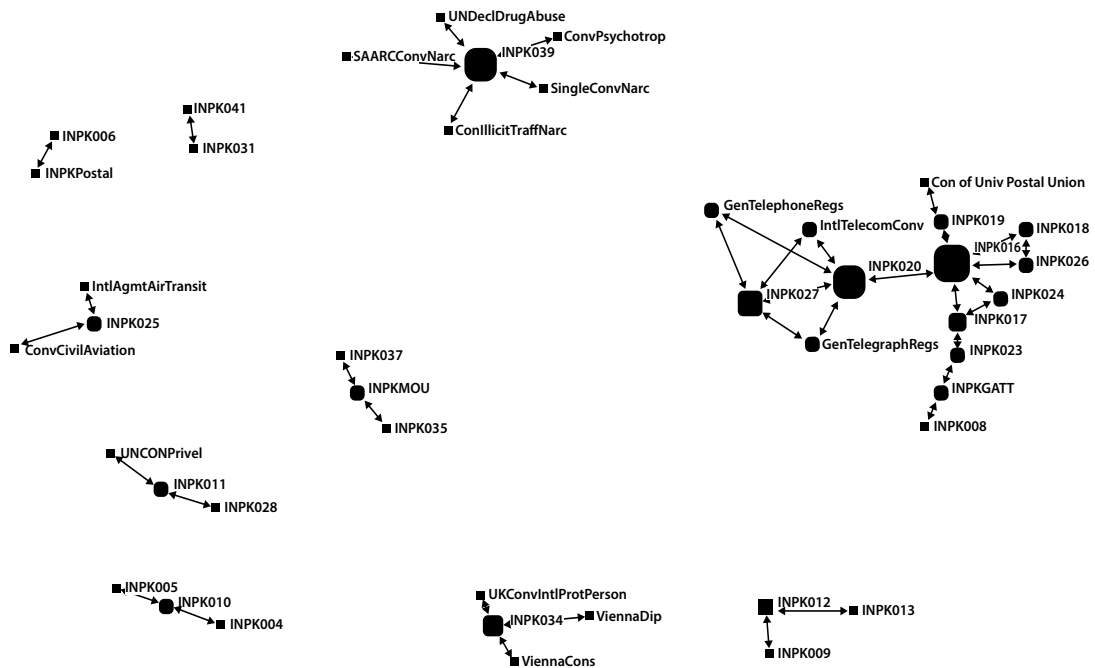


Figure 2. Indo-Pakistani treaty network map, 1960–2017. (Treaty node sizes are set to degree centrality measures. Thus, the larger the treaty node, the more central a treaty is to the bilateral relationship.)

Table 3. Degree centrality scores for lodestone treaties in Indo-Pakistani relationship. (Only the most central treaties are reported in this table. Other treaties are also central to the relationship, but are not the most central to the bilateral relationship.)

Treaty Number	Official Name of Treaty	Degree Centrality Score
INPK016	Simla Agreement (1972)	6.00
INPK020	Agreement on Telecommunications (1974)	5.00
INPK039	MOU On Drug Demand Reduction and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals and Related Matters (2011)	5.00
INPK027	Treaty on Telecommunications (1977)	4.00
INPK017	Protocol Between India and Pakistan on Resumption of Trade (1974)	3.00
INPK034	Code of Conduct for the Treatment of Diplomatic/Consular Personnel in India and Pakistan (1992)	3.00

The Agreement between India and Pakistan on Bilateral Relations (INPK016 in fig. 2, also commonly known as the Simla Agreement) was signed in 1972 in the aftermath of Bangladesh’s independence. The agreement served as a peace treaty, ending the Bangladeshi Liberation War, which turned into the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971 when India entered the conflict to support Bangladesh (formerly known as East Pakistan) in its bid for independence from West Pakistan. It stated that India and Pakistan were resolved to settle their differences using peaceful means.³⁰ The language of the treaty qualifies it as a nonaggression pact between India and Pakistan, as per the criteria used in international security studies literature.³¹ The treaty also included agreements regarding troop withdrawals and the repatriation of prisoners of war. It is worth noting that there have been cross-border aggression from both sides, leading to repeated violations of the peace agreement. While both parties have violated this particular treaty, it is the largest node within the relationship and is a crucial link in building trust and institutionalizing cooperation between India and Pakistan.

The second lodestone treaty is the 1974 Agreement between India and Pakistan on Telecommunications (INPK020 in fig. 2). This treaty is nested within the Simla Agreement and serves as the basis of many future treaties. The treaty specifies the types of telecommunication services that would be restored between the two rivals, including the charge rates and other details of operation. This treaty serves as evidence of the above argument that a substantial amount of

cooperation between these neighboring rivals is geared toward the provision and restoration of basic services. This cooperation has the potential to spill over into other issue areas such as trade and security, and in fact, based on the cooperation score, it can be argued that the two states are on their way toward institutionalizing their cooperation.

The third lodestone treaty is the Memorandum of Understanding between India and Pakistan on Drug Demand Reduction and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals and Related Matters (INPK039 in fig. 2). The agreement underscores the two nations' attempts to coordinate response to achieve the mutually desired goal of combating illegal drug trafficking. Two other large nodes within the network map include another treaty on telecommunications (INPK027 in fig. 2) and an agreement on the Code of Conduct for the Treatment of Diplomatic Personnel between India and Pakistan (INPK034 in fig. 2).

A final lodestone treaty that deserves mention is the 1992 Code of Conduct for the Treatment of Diplomatic/Consular Personnel in India and Pakistan (designated as INPK34 in fig. 2). This treaty is nested within several other multilateral agreements, including The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961, The Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 1963, and The UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, Including Diplomatic Agents, 1973. By connecting this agreement to several major multilateral frameworks, India and Pakistan raised the stakes of treaty violation and made a commitment to "the smooth and unhindered functioning of their diplomatic and consular officials in conformity with recognized norms of international law and practice."³² By signing this treaty in 1992, India and Pakistan's cooperation score increased to 0.992 (as indicated in appendix 1).

Conclusion

India and Pakistan are rivals and will continue to be rivals for the foreseeable future. The frequent CFVs could lead to an escalation of conflict between the two states. Since currently, India's conventional capabilities far exceed those of Pakistan, if a war breaks out, India would have an intense advantage over Pakistan. An even scarier scenario is that with both states possessing nuclear weapons, the specter of nuclear war is always a possibility. If Pakistan faced certain defeat in a conventional conflict, it could conceivably turn to nuclear weapons to protect itself. Even if a civilian government might be reluctant to use nuclear weapons, the Pakistani military has a long-established reputation for following its own agenda. It would be very difficult to predict the actions of a new military government in

Pakistan, which could turn to a combination of irregular warfare and the threat or use of nuclear weapons against India. In short, if war were to fully break out between the two states, it could spiral out of control very quickly.

Both states realize the gravity of the situation and have worked at various times to manage their rivalry. New Delhi and Islamabad have tried to find areas more opportunities in which to cooperate. In this article, we have argued that the use of treaties, and more specifically treaty nesting, is a way in which states can increase the cost of violating treaties that are part of the treaty network. The use of treaty nesting institutionalizes cooperation, thus making it more difficult to destroy the bilateral relationship through a conventional war. This helps to manage conflict and deescalate an impending conflict due to the violations of the CFVs. In other words, we do not argue that treaty nesting *eliminates* conflict, merely that it provides a successful method in *managing* the rivalry and *deescalating* conflict when it occurs.

We offer a unique approach to study Indo-Pakistani bilateral ties. We argue that the Indo-Pakistani bilateral treaty network provides key information on both states' intent to cooperate. The current levels of treaty nesting between India and Pakistan suggest that both states are attempting to build trust and enhance bilateral cooperation. Their current levels of treaty nesting may also provide an explanation for why the two sides have chosen to avoid war and actively pursue conflict de-escalation in the face of recent volatile events.

The bilateral relationship between India and Pakistan has only recently evolved to crossing the threshold of being a cooperative one. Further, it is just barely over that threshold. Thus, there is the danger that the relationship could regress into a noncooperative one, again raising the possibility of a disastrous war in South Asia. Policy makers in both India and Pakistan should look for simple issue areas in which cooperation can be fostered. Further, policy makers need to be cognizant of the fact that they need to tie future cooperation to successful preexisting treaties. This will strengthen the relationship and will help solidify an important conflict management tool for both states. **JIPA**

Notes

1. Rifat Fareed, "Kashmir Suicide Attack Kills Dozens of Indian Security Forces," *Al Jazeera*, 14 February 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/02/indian-security-forces-killed-kashmir-blast-reports-190214110644498.html>.

2. India also withdrew the most-favored-nation trade status previously given to Pakistan, and the Indian finance minister, Arun Jaitley, announced that the government will take all possible diplomatic steps "to ensure the complete isolation from international community of Pakistan of which incontrovertible evidence is available of having a direct hand in this gruesome terrorist incident." See Aijaz Hussain, "India warns of 'crushing response' to Kashmir suicide attack," *Associated Press*, 15 February 2019, <https://www.apnews.com/a7ede33c10d84d1f9a09b4ad1015db87>.

3. See T. V. Paul, *The India-Pakistan Conflict: An Enduring Rivalry* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), and "Why Has the India-Pakistan Rivalry Been So Enduring? Power Asymmetry and an Intractable Conflict," *Security Studies* 15, no. 4 (2006): 600–30.

4. Lara Seligman, "Did India Shoot Down a Pakistani Jet? U.S. Count Says No," *Foreign Policy*, 4 April 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/04/04/did-india-shoot-down-a-pakistani-jet-u-s-count-says-no/>.

5. Abu Arqam Naqash and Sanjeev Miglani, "India Launches Air Strike in Pakistan; Islamabad Denies Militant Camp Hit," *Reuters*, 25 February 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-kashmir-pakistan/india-launches-air-strike-in-pakistan-islamabad-denies-militant-camp-hit-idUSKCN1QF07B>.

6. The Pakistani intelligence agency, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), is known to operate independently of and sometimes in direct contradiction to the country's civilian government. It is believed that the ISI provides training camps, resources, and safe havens to terrorist groups that target India.

7. Maria Abi-Habib, "Terrorism Watchdog Castigates Pakistan over Aid to Militants," *New York Times*, 22 February 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/22/world/asia/pakistan-terrorism-funding.html>.

8. Karthika Sasikumar, "India's Surgical Strikes: Response to Strategic Imperatives," *Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs* 108, no. 2 (2019): 159–74.

9. Press Trust of India, "Pakistan to Release 300 Indian Prisoners This Month as Goodwill Gesture," *India Today*, 5 April 2019, <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/pakistan-release-360-indian-prisoners-april-goodwill-gesture-1495261-2019-04-05>.

10. Ian Hall, "The Requirements of Nuclear Stability in South Asia," *Nonproliferation Review* 21, no. 3 – 4 (October 2014): 355–71.

11. Austin Bay, "To Deter China, India Joins the 'Nuclear Triad' Club," *Creators*, 14 November 2018, <https://www.creators.com/read/austin-bay/11/18/to-deter-china-india-joins-the-nuclear-triad-club>.

12. Bhumitra Chakma, "Escalation Control, Deterrence Diplomacy and America's Role in South Asia's Nuclear Crises," *Contemporary Security Policy* 33, no. 3 (December 2012): 554–76.

13. *Ibid.*

14. Abi-Habib, "Terrorism Watchdog Castigates Pakistan."

15. Indo-Asian News Service, "Pakistan 'Accepts' India's 'Offer' on Kartarpur," *Economic Times*, 8 April 2019, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/pakistan-accepts-indias-offer-on-kartarpur/articleshow/68783651.cms>.

16. Barbara Koremenos, Charles Lipson, and Duncan Snidal, "The Rational Design of International Institutions," *International Organization* 55, no. 4 (Autumn 2001): 761–99; Barbara Koremenos, "Can Cooperation Survive Changes in Bargaining Power?: The Case of Coffee," *Journal of Legal Studies* 31, no. 1 (2002): S259–83; Barbara Koremenos, "Contracting Around International Uncertainty," *American Political Science Review* 99, no. 4 (2005): 549–65; Barbara Koremenos, "International Institutions as Solutions to Underlying Games of Cooperation," IBEI Working Papers (Barcelona, Spain: IBEI Working Papers, 2009).

17. Michael O. Slobodchikoff, *Strategic Cooperation: Overcoming the Barriers of Global Anarchy* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013).

18. A treaty with a high degree of centrality is one in which several subsequent treaties are nested. Such a treaty would have many ties or connections with other treaties. See M. G. Everett and S. P. Borgatti, "The Centrality of Groups and Classes," *Journal of Mathematical Sociology* 23, no. 3 (1999): 181–201; V. Latora and M. Marchiori, "A Measure of Centrality Based on Network Efficiency," *New Journal of Physics* 9, no. 6 (2007), 188; Tore Opsahl, Filip Agneessens, and John Skvoretz, "Node Centrality in Weighted Networks: Generalizing Degree and Shortest Paths," *Social Networks* 32, no. 3 (July 2010): 245–51; and Stanley Wasserman and Katherine Faust, *Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

19. Slobodchikoff, *Strategic Cooperation*.

20. Ibid.; and Michael O. Slobodchikoff, *Building Hegemonic Order Russia's Way: Order, Stability, and Predictability in the Post-Soviet Space* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014).

21. Thus, our analysis includes all bilateral treaties signed between the two neighbors. The first and last treaty signed between India and Pakistan was in 1950 and 2012 respectively. However, the two countries became independent and began diplomatic ties in 1947, hence our analysis begins and ends in 1947 and 2017 respectively. Data on bilateral treaties between the two states is obtained from the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, accessible at <https://www.mea.gov.in/>. We find that the two neighbors are part of 59 agreements between 1947 and 2017, including 44 bilateral agreements.

22. The node sizes in figure 2 are set according to degree centrality. Thus, the larger the treaty node, the more central the treaty is to the bilateral relationship. These treaties are the lode-stone treaties of the relationship.

23. We use the threshold of 1 as it is the point at which the total number of ties is equal to the total number of treaties formed in a bilateral relationship. For further explanation of this methodology, please see Slobodchikoff, *Strategic Cooperation*. This methodology is developed and used in other works exploring treaty networks: Slobodchikoff, *Building Hegemonic Order Russia's Way*; Michael O. Slobodchikoff and Aakriti Tandon, "Shifting Alliances and Balance of Power in Asia: Transitions in the Indo-Russian Security Ties," *Asian Journal of Political Science* 25, no. 2 (2017), 159–75; Michael O. Slobodchikoff and Aakriti Tandon, "Building Trust: Cooperation between Rivals India and Pakistan," *Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs* 108, no. 2 (2019): 189–201.

24. The ceasefires implemented in Kashmir, which have been repeatedly violated by both sides over time, are the exception.

25. The last bilateral treaty between India and Pakistan was signed in 2012, although we continue our analysis to 2017.

26. It is difficult to ascertain whether a thaw in ties provided a conducive environment for the two states to institutionalize their cooperation, but the thaw certainly preceded the treaty

formation frenzy in the 1970s. We do not claim that the bilateral treaties are a cause or a product of the improvement in bilateral ties. Although a vital and interesting question, it is beyond the scope of this article. We thank an anonymous reviewer for raising this point.

27. Data reported by the Indo-Pak Conflict Monitor, an independent research initiative that monitors CFVs, conflict patterns, and escalation dynamics between India and Pakistan.

28. Different data are reported by different governmental and non-governmental agencies. However, while the individual numbers may be different, there seems to be an agreement on the pattern of CFVs; they seem to be rising steadily since a relatively lull from 2002-2007 and have increased significantly in 2017 post the Uri terrorist attacks and the resultant surgical strikes by the Indian army. See Christophe Jaffrelot, "Ceasefire Violations in Kashmir: A War by Other Means?," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 24 October 2018, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2018/10/24/ceasefire-violations-in-kashmir-war-by-other-means-pub-77573>.

29. Data on CFVs on the Pakistani side is unavailable between 2002 and 2006.

30. Agreement between India and Pakistan on Bilateral Relations (Simla Agreement), 1972.

31. See Brett Leeds, Jeffrey Ritter, Sara Mitchell, and Andrew Long, "Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions, 1815-1944," *International Interactions* 28, no. 3 (2002): 237-60. Scholars of Indian foreign policy and South Asian studies may disagree with this characterization of the treaty, as, unlike defense pacts, nonaggression pacts do not promise aid or resources if and when an ally is under attack.

32. Code of Conduct for the Treatment of Diplomatic/Consular Personnel in India and Pakistan, 19 August 1992, <https://mea.gov.in/Portal/LegalTreatiesDoc/PAB1225.pdf>.

Appendix

Annual India-Pakistan cooperation scores based on treaty nesting

Year	Cooperation Score
1950	0
1951	0
1952	0
1953	0
1954	0
1955	0.142
1956	0.142
1957	0.25
1958	0.25
1959	0.4
1960	0.416
1961	0.416
1962	0.416
1963	0.461
1964	0.461
1965	0.461

Slobodchikoff and Tandon

1966	0.4
1967	0.4
1968	0.4
1969	0.4
1970	0.4
1971	0.4
1972	0.375
1973	0.375
1974	0.636
1975	0.75
1976	0.84
1977	0.964
1978	0.964
1979	0.964
1980	0.964
1981	0.964
1982	0.964
1983	0.931
1984	0.931
1985	0.931
1986	0.931
1987	0.931
1988	0.870
1989	0.870
1990	0.870
1991	0.818
1992	0.909
1993	0.909
1994	0.909
1995	0.909
1996	0.909
1997	0.909
1998	0.909
1999	0.882
2000	0.882
2001	0.882
2002	0.882
2003	0.882
2004	0.882

Feature

2005	0.941
2006	0.941
2007	0.942
2008	0.942
2009	0.942
2010	0.942
2011	1.02
2012	1.0
2013	1.0
2014	1.0
2015	1.0
2016	1.0
2017	1.0

Dr. Michael O. Slobodchikoff

Dr. Slobodchikoff is an associate professor and chair of the Department of Political Science at Troy University. He is a subject matter expert on Russian relations with post-Soviet states. His first book is *Strategic Cooperation: Overcoming the Barriers of Global Anarchy* (2013). His second book, entitled *Building Hegemonic Order Russia's Way: Rules, Stability and Predictability in the Post-Soviet Space*, was published in 2014. His most recent book, entitled *Cultural Imperialism and the Decline of the Liberal Order: Russian and Western Soft Power in Eastern Europe*, was published in 2019 and was coauthored with G. Doug Davis. Slobodchikoff has also published peer-reviewed articles in the *Journal of International Relations and Development*, the *International Area Studies Review*, the *Soviet and Post-Soviet Review*, the *Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe*, and *Studies of Changing Societies*. He is also the editor of the Russian, Eurasian, and Eastern European Book Series through Lexington Books. Dr. Slobodchikoff specializes in relations between Russia and the former Soviet states, international conflict and peace, and comparative politics. He is a regular contributor to Russia Direct, the Russian International Affairs Council, and has often served as an analyst on Russia's relations with Ukraine for *BBC World News*. He has also served as an analyst on Russian relations with the United States for *Voice of Russia Radio*. He is also a senior analyst with *Wikistrat*.

Dr. Aakriti A. Tandon

Dr. Tandon is an associate professor of political science at Daemen College. Her research interests include military alliances, security institutions, and foreign policy, with an emphasis on South Asian security. She has published articles on Indian foreign policy and India's interstate relations with major powers such as Russia, China, and the United States in scholarly journals including the *Asian Journal of Political Science*, *Strategic Analysis*, as well as the *Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*. She has also served as guest coeditor (with Michael O. Slobodchikoff) of the *Round Table* for a special issue on security in South Asia. She currently serves on the executive committee of the Women's Caucus (WCIS) at the International Studies Association.