



## Kashmir Terrorism and Politics of Blame

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### **Abstract**

*Kashmir has been a long-standing conflicted region between Pakistan and India. It has been shaped by opposing narratives which drown out the pain of ordinary Kashmiri's. The objectives of this study reflect Indian strategic hypocrisy of sponsoring terrorism in Kashmir while ignoring its own involvement as well as blaming Pakistan without any concrete evidence. Pakistan rejected Indian claims, because India uses Kashmir as a threshold of war against Pakistan also to legitimize its presence in Indian illegally occupied Kashmir (IIOK). Pakistan advocated for a free and fair referendum as mandated by the United Nation Resolution. The blame politics often diverts attention from local issues and perpetuates the conflicts in the region. For instance, the URI attack in 2016, the Pulwama attack in 2019, and most recently the Pahalgam attack in 2025 each*

*episode follows the similar pattern of attack blaming Pakistan, India domestic media become frenzy and follow dissenting narratives. The significance of this study lies in the analysis of blame politics. The study recommends that blame politics hides the grievances of the local Kashmiri's and the rights given by the UN charter. The study contributes insightful knowledge for policymakers, scholarly realms, and academia.*

**Keywords:** Pakistan, India, Kashmir, Conflict, LOC, Militants, United Nations, Terrorism

## **Introduction**

The Kashmir conflict constitutes one of the most protracted territorial and political disputes in the south Asian region. Its origin is from the partition of the Indian subcontinent of 1947. The people of Jammu and Kashmir had no opportunity for autonomous status, thereby setting fire to geopolitical tensions<sup>1</sup>. From the Pakistani perspective, the Kashmir issue extended beyond territorial claim, but to justice and self-determination. For decades, the citizens of Kashmir have been living under extreme mobilization and stringent restrictions. Whereas Pakistan has always with consistent approach advocated the Kashmiri cause at international and regional forums.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kokab Saeed et al., "From Pahalgam to Ceasefire: The 2025 India–Pakistan Conflict, Its Historical Roots, And Donald Trump's Mediation Role," *Pakistan Journal of Social Science Review* 4, no. 4 (2025): 1173–204.

<sup>2</sup> Robert C. Mayfield, "A Geographic Study of the Kashmir Issue," *Geographical Review* 45, no. 2 (1955): 181–96.

The published literature indicates that the emergence of militancy in Kashmir was shaped by political grievances and unfulfilled commitments. The 1987 elections were widely regarded as deeply rigged, which was cited as a critical turning point that pushed Kashmiris towards resistance. Pakistan extended its political and moral support to the Kashmiris, while the Indian military resisted<sup>3</sup>. Instead of addressing the public grievances, the Indian government frames it as a movement of terrorism. This narrative provided justification for the implementation of stringent laws and extensive military operations. Pakistan, on the other hand, has argued that the struggle of Kashmiris is indigenous and they are fighting for self-determinations.<sup>4</sup>

After the events of September 11, 2001, the global war on terror underwent dynamic changes. The Indian government declared the regional issue of Kashmir as an international conflict. India linked the Kashmiri struggle with terrorism. Pakistan rejected the false characterization of India, emphasizing that the people of Kashmiri are not violent and extremist; however, they are fighting for their rights of freedom. Pakistan pointed out that the only way to achieve peace in Kashmir is through sustained dialogue that addresses all Kashmiri grievances. Pakistan always upholds its commitments

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<sup>3</sup> Mahrukh Baig and Rana Eijaz Ahmad, "The Shift in Geopolitical Alliances and Its Impact on the UN's Role in The Kashmir Conflict," *Annals of Human and Social Sciences* 5, no. 4 (2024): 630–45.

<sup>4</sup> Shakti Bhatt, "State Terrorism vs. Jihad in Kashmir," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 33, no. 2 (2003): 215–24, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472330380000131>.

under the United Nation Charter particularly for the people of Kashmir<sup>5</sup>.

Bad Governance and continued violation of human rights in the Indian illegally occupied Kashmir IIOK has complicated the crisis. Investigation reports from multiple scholars, scholars, critical thinkers and international organizations highlight the off-camera situation in which ordinary people live under passive fear and uncertainty. For instance, physical torture, enforced disappearances, and sever restriction on the freedom of expression are common. Pakistan raises all the concerns of Kashmiri people at the international forum, and believes that peace cannot be achieved in south Asian if Kashmir remains oppressed <sup>6</sup>.

Over time, the politics of blame has developed into institutionalized practice. India blames Pakistan for sponsoring terrorism. while, Pakistan answers with concrete evidence exposing India of refusing to grant fundamental rights to the people of Kashmir. Interestingly, scholars from both sides blame each other for ongoing violence, instability and lack of resolution in dispute. This paper seeks to examine the background history of the conflict, the role of terrorism in Kashmir, and the emerging global crisis that is responsible for

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<sup>5</sup> Rekha Chowdhary, "Terrorism and Political Movement in Kashmir," *The Dark Side of Globalization*, 2011, 144.

<sup>6</sup> Sumantra Bose, "The India-Pakistan Crisis of 2025: Retrospect and Prospect," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 53, no. 4 (2025): 969–78, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03086534.2025.2512144>.

Pakistan in global terrorism.<sup>7</sup> This paper also highlights the key role of the media that provides a fair podium to the people of Kashmir to express their voices. It also mentions Pakistan's peaceful approach to Kashmir, while India has relied on military measures.

### **Research Questions**

1. How does India blame politics by accusing Pakistan of fueling terrorism in Kashmir?
2. How do these accusations influence the conflict and worsen conditions for Kashmiris?

### **Significance of the Study,**

The key aspect of this study is that Kashmir is not merely a territorial dispute but a region where individuals struggle for their freedom. Over the past decades, the Kashmiri population has been treated under extensive militarization under Indian administration, while the Indian authority frequently blames Pakistan for the instability in the region and for sponsoring terrorism. Pakistan rejected such claims and contended that such narratives are used as a tool to secure international support and to legitimize its action in Indian illegally occupied Kashmir (IIOK). This study further

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<sup>7</sup> Shahid Ahmad Hashmat, "Kashmir Dispute between India and Pakistan: Implication for Regional Peace and Stability in South Asia," *Journal of Interdisciplinary Insights* 3, no. 2 (2025): 24–37. See also Saima Farhad, "The Making of a Disaster: Conflict Intractability and Governance Contradictions in Kashmir," in *Disaster Studies*, ed. Janki Ancharia (Springer Singapore, 2020), [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-32-9339-7\\_21](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-32-9339-7_21).

examines the critical aspects of blame politics designed to attack another country, such as the 2019 escalation and the recent 2025 war. This study also highlights that Pakistan consistently supported the right of self-determination for the people of Kashmir. It reveals that the peace in South Asia is linked to the peace in Kashmir. This research is significant for researchers in academia, public policy, and human rights. It addresses how human rights are violated, and humanity is crushed through militarization.

### **Problem Statement**

The Kashmir conflict has lasted more than seven decades and continues to bring daily suffering to millions. A promise of self-determination made in 1948 remains unfulfilled. People live under strict curfews, forced disappearances, and an enduring constant atmosphere of fear.<sup>8</sup> India has consistently used the politics of blame, framing the Kashmiri struggle as terrorism and linking it with Pakistan. The analysts argue that Pakistan has stood firmly with the people of Kashmir, repeatedly calling for the promised referendum and their right to determine their own future.<sup>9</sup> Between these ongoing accusations, the voices of ordinary Kashmiris are lost<sup>10</sup>. Most studies remain caught in the same cycle of blame, treating Kashmir as a territorial contest. The human reality, the grief, the shattered families, and the longing for dignity rarely find their

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<sup>8</sup> Naghma Mangrio, "A Historical and Political Perspective of Kashmir Issue," *The Dialogue* 7, no. 3 (2012): 255–64.

<sup>9</sup> Mangrio, "A Historical and Political Perspective of Kashmir Issue."

<sup>10</sup> Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan, "Kashmir and Power Politics," *Defence Journal* 23, no. 2 (2019): 48.

place. This study fills that gap. It centers the Kashmiri people and their lived experience. It shows that the issue of Kashmir is not just about the territory but the innocent people who deserve the basic fundamental rights to decide their own paths independently.<sup>11</sup>

## **Literature Review**

Scholarly research has vividly examined the Kashmir conflict. Different writers have explored its historical dimensions, political realities and consequences on humans. Research literature suggests that Kashmir is not merely a subject of territorial dispute, yet it also presents the question of justice and self-determination. Pakistan's stance is clear in this regard; the struggle of Kashmiri people is indigenous in nature, driven by their aspirations for independence. On the flip side, India has always framed their struggle from the lenses of terrorism. This divergence in narrative plays a crucial role in shaping how conflict is interpreted<sup>12</sup>.

Previous research highlights that the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir was not given a genuine opportunity to determine its political future in 1947. The majority of the population was Muslim, and people believe that joining Pakistan would be a better option for opportunities to practice their religion freely and to enjoy fundamental rights. However, the signing of the Instrument of Accession in favor of India created significant political uncertainty

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<sup>11</sup> Abdul Majid and Mahboob Hussin, "Kashmir: A Conflict between India and Pakistan," *South Asian Studies* 31, no. 1 (2020), <http://journals.pu.edu.pk/journals/index.php/IJSAS/article/view/3038>.

<sup>12</sup> Hashmat, "Kashmir Dispute between India and Pakistan."

and dispute.<sup>13</sup> Pakistan raised the issue at the United Nations, and the UN resolutions called for a plebiscite. India refused to conduct a plebiscite. Scholars describe this refusal as the first betrayal of the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.<sup>14</sup>

Researchers emphasize notable concern regarding governance challenges in Kashmir. Issues such as corruption and administrative inefficiencies have contributed to a sense of alienation among the population. The 1987 election is regarded as a critical turning point, as numerous policy analysts suggest that alleged irregularities may have impacted public confidence in the electoral process. Following this period, some young Kashmiri sought alternative means of expression, leading to increased support for armed resistance. However, India responded with extensive military measures. This era is described as a turning point that saw the rise of militancy in the region. Scholars, for example, highlighted that the movement was rooted in local grievances, and external support acting as amplifying factors.<sup>15</sup> The global context of September 11 significantly influenced the academic perspective on the Kashmir conflict. India portrays the struggle of Kashmir as externally driven terrorism, while Pakistan emphasizes the legitimacy of Kashmir

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<sup>13</sup> Rashida Abbas, Adeela Ahmed, and Muhammad Tabish, "Mediation in Armed Conflict: A Case of Kashmir," *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs* 5, no. 2 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v5i2.423>

<sup>14</sup> Sekhar Sil, "Kashmir and the Problem of Terrorism: The Response of the Indian State," *Jadavpur Journal of International Relations* 14, no. 1 (2010): 56–75, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0973598410110005>.

<sup>15</sup> Muhammad Waqas and Khalil Rehman, "The Kashmir Dispute: A Strategic Analysis," *VFAST Transactions on Education and Social Sciences* 11, no. 3 (2023): 17–23, <https://doi.org/10.21015/vtess.v11i3.1662>.

aspiration for self-determination.<sup>16</sup> Scholarly literature from this period illustrates the influence of global narrative on regional conflict. Some authors stated that India employed the war on terror as meant to justify several legislation and military action. It is apparent from the literature that international politics significantly contributed to the escalation of the conflict. Additionally, a prevailing theme concerns human rights; reports indicate that Indian illegally occupied Kashmir IIOK has experienced instance of torture and suppression of freedom of speech by various organization. These violations are said to have intensified local resentment and perpetuated the cycle of resistance.<sup>17</sup>

At the same time militant groups carried out attacks on civilian and majority pollution, further complicating the security situation. The literature also highlights a persistent pattern of mutual accusation, India attributes terrorism sponsorship to Pakistan, while Pakistan emphasizes systemic human rights violation and excessive militarization in the region. Scholars describe these dynamics as a vicious cycle of blame, in which both parties blame each other, yet the civilian population absorbed the majority of impact. Furthermore, media analysis reveals a contrasting narrative; India media often emphasize security concerns and attribute instability to Pakistan actions. Whereas Pakistan media highlights human rights violations and advocates for self-determination.

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<sup>16</sup> Mangrio, "A Historical and Political Perspective of Kashmir Issue."

<sup>17</sup> Rekha Nair, "Study of Kashmir as an Issue in Indo-Pak Relations-A Historical and Political Perspective," *UGC Care Group I Journal* 12, no. 10 (2022): 114–21.

Another critical dimension of this study concerns with the everyday struggle of the Kashmiri civilians. Scholars discuss about the of families who are separated in the Line of Control, are now facing psychological effects, poverty, and limited access to opportunities<sup>18</sup>. The cost of the conflict remains immense, and Pakistan has repeatedly raised these concerns at international forums, and demands justice and the recognition of the Kashmiri voice.<sup>19</sup>

The researchers believe that the voices of the people cannot be ignored. In recent research, the focus is on the 2019 revocation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. India took away Article 370 and imposed a lockdown in the valley. Scholars widely characterize this move as a significant escalation.<sup>20</sup> Pakistan condemned the action and brought up the matter at the United Nations. This decision has continued to estrange the people and bring about more tensions, as demonstrated in the literature. The authors believe that it is against international law, which undermines the rights of Kashmiris. Pakistan has indicated that peace in South Asia is not possible as long as the region of Kashmir is under occupation.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> “The Psychological Impact of Forced Disappearances On Kashmiri Families,” <https://Kiir.Org.Pk/Blogs/the-Psychological-Impact-of-Forced-Disappearances-on-Kashmiri-Families-5608>, <https://kiir.org.pk/blogs/the-psychological-impact-of-forced-disappearances-on-kashmiri-families-5608>.

<sup>19</sup> Sameer P. Lalwani and Gillian Gayner, *India’s Kashmir Conundrum: Before and After the Abrogation of Article 370* (JSTOR, 2020), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep25405.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> Adeela Ahmed, Arsim Tariq, and Rashida Abbas, “Demographic Changes in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) and the Future of UN Resolutions,” *International Journal of Kashmir Studies* 3, no. 2 (2022).

<sup>21</sup> Saeed et al., “From Pahalgam to Ceasefire.”

A researcher also highlights the strong elements of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the ideological nucleus of the Hindutva movement, which has marginalized the minorities groups that have shaped the contemporary politics of India, especially Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who had been associated with the ideology of RSS since his young age and dedicated himself as an active volunteer since entering the politics. The RSS and the BJP are masters at navigating and exploiting to gain support and reshape the national discourse. In contrast, Pakistan's stance generally emphasizes human rights and advocates for dialogue and peace.<sup>22</sup>

The 2019 war between India and Pakistan has also been discussed in recent writings. India blamed Pakistan for terrorism in Indian illegally occupied Kashmir without valid evidence. This blame was used to justify its military action. Pakistan refuted the Indian allegations and claimed that the struggle for independence in Kashmir is an indigenous movement. The recent clash between India and Pakistan has revealed how quickly blame games can escalate into an open conflict. India has consistently used terror allegations to avoid bilateral dialogue, whereas Pakistan called for investigation and dialogue.<sup>23</sup> The 2025 war also showed that blame games without evidence can increase tensions and lead to utterly destructive consequences. Indian media and political speeches were

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<sup>22</sup> Ahmed Ali, "RSS at 100: Continuity amid Change," *Stratheia*, May 9, 2025, <https://stratheia.com/rss-at-100-continuity-amid-change/>.

<sup>23</sup> Naveed Mushtaq, "Evolving Indo-Pak Conflict Dynamics and Its Strategic Implications in the Post-Pahalgam Scenario," *Journal of Political Stability Archive* 3, no. 4 (2025): 61–74.

rife with accusations of Pakistan sponsoring terrorism. Pakistan instead insisted that the independence movement in Kashmir is an indigenous struggle aimed at securing their social and political rights. In the given context, Pakistan faced a two-front challenge emanating from India as well as Afghanistan. With cordial relations developing between Afghanistan and India, it doubled the dilemma for Pakistan. Scholars note that the 2025 clash was avoidable through consistent diplomacy and negotiations.<sup>24</sup> In this literature, India used allegations as a weapon to escalate the situation, while Pakistan emphasized peaceful resolution and dialogue. Existing literature shows that the blame game politics are a defining feature of the India-Pakistan discourse, shaping regional politics and interpretation of events. Such framing disparity is one of the reasons the conflict between the two countries remains alive. Therefore it is essential to respect the desires of the Kashmiri people in any resolution of the Kashmir issue.<sup>25</sup> This literature review builds the foundation for the subsequent sections of the paper by revealing the multidimensional nature of the Kashmir conflict between India and Pakistan. It also outlines a wide range of scholarship whose aim is to explain the causes and implications of the war. It emphasizes the idea that terrorism should be viewed in the context of external intervention and deeply rooted grievances of the local population.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Mehreen Yaseen et al., "False Flag or Faulty Intelligence? A Diplomatic Analysis of India's Accusations Against Pakistan After the 2025 Pahalgam Attack," *The Critical Review of Social Sciences Studies* 3, no. 3 (2025): 48–66.

<sup>25</sup> Mushtaq, "Evolving Indo-Pak Conflict Dynamics and Its Strategic Implications in the Post-Pahalgam Scenario."

<sup>26</sup> Bose, "The India-Pakistan Crisis of 2025."

This analysis demonstrates that the blame game politics in South Asia have shaped dominant narratives, policy responses and international relations. It is pertinent to note that the people of Kashmir remain the centerpiece of the conflict. Despite a long history of instability, human losses and a legitimate aspiration for rights, dignity and agency, they continue to assert their existence in an increasingly majoritarian India.<sup>27</sup>

### **Methodology**

For the proper interpreting of meanings, narratives and patterns embedded in diplomatic and political articles on Kashmir, qualitative research design is used in this study. Qualitative content analysis is used because in international relations we often need to understand not just what is said, but how certain framing carries power and tell the story in conflicting ways. Data is picked from various sources to ensure balance and comprehensiveness. These include official reports from India and Pakistan, United Nations resolutions, think tanks reports. Moreover, databases and websites of Scopus, Web of Science, Springer Nature, Lexis Nexis and similar platforms were screened and twenty particularly influential articles on blame politics were picked. Data collection relied on publicly accessible repositories. These comprehended the official government websites, UN online libraries and the databases stated above. This approach guaranteed transparency and ensured

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<sup>27</sup> Khalid, "Abrogation of Article 370 and 35-A, Human Rights Situation in Indian Occupied Kashmir and Response Options for Pakistan."

reasonable plus ethical treatment of all sources. The analysis uses a directed content analysis method guided by constructivism and critical discourse analysis as theoretical lenses while remaining open to developing themes. Ethical considerations guided the entire research process. By restricting the study to publicly available documents and published articles, concerns regarding confidentiality were avoided. Explanation of politically complex material was commenced responsibly with constant awareness of possible state biases and a dedication to centering Kashmiri voices wherever possible. Like all qualitative studies, this one also has limitations. Interpretation depends partly on the researcher's judgment, findings cannot be generalized to other conflicts, and some sources carry clear political bias. Such obstacles were reduced by going through many sources to explain every step and reflect on our own views.

### **Analysis and Findings**

This study reveals that the Kashmir conflict is, above all, a human cry for dignity and freedom. It is far more than a border dispute between two states<sup>28</sup>. The rigged elections of 1987 stand out as the moment when hope died for an entire generation. Young men who once believed in ballots picked up guns instead. What began as a popular revolt against corruption and stolen votes was quickly branded foreign terrorism. Troops poured in. Curfews became permanent. The blame placed on Pakistan grew louder with every

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<sup>28</sup> Muhammad Imran et al., "Human Rights Violations in Kashmir and the Role of the United Nations," *Global Social Sciences Review* IV (December 2019): 562–69, [https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2019\(IV-IV\).68](https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2019(IV-IV).68).

funeral. The human cost is heartbreaking. Mothers still search for their sons who disappeared into army camps. Children grow up recognizing the sound of boots before they learn the sound of laughter. Families remain divided by barbed wire, jobs and schools are closed for months.<sup>29</sup> The politics of blame has kept this cry unheard for decades and has turned grief into guns. The clearest finding is that India has repeatedly accused Pakistan of sponsoring terrorism in Kashmir without placing convincing public evidence before the world. This pattern appeared in every major crisis from Kargil in 1999 to the wars of 2019 and 2025. India uses this allegation to gain sympathy from Western capitals and to present its heavy military presence in Kashmir as a necessary defense against terror. In reality, the accusations serve to silence questions about occupation and to justify the continued lockdown of an entire people.

Pakistan has never accepted these accusations. From the beginning, Pakistan has insisted that the fire in Kashmir is lit by broken promises and injustice at home. Pakistan has carried the Kashmiri demand for the promised referendum to every international platform. Pakistan vows openly and without hesitation that the people of Kashmir must be given their right to self-determination exactly as the United Nations resolutions require.<sup>30</sup> Pakistan repeats that only the Kashmiri people themselves can decide their future.

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<sup>29</sup> Khan, "Kashmir and Power Politics."

<sup>30</sup> Adeela Ahmed, Arsim Tariq, and Rashida Abbas, "Demographic Changes in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) and the Future of UN Resolutions,"

(BJP) under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is influenced by the RSS ideology (Akhand Bharat) that gives a new life to Hindu society. The establishment of RSS in India works to marginalize the minorities, especially Muslims. Third, the RSS and BJP master's blame game to gain support and reshape the national discourse. In contrast, Pakistan's stance generally emphasizes human rights and advocates for dialogue and peace. Trauma has become the inheritance of an entire generation. The revocation of Article 370 in 2019 and the short but terrifying wars of 2019 and 2025 showed how quickly blame without evidence can turn into violence. In both cases, India pointed across the border and initiated a strike first.<sup>31</sup> Pakistan answered that the anger is homegrown and requested dialogue instead of missiles. The people of Kashmir paid the heaviest price yet again.<sup>32</sup> This research finds that peace in South Asia cannot come without peace in Kashmir, and peace in Kashmir cannot come while blame drowns out truth. Real peace needs evidence instead of accusation. It needs dialogue instead of lockdown. Above all, it needs the world to remember the promise made in 1948 and to let the people of Kashmir speak and choose for themselves. Pakistan has never stepped back from that promise. Pakistan vows again and again that the Kashmiri people alone must decide their future. Until that oath is honored and until blame gives way to listening, the suffering will go on.

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<sup>31</sup> Ted Svensson, "Frontiers of Blame: India's 'War on Terror,'" *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 2, no. 1 (2009): 27–44,

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17539150902752606>.

<sup>32</sup> Hashmat, "Kashmir Dispute between India and Pakistan."

## Discussion

Kashmir is not simply a dispute between two countries. It is the story of millions of human beings who have lived under fear and uncertainty for generations. Their homes are searched in the middle of the night.<sup>33</sup> Their children learn the sound of boots before they learn to read. Their future feels taken from them. This research shows that the politics of blame has been the loudest voice in this story and the reason why peace remains out of reach. The turning point came in 1987, when elections were widely perceived as stolen. A generation once believed in the ballot, lost faith, and turned to bullets. What began as a protest against corruption and misgovernance was quickly labeled as foreign-sponsored terrorism. Troops flooded the Valley. The politics of blame grew louder with every grave. India has framed the Kashmiri struggle as Pakistan-sponsored terrorism.<sup>34</sup> A narrative repeated in every major crisis from Kargil to the conflicts of 2019 and 2025. Accusations arise quickly. While publicly shared evidence arises slowly, if at all. The terrorism label has served two strategic purposes. It wins sympathy from Western powers concerned about global security, and it presents the heavy military presence in Kashmir as a painful but necessary defence. In truth, the label has silenced questions about occupation, curfews, and lockdowns in Kashmir.

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<sup>33</sup> Bhatt, "State Terrorism vs. Jihad in Kashmir."

<sup>34</sup> Farhad, "The Making of a Disaster."

Pakistan has never accepted this narrative. From the very beginning, Pakistan has argued that the fire in Kashmir was internal, with broken promises, rigged elections, and the refusal to honor the United Nations pledge of a free vote.<sup>35</sup> Pakistan has carried this message to every international forum. Pakistan vows openly and repeatedly that only the people of Kashmir can decide their future. Not only Pakistan, but the UN resolutions and the International Court of Justice can decide the right of self-determination in Kashmir.<sup>36</sup> After September 11, 2001, India found a powerful new advantage in the global war on terror. The act of Kashmiri resistance was increasingly linked to international extremism. Special security laws were expanded, Pellet guns blinded children, and enforced disappearances became routine. Pakistan continued to remind the international community that Kashmiris are not terrorists, but people denied their promised freedom. Yet the simpler narrative of terrorism spread faster.<sup>37</sup> Human rights have become the quiet casualty. Reports speak of the torture of vanished sons of silenced voices of families torn apart by the Line of Control. When civilians suffer attacks, India points across the border. When civilians suffer under occupation, Pakistan points to the denial of rights. Between these two accusations, the pain of ordinary Kashmiris disappears.

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<sup>35</sup> Taraknath Das, "The Kashmir Issue and the United Nations," *Political Science Quarterly* 65, no. 2 (1950): 264–82.

<sup>36</sup> Hashmat, "Kashmir Dispute between India and Pakistan."

<sup>37</sup> Nair, "Study of Kashmir as an Issue in Indo-Pak Relations-A Historical and Political Perspective."

The Media has amplified the politics of blame even further. India channels display maps and flags repeatedly, pointing to a Pakistani hand. Pakistani channels show bleeding children and shuttered schools and speak of freedom. International networks often adopt the language of terror because it is easier than explaining a promise made in 1948 that was never fulfilled. In this storm of competing narratives, the Kashmiri voice is almost drowned. The revocation of Article 370 in 2019 and the wars that followed in 2019 and 2025 revealed how quickly blame without evidence can escalate into war. In both cases, India launched the first strike and justified its action with accusations of terrorism. Pakistan denied the allegation and demanded evidence, and called for dialogue instead of missiles. The people of Kashmir paid the heaviest price once again.<sup>38</sup>

Peace in South Asia cannot be achieved without peace in Kashmir, and peace in Kashmir cannot exist as long as blame speaks louder than truth. Real peace needs evidence before accusation. It needs dialogue before lockdowns, and a global commitment to honor the promise made to the Kashmiri people. Pakistan has stood for dialogue for justice and the right of Kashmiris to choose their own future. India, by contrast, has relied on blame and the use of force. The difference is clear. One path leads toward healing while the other paths have led only to more graves. Until the politics of blame gives way to listening, until the promise of self-determination is honored, and until the people of Kashmir are treated as human

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<sup>38</sup> Baig and Ahmad, "The Shift in Geopolitical Alliances and Its Impact on the UN's Role in The Kashmir Conflict."

beings with rights and dreams, the suffering will continue. Their longing for dignity and freedom remains the strongest voice of all if only the world would finally hear it.

## **Conclusion**

One of the deepest wounds caused to South Asia is by the Kashmir conflict. Not only is it a disputed land but people are living under fear, curfew and generational losses. This study highlights that the wound is kept open by the politics of blame. Pakistan is repeatedly accused of terrorism in IOK by India without any proper evidence. India accuses Pakistan to justify its heavy militarization, lockdown and oppression while silencing questions about rights and broken promises.

Pakistan has responded to every accusation with the same fundamental truth. The unrest in Kashmir is rooted within the region itself, from stolen elections in 1987, the refusal to hold the promised plebiscite, and the daily experiences of injustice and occupation. Pakistan has never stopped speaking for the Kashmiri people. Pakistan has carried its demand for self-determination to every international forum and has always called for dialogue instead of missiles. The rigged elections of 1987, the revocation of Article 370, and the wars of 2019 and 2025 all follow the same painful pattern. Accusation comes first. Evidence comes slowly, if at all. Military action follows quickly, and each time, Ordinary Kashmiris bear the heaviest price. Peace in South Asia cannot be achieved without peace in Kashmir, and peace in Kashmir cannot exist as long as

blame speaks louder than truth. Real peace needs evidence before accusation. It needs dialogue before the lockdown. It needs the world to honor the promise made in 1948, and finally allow the people of Kashmir to determine their own future. Pakistan has never walked away from that promise. It has remained ready for honest dialogue and justice. The path forward is clear, listen to the people of Kashmir and move beyond blame politics and the right of self-determination should be respected so that the guns fall silent and the people of this wounded valley know a morning without fear.

### **Policy Recommendations**

The breakdown of the Kashmir issue makes it clear that peace in South Asia cannot be attained without moving beyond blame politics. The conflict has been shaped through accusations from decades resulting in mistrust and violence. Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are necessary for a sustainable resolution.

- First, Proper evidence should be provided by India for accusing Pakistan of terrorism in (IIOK) or it must abandon the blame politics. The blame politics have silenced the voice of local Kashmiris, created confusion and escalated wars. Accusations must not be based on political motives but transparent investigation. Only then can trust be rebuilt.

- Second, an uninterrupted dialogue process should be initiated by both the countries. Dialogue should not be conditional and paused even if the political temperature rises. An institutional framework supported by international actors would ensure accountability. India denies offers for dialogue while Pakistan has repeatedly shown its willingness and openness to engage in talks.
- Third, a neutral role should be taken by the international community. Resolutions passed by the United Nations on Kashmir must be implemented. International powers must acknowledge that peace in South Asia is tied with peace in Kashmir. Independent investigations, human rights monitoring and diplomatic pressure should be insured instead of accepting one sided narrative.
- Fourth theoretical studies of the Kashmir conflict often note the marginalization of Kashmiri voices within state narratives from India and Pakistan. These outlines have prioritized regional claims over Kashmiri lived experiences, identity ambitions and miseries. Comprehensive resolution requires focusing Kashmiri agency through safe expression of political motivation. Essential confidence boosting measures evolve easing movement limits, restoring communication networks and enabling free civil society operations.

- Fifth, a sensible response should be adopted by the media of both sides. Blame politics suits the media as it has more sensationalism, it often escalates the conflict and overshadows the voice of Kashmiris. Human sufferings should be highlighted by the media and space should be given to the Kashmiri perspective to cool down the conflict.
- Sixth, India's strategies such as increased military personnel in the valley and the termination of Article 370 in 2019 have underwired sentiments of separation and anxiety among Kashmiri youth. These factors have deepened local criticisms and stressed joint dynamics. Obedience with international legal norms tied with the restoration of political rights could evidently boost opportunities for permanent peace and positive engagement in the region.
- Seventh, Pakistan should keep supporting the Kashmiri struggle both diplomatically and morally while promoting regional stability. By keeping a constant stance on talks and referendums, Pakistan can strengthen its trustworthiness and force for international engagement.

Lastly, maintainable peace in the area requires addressing determined humanitarian challenges. Access to education, health and financial opportunities and psychological services remains

critical for a generation shaped by prolonged war. Allowing international philanthropically organizations an unrestricted entry and effective freedom would enable effective delivery of essential aid and support long-term recovery efforts.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the Kashmir conflict demands a justice-oriented approach over accusations. The continuation of blame politics has intensified human suffering and mistrust. Predictions for acquiring peace hinge on genuine dedication, sustained dialogue and acknowledgment that the Kashmiri public constitutes a community seeking self-respect and self-determination rather than a mere security apprehension. Serious consideration of these proposed measures offers the most feasible pathway toward regional stability and harmonious relations in South Asia.

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