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The Threatening Problem of Functional Illiteracy: Revisiting Education

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ABSTRACT

Provision of quality education enables members of any society to reach their maximum potential and play their role in the socio-economic development of their society. This paper examines whether education system/schooling in District Dir Upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa equips pupils with appropriate reading, writing and arithmetic skills needed in contemporary society or graduate functional illiterates. The study was carried out by employing quantitative as well qualitative research approaches. The data was collected from a sample of 64 college students and 10 subject experts using stratified random and purposive sampling techniques respectively. The study found that the ongoing education processes in the study area produce functional illiterates not productive citizens for knowledge based economy. It highlights lack of teaching zeal among teachers, unnecessary political intervention in education, lack of coordination between teachers and parents as major factors that contribute to functional illiteracy. The paper strongly emphasizes on major structural changes in schooling institutions and teaching learning process to overcome the threatening problem of functional illiteracy.

Keywords: Functionally literate, Functional illiteracy, Knowledge economy

INTRODUCTION

Most People around the world are quite familiar with the term illiteracy and literacy. Individuals, societies and states have a good understanding and awareness of the problems associated with illiteracy (see Ullah 2014). There is, however, another type of problem which can be very dangerous and destructive for societies. Sociologists of education conceptualized this destructive problem as 'functional illiteracy'. The term "functional illiteracy" refers to inadequate reading and writing skills that leave a person unable to effectively manage any employment task. Functional illiteracy means reading and writing skills inadequate for carrying out every day

responsibilities (Macionis, 1997). A functional illiterate is someone who may have spent up to 12 years in schools and learnt to recognize some words as a whole configuration, like [Urdu Characters] Chinese Characters, English language skills, but is incapable of decoding the written language. They are frustrated, handicapped readers who find reading so onerous that they avoid it. It is pertinent to mention here that a purely illiterate person cannot read or write in any capacity, for all practical purposes, whereas a functional illiterate is a person who can read and write single words or possibly simple sentence with a limited vocabulary, but not entire sentences (see Kozol, 1980). As mentioned earlier and reiterated here that the focus of this paper is not illiteracy but functional illiteracy.

Functionally illiteracy is an emerging issue across societies. In Britain, according to the latest report of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 22% of the population in England and Wales is functionally illiterate as compared to 25% in Ireland and 20% in France (OECD, 2000). Millions of young Americans now emerge from twelve years of compulsory schooling unable to read, write, spell and speak coherently. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported that only 13 percent of American adults are highly literate, 56 percent have intermediate literacy skills, and that 43 percent of American adults are virtually illiterate (NCES, 2003). Functional illiteracy in the US is growing at a rate of over 2 million new inductees per year into its ranks and the tide will only grow stronger as the current educational policy are not changed to address the problems (New York Time December 2012). In Germany, 2.3 million people are functional illiterate. They can read and write single words but cannot not read and write entire sentences (see Houtkoop, 1994). According to United Nation Education scientific and Culture Organization's, (UNESCO) report, Pakistan is amongst the 21 countries facing a serious learning crisis. The reports vividly writes that even 36 per cent of grade 5 pupils in private schools cannot read a sentence in English, which they should have been able

to do by grade 2 (UNESCO, 2014). Looking at the global picture and statistics of the developed countries where schooling became universal among their population and where governments confidently claimed that illiteracy had been all but eliminated (Macionis, 1997), focusing on and studying the problem of functional illiteracy in Pakistan is immensely important. This paper, thus, examines the complex and alarming issue of functional illiteracy in a rural District of KPK, Pakistan.

Contextualizing the study we deem it important to give a brief discussion of Pakistan commitment to the cause of education. Pakistan, being one of the developing countries, has been committed to the cause of education since its inception on August 14, 1947. The first comprehensive policy for quality education was the Report of the National Commission on Education in 1959 (Government of Pakistan, 1959; Ullah 2014). The constitution of Pakistan in its articles 25 A, 37 (b) 38 (d), and 34 sets out a broad based egalitarian view of education and emphasis on education for all (Ullah, 2014). Similarly, the government of Pakistan has committed to many international declarations (i.e., Jomtein Declaration 1990 and World Education Forum: the Dakar Framework for Action 2000) to enroll each and every child into school. In the same fashion, Education Sector Reform 2001–2015 and the National Plan of Action 2001–2015 were the pledges to improve the quality of education and make it a public good (ibidi; MoE, 2003). “The National Education Policy 2009 clearly states that education is a categorical imperative for individual, social and national development that should enable all individuals to reach their maximum human potential” (Ullah 2013, p 196; also see NAP, 2001–15; NAP, 2003). It is vividly clear that government of Pakistan, at least in formulation of policies, 'shows strong commitment to ensure quality education for all, equal educational opportunities, better school management strategies, and making public education a key driver of economic growth and social mobility for everyone' (Ullah, 2013, p 159). Despite official commitment of the government of Pakistan, 5.5 million children are still out of school (UNESCO, 2014), 50 per cent of all the enrolled children drop out

from school before they complete their primary education, 56 per cent are girls (Ullah 2013). “The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) in its' assessment claimed that Pakistan's education system is among the most deficient and backward in Asia” (EIU, 2007 cited in Ullah 2013 p 197). Keeping in view government's commitment to meet the international pledges like Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Dakar Framework of Action Education for All (EFA) Goals and the commitment set out in various policies for making education as a public good and vital investment for human and economic development, we attempted to explore whether education in the study area train pupils in appropriate reading, writing and arithmetic skills or passing pupils from one grade to the next grade without academic skills? We also focused on knowing factors that have pushed Pakistan education system to produce functional illiterates. Having raised these questions, we deem it necessary to analyze the issue of functional illiteracy in theoretical standpoints (sociological perspectives) used by sociologists of education for explaining education in different contexts.

THEORETICAL ENGAGEMENT

The study of education in sociology has been “influenced by a number of theoretical standpoints offering different explanation of what education is and how it operates” (Burgess and Parker, 1999, 183). Four major theoretical perspectives (structural functionalist theory, Marxist (conflict) theory, symbolic interactionist-social action-theory, and feminist perspective have been identified as central to the way in which sociologists have analyzed educational systems and their related context (Ullah 2013). Structural functionalists believe school as a social system that provides important link between individual and society. They (structural functionalists) argue that education helps in maintaining society equilibrium by systematic socialization of young generation (Durkheim, 2006; Henslin, 1997). Like Durkheim, Parson (1961) believed education in term of societal function it serves. He argued that education teaches fundamental values and rules of society thereby facilitating the maintenance of moral order and consensus (Burgess and Parker, 1999). Schools promote the values of hard work and

promote the spirit of competition, patriotism, equality of opportunity, transfers reading, writing, numeracy and IT skills that are important for the economy (see Henslin, 1997; Macionis, 1997). Parson also asserts that school sorts/selects people for works role which are appropriate to their abilities. Although functionalism has been widely criticized for presenting an essentially conservative and uncritical view of education, industrial/capitalist societies do put strong emphasis on primary, secondary [technical] education essential for the socio-economic development of society and individual successes in the modern world (Miller, 1988; Gildea, 2003). Duncan and Blau (1998) argue that modern economy depends for its prosperity on using human capital-its workers and skills. Ensuring real equality of opportunity and effective schooling is the prerequisite for education system to servers its function, as claimed by meritocratic education system (Ullah, 2013). Nevertheless, the critics argue that the state education system fails to prepare young people adequately for work (see Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Douglas, 1964; Althusser, 1971). Marxists, in a serious academic tone, asserts that education system actually works for the benefits of the bourgeoisie. According to Marxists/Conflict perspective, education system is one of the key instruments used by Bourgeoisie to maintain their dominancy (see Ullah 2013). Locating the current study in the above cited theories, it is attempted to see whether education system is training the new generation as claimed by structural functionalists or wasting their talent (see Ullah 2013) and will lead to society disequilibrium.

METHODOLOGY

The data for this study comes from two categories of respondents (64 college students and 12 subject experts). A total of 64 college students (32 from 1st year and 32 from 2nd year) were selected through stratified random sampling. The selection was also along the axes of science and arts group. It is important that 32 (16 in each college) were selected from arts and 32 (16 from each college) were selected from science group. The respondents from teacher's body (subject experts) were selected through purposive sampling.

As stated earlier and reiterated here that 12 subject experts (from the domain of English, Urdu and Mathematics) were selected in line with the nature and key objectives of the study. As discussed in the introduction, we focused on examining the reading, writing and counting skills of students, therefore, it was imperative to seek the opinion of English, Urdu and Mathematics teachers. The belief was that the respondents selected through purposive sampling hold expert views and understanding on the complex problem of functional illiteracy. The data was collected through two different questionnaires (one each for students and teachers). Both questionnaires were having closed as well as open ended questions. We asked close-ended and open-ended questions for acquiring quantitative and qualitative data respectively. The data analysis encompassed quantitative as well as qualitative analysis. The quantitative analysis of data was carried out with the help of statistical package for social science (SPSS). The qualitative data was initially sorted into piles according to questions. Data not directly related to questions was set aside and some responses were revisited several times to make relevance with the relevant question. The inspiration for this step came from Mills (1997). Mills argues that some qualitative information need to be reread or revisited several times for sorting into piles according to questions and [avoiding premature analysis and over reliance on perceptual data]. The qualitative analysis enabled us to identify and categorize important statements and concepts. In line with qualitative analysis, we remained inductive-we identified important categories in the data, as well as patterns and relationships, through a process of sorting out themes. Our focus here was reaching causes of functional illiteracy from the perspective of participants (teachers). Our approach here was emic-representing the setting in terms of the participants and their viewpoint. Thus, our decision of combining qualitative and quantitative approaches was based on the belief that quality and the effectiveness of education research depend on qualitative as well as quantitative variables (Mayer et al., 2000). Employing qualitative and quantitative approaches, we derived the following themes from the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

- Functional failure of school and education system
- Poor study habits and reading spirit among school and college students
- Lack of zeal and spirit among teacher
- Normalization of cheating in examination
- Lack of connection and coordination between school and families
- Unnecessary political intervention in education

Functional failure of school and education system: by functional failure we mean failure of education system or inability of education system to inculcate appropriate reading, writing and comprehension skills among students. The study found that majority of the 1st and 2nd year college students was not able to translate simple Urdu sentences to English and vice versa (see table 1). The study also unpacked that great majority (79 %) of college students were found unable to solve basic mathematical questions, such as $a^2 \cdot a^5 =$ and If $3x+5x=8$, then $x+1=$ (see table 2). The concern that we voice here is that education system in KP does not transmit appropriate reading, writing arithmetic skills to the new generation. Reading, writing and mathematics skills, as claimed by structural functionalists (see Parson 1961; Ullah 2013), are essential prerequisites for the socio-economic development of society and [individual wellbeing] (Miller, 1988).

Poor study habits and reading spirit among school and college students: poor study habits and reading spirits means attitude towards learning. Findings of the study revealed that majority of the students (56 %) had no interest in studying and leaning (see table 3). Similarly, considerable majority (58%) students said that they did not read any newspaper/magazine. The study also revealed that 62 % students never studied any books/navels other than their course work (see table 4 for detail). The underlying cause of

poor study habit, affirmed by 9 out of 12 teacher respondents, was “student from the very begging of their education journey don't develop proper attitude toward learning which, in turn, leads them to have poor or no study habits at all” (Extract from teachers' opinion). One of the subject specialist argued that “neither teachers nor parents motivate students to study”.

Lack of zeal and spirit among teacher: teachers' motivation and love with teaching have significant and crucial correlation with long term growth and improvement of education system around the world (see Johnson, 1990). This study found lack of zeal and interest among teachers as one of the key factors that contribute to the complex problem of functional illiteracy in KP. The study found that teachers are neither motivated themselves to teach nor motivate students towards studies and learning. Majority (7 out of 12) respondents claimed “that lack of interest among teachers for teaching and outmoded pedagogical methods are the main causes of functional illiteracy (Extract from the majority opinion). Similarly, majority of the respondents asserted that “most of the teachers themselves are not inept in their subjects who in turn confused students. Teachers' incompetency and lack of effective teaching disable students to master the substance of lesson (Extract from teacher opinions). The concern that we raise here is that an effective learning has strong correlation with teachers' command on the knowledge/content of the subject that they teach and their interest in teaching. Teachers' subject knowledge and their interest in teaching create conducive learning environment where all students feel comfortable and can succeed and enhance their academics as well as personality growth (Henslin, 1997).

Normalization of cheating in examination: examination, around the world is used to assess and evaluate the academic achievement of students in the school system. In all teaching and learning institutions, it is essential to find out from time to time how much students achieve from what they are being taught. Unfortunately, examination malpractice is rated as one of the greatest problems that undermine the foundation of educational practice in Pakistan. This study found that poor examination system, especially the widespread

prevalence of cheating in examination, has become normative which in turn disables students to learn and understand their subject. Majority teachers (who were interviewed for this study) pointed out that cheating is one of the key causes of functional illiteracy. They asserted that malpractices in examination have spoiled the entire education system. One of the teachers claimed that “cheating has become an epidemic and has ruined the overall quality of education across the”. An English subject expert asserted that “students are helped in cheating by their teachers and parents”. Studies have shown that teachers and parents actively help children in using unfair means to score high in examination and enter good colleges and university. The problem to be highlighted here is that cheating leads to the pursuit of high marks and not the development of intellectual power through learning (see Batool, et al, 2011). Normalization of cheating leads youths to reject the honour of getting sound education and seems to opt for fraudulent activities and deceptive ways in making-ends meet as epitomized by examination malpractices thereby negating the philosophy of sound education. The graduate of such a system can only grow up to be unbelievers, insensible, dishonest, ignorant, unintelligent, deceptive, one sided beings who would be indifferent to the issues of life and powerless to act, create and succeed (Henry, 2004).

Lack of connection and coordination between school and families: studies have found that children with involved parents complete high school with good grades and higher academic achievement than peers whose parents were not involved (Colman et, al., 2009). Research indicates that parents' involvement in schools and teachers' feedback to parents increase students' achievement (Henderson & Berla, 1994). “Parents play an important role in their children's ability to excel academically (Ullah, 2013, 309). This study found that, on the one hand, parents did not have follow up of their children education and, on the other hand, teachers did not bother to give feedback to children's parents regarding their children's education progress. Majority (7

out of 12) respondents pointed out widespread illiteracy and lack of interest among parents in their children education as one of the main causes of functional illiteracy. “We see parents/guardians once at the time of admission and some time when we expel the students from school due to absentees” (Extract from the majority opinion). One of the respondents argued that “parents think that their responsibility is over when they enroll their children in school”. Parents' involvement in their children education is immensely important as children whose families are in regular contact with schools regarding their children educational progress, their children participation in extra-curricular activities, comments on homework, school events, etc., become higher achievers (Becker, 1986a cited in Ullah 2013). The point to ponder upon here is that parents, predominantly, lack “various types of capitals (economic, cultural, and social capitals) which equip them to contribute positively in their children education” (Ullah, 2013, P. 194; also see Bourdieu, 1976).

Unnecessary political intervention in education: despite government of Pakistan “strong commitment to ensure quality education for all, equal educational opportunities, better school management strategies for making public education a key driver of economic growth and social mobility for everyone” (Ullah, 2013, p 194), this study found unnecessary political intervention as one of the key causes of functional illiteracy. Majority (7/12) respondents asserted that too much involvement of the politicians in the process of teachers' appointment, teacher transfers and in the overall education process have destroyed the standard and quality of education. The study findings clearly show that effective education policy and their implementation for the quality education suffered from unnecessary and uncalled political and bureaucratic intervention. Majority of the respondents affirmed that “unnecessary political interference and intervention by politicians as well as governments education department is the key reasons of poor quality of education (extract from the majority opinion). Politicians appoint, transfer and use school teachers for their interest rather than the

larger interest of the state (Ullah, 2013). Hussain asserted that a lot of political interference is noted in the appointments, transfer and violation of merit (Hussain, 2011).

Table 1: *Respondents' (Students) Ability of Translating Simple English Sentence into Urdu*

Statement	Correct Translation		Incorrect Translation		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
He plays piano.	36	56	28	44	64	100
They are fighting.	31	48	33	52	64	100
Sara and Saleem have completed their studies.	32	50	32	50	64	100
It has been raining since 8 AM.	25	39	39	61	64	100
Did teacher teach English yesterday?	27	42	37	58	64	100
Who was he talking to principle?	33	52	31	48	64	100
We had not planned meeting with them.	26	41	38	59	64	100
Are you disturbing your brother?	30	47	34	53	64	100
It was raining when I got home	24	38	40	62	64	100
Had she been watching TV since 6 O' clock?	20	31	44	69	64	100

Table 2: *Students' Understanding of Basic Mathematics*

Categories	Ability to solve		Un-ability to Solve		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
(I) 2^8 ii. $(-50)^{50}$	35	55	29	45	64	100
a 2^5 a 5^2	28	44	36	56	64	100
If $3x+5x=8$, then $x+1=$	20	31	44	69	64	100
Which Fraction is equal to 0.20	8	13	56	87	64	100
A. $\frac{1}{20}$ & B. $\frac{1}{40}$						

Table 3: *Respondents Habits of Studying Newspaper / Magazine during School Time*

Stuff that are studied	Yes		No		Daily		Weakly		Occasionally	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Study of newspaper										
Magazines in	27	42	37	58	5	18	7	26	15	55
Schools										

Table 4: *Students' Habit of Reading Novels or Books other than their Course Work*

Stuff that are studied	Yes		No		Islamic book		General Books		Novel	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Study any novels or book	24	38	40	62	13	20	7	11	4	6

CONCLUSION

This research has provided a brief sociological analysis of functional illiteracy and its underlying causes. The key argument that we reach through this study is that education system, at least in this study locale, fails to equip students with reading, writing and counting skills required for becoming a productive member of modern economy and socio-economic development. Taking into account government's claim and the emphasis of capitalist economic system on credentials as the new panacea for the masses, the existing poor schooling not only further marginalizes rural children but is also "leading them to an ironic situation in which rural children are adversely affected by the possession of credential without appropriate knowledge. The study findings give us qualifying grounds to claim that government's claim of quality education is deceptive as the existing education process is wasting the aspiration and ambitions of many children. It is no more than what Hazir

Ullah asserted that “public education in Pakistan is mere ritual perform between teachers and students” (Ullah, 2013, p 278). It will not be a sweeping generalization that the current schooling does not play the role of gatekeeper/sorting machine that filter and track members of society into various positions on the basis of their talent and ability but equips students with the menace of cheating in examination, illegal ways of success. It will not be a sweeping generalization to claim that education practices, if not corrected, may lead to society disequilibrium.

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Learning Styles: History, Conceptualization and Continuum

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ABSTRACT

The behavioristic approach influences almost each dimension of educational research and has been considered as a paradigm shift in Psychology. Unlike cognitive styles, learning styles were also acknowledged as a product of behavioristic movement and then it surged into the educational and Psychological research domains. The expansion of the learning styles produced scattered and confusing literature that became obstacle to comprehend the construct that were concise, categorized and synchronized in several researches to depict an explicit theoretical as well as an empirical manifestation of learning styles.

Keywords: Learning, Learning styles, Learning style models, Learning style families

INTRODUCTION

Although we could relate the roots of learning styles (LS) with philosophical commencement of learning but LS emergence may not be conditioned with philosophical influence because learning philosophies provided the sources of learning theories but learning styles are product of learning theories (or educational theories at broader level). It can also be demonstrated via philosophical and scientific differences. It means that learning theories, at macro or micro level, though deals with philosophical explanation of the existing realities bases upon evidences while learning styles are, almost all, meso-level (or a lower level than macro and higher level than micro level theories) theories.

Learning styles are always elaborated with reference to the review of learning theories but since the past two decades the field was expanded too

much that intrigued learning researchers to classify it e.g., Curry onion model. This model precisely categories the several learning styles while Simon Cassidy also introduced the taxonomy of learning styles which is based on major models i.e. Curry onion model, model by Riding and Cheema and model by Rayner and Riding. It means that the expansion of learning-styles' field itself demands for a broader level theory that can describe, if possible, learning styles in the way which combine all learning styles and formulate a uniform theory of them. The influential endeavor in this concern accomplished by Frank Coffield and his fellow researchers but actually they did not profoundly produced a theory of universal learning style while they deduced the most reliable and validate learning styles, models and inventories.

PREDECESSORS OF LEARNING STYLES

Empiricists prefer sensory experiences of existing world to learn over the postulates devised by rationalists. The surge of empiricism produced the experimental orientations of science that seem a shift in learning paradigm. Concerning with the epistemological orientation, empiricists believe that the most reliable and validate source for the acquisition of knowledge is experience which reflects the domination of senses over the ideas of innate knowledge. The concept of tabula rasa was originated and expressed to delineate the empiricists' position that penetrated into psychology.

The expansion of empiricism formulated its sub-doctrines in which radical empiricism and associationist-empiricist is widely acknowledged; and adopted by psychologists and educationists to develop theories of learning and learning behavior. Acknowledging the associationist-empiricist position, Watson, J. B. commenced a moment of behaviorism which based on contingencies or associations to comprehend the observable behavior of humans. He rejected the introspective psychology which based on the principles of consciousness and covert behavior.

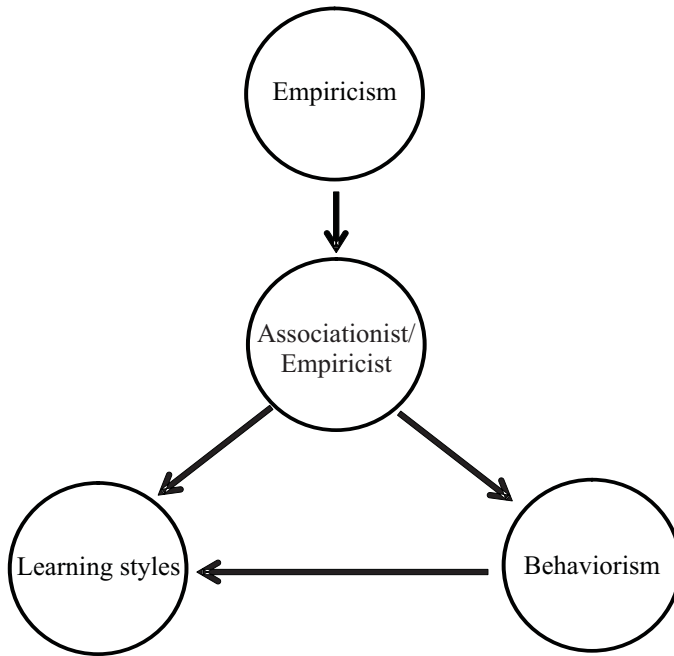


Figure 1. *Predecessors of learning style theories*

The core focus of behaviorism, as described by Watson, is the overt behavior without involvement of mental process. The observable behavior in association with the external stimuli represents the response-stimulus mechanism that rejects the cognitive process of individuals. Watson's legacy was adopted by several educational psychologists that studied the observable behavior of students to interpret the problems of study and their solutions. The most prominent follower of the legacy is Skinner who introduced the operant conditioning in educational context. Skinner, similar to Watson, was of the view that learning occurs via experiences of stimulus response mechanism. In addition, the reinforcements are vital contributing factors in the learning process of students. He claimed that students learn due to the fear of punishment, the fear of punishment forced them to accomplish the learning tasks assigned by teachers. He further argued that learning may occur without a teacher because it's a ubiquitous phenomenon whereas the purpose of a teacher is to provide the most appropriate environment to students to acquire the desired behavior in return. The propositions of

skinner than widely studied in the context of education because the classical condition was not able to demonstrate the whole structure of student/teacher behavior and external environment of educational institution.

The effects of the external environment on the academic achievement of students were widely acknowledged by researchers. The learning style theorists also established their conceptual assumption to propose their theories of learning with particular preferences like Dunn and Dunn resembled the environmental influences to the physiological learning styles while Grasha-Riechmann expressed the external effects as the most preferable environment to learning.

LEARNING STYLES ORDER

Prior to the description of the selected learning styles models, it is necessary to identify all the existing learning styles inventories and models which would be a guiding principle of the selective review. These models, inventories, questionnaire and theories are mentioned in table 1.

The descriptive table of the learning styles guides to understand the major measures of each learning style presented by Coffield and his colleagues. It also exposed that learning styles were extensively concentrated by researchers after 1960s. Such expansion in the field also motivated other researchers to reconsider their previous studies and they notified some critical points that directed them to modify their models. Some revised models in table 1.

The depiction of the table does not express that only these models/inventories were revised. The table shows only those models which are extensively cited and referenced. In fact, other scales, inventories and models were also revised as Betts inventory was revised (Riding and Rayner, 2000); and Grasha-Riechmann questionnaire was enhanced by them. Biggs' Study Behavior Questionnaire –unlike the title it aimed to measure personal feelings, beliefs and attitudes of students –was replaced by Study Process Behavior which was comprised of 80 items. Later on, the revised questionnaire was again revised by Zeegers.

Table 1: *Chronological list of Learning Styles*

Introduced in	Author(s)	Instrument/Measurement
1909	Betts	Betts inventory
1932	Bartlett	-
1949	Gordon	Scale of imaginary control
1950	Guilford	-
1954	Holzman and Klein	Schematising Test
1958	Pettigrew	Scale of cognitive style
1959	Gardner et al.	-
1960	Broverman	-
1962	Witkin	Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT)
1962	Myers -Briggs	Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)
1966	Hudson	(following Guilford)
1967	Sheehan	Shortened Betts Inventory
1971	Paivio	Individual Difference Questionnaire (IDQ)
1973	Marks	Marks Vividness of Visual Imagery Questionnaire
1973	Kogan	Sorting styles into types
1974	McKenney and Keen	Model of cognitive style
1974	Grasha -Riechmann	Student Learning Style Scales (SLSS)
1976	Reinert	Edmonds Learning Style Identification Exercise (ELSIE)
1976	Pask	-
1976	Messick	-
1976	Marton and Säljö	-
1976	Hill	Cognitive Style Profile
1976	Friedman and Stritter	Instructional Preference Questionnaire
1977	Richardson	Verbaliser Visualiser Questionnaire
1977	Schmeck et et. al.	Inventory of Learning Processes
1977	Gregorc	Gregorc Mind Styles Delineator (MSD)
1978	Renzul li-Smith	Learning Style Inventory
1978	Hunt	Paragraph Completion Method
1980	Letteri	Cognitive Style Delineators

1980	Christensen	Lifescrpts
1980	Tamir -Cohen	Cognitive Preference Inventory
1980	Canfield	Canfield Learning Style Inventory (CLSI)
1981	Meredith	
1981	Rezler -Rezmovic	Learning Preference Inventory
1982	Honey and Mumford	Learning Styles Questionnaire (LSQ)
1982	Cacioppo and Petty	Need for Cognition Scale
1983	Curry	'Onion' model
1984	Galbraith and James	
1984	Whetton and Cameron	Cognitive Style Questionnaire (CSQ) [based on McKenney and Keen]
1986	Keefe and Monks (NASSP)	NASSP Learning Style Profile (explicit attempt at meta-taxonomy)
1986	Zimmerman and Martinez	Self-Regulated Learning Interview Schedule (SRLIS)
	Pons	
1987	McCarthy	4MAT
1987	Biggs	Study Process Questionnaire
1988	Kirby et al.	Multidimensional verbal-visual LSQl
1988	Das	
1988	Weinstein, Zimmerman and Palmer	Learning and Study Strategies Inventory
1989	Kirton	Kirton Adaption-Innovation inventory (KAI)
1989	Kaufmann	The A -E Inventory
1989	Epstein and Meier	Constructive Thinking Inventory (CTI)
1990	Groner	Cognitive Style Scale
1990	Conti and Kolody	Self-Knowledge Inventory of Lifelong Learning Skills (SKILLS)
1990	Torrance	Style of Learning and Thinking
1991	Miller	Personality typology: cognitive, affective, conative
1991	Pintrich, Smith, Garcia and McEachie	Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire
1991	Riding	Cognitive Styles Analysis (CSA)
1995	Walters	Psychological Inventory of Criminal
1995	Herrmann	Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI)

1996	Felder and Silverman	Index of Learning Styles (ILS)
1996	Vermunt	Inventory of Learning Styles (ILS)
1996	Allinson and Hayes	Cognitive Style Index (CSI)
1997	Coope r	Learning Styles ID
1998	Harrison -Branson	Revised Inquiry Mode Questionnaire
1998	Sternberg	Thinking Styles
1998	Apter	Motivational Style Profile (MSP)
	Hermanussen, Wierstra, de	
2000	Jong and Thijssen	Questionnaire Practice-oriented Learning (QPL)
20 02	Jackson	Learning Styles Profiler (LSP)

Source:

Table 2: *List of Revised Learning Styles (R-LS)*

Author(s)	Instrument/Measurement	Introduced (1 st date)
Dunn and Dunn	Learning Style Questionnaire (LSQ)	1979
	Learning Styles Inventory	1975
	Productivity Environmental	1979
	Preference Survey (PEPS)	2003
	Building Excellence Survey (BES)	
Entwistle	Approaches to Study Inventory (ASI)	1979 -1995
	Revised Approaches to Study Inventory (RASI)	
	Approaches and Study Skills Inventory for Students (ASSIST)	2000
Kagan	Matching Familiar Figures Test	1965
		1967
Kolb	Learning Style Inventory (LSI)	1976
	Revised Learning Style Inventory (R LSI)	- 1985
	LSI Version 3	1999

Source: Coffield et al., 2004.

DEFINITION DILEMMA AND CONCEPTUALIZATION

Similar to the learning definition, learning style is still have contradiction in its conceptualization and confronting criticism frequently . All the learning style theorists are agreed upon that learning styles are the “preferred way(s) of learning” but the problem lies in the “preferred way(s)”. Cognitive theorists prioritized the cognitive preferences of the students while behaviorists preferred operant behavior of learners. Both terms have been used interchangeably yet bulk of researches was conducted on the concepts. Several researches studied the concept in various contexts using their own label to the construct. Although, the emergence of the term “style” is associated with the cognitive theory (or derived from the theory), yet it penetrated in multidisciplinary areas –the educational context is the most notable among all of them.

Cognitive style originated when individuals' distinctiveness of information processing and cognitive functioning was discovered ; and the exploration of the construct was remained persistent in the various disciplines like psychology and education . The inventor (i.e., Allport) of the cognitive style described it as a “distinctive mental process” that seems a closed or narrow conceptualization of the construct while later it was expanded by other investigators (for example. Several investigators strived to define cognitive styles ; instead the diversity is identified. defined cognitive style as “stable attitude, preference, or habitual strategies determining a person's typical modes of perceiving, remembering, thinking and problem solving” (p.5). Further, he reduced the definition as consistent approach of organizing and information processing during learning .

Learning style, often perceived as active contrary term to the cognitive style, was proposed as physiological, social, interactive, content feature preferences ; and even cognition was taken as a factor of it including physiological and affective factors ; . Feldman (2004) defined learning styles as “preferred manner of acquiring, using and thinking knowledge”. defined

learning style focusing on external stimuli while Kolb described it considering how people perceive and process information that produced Kolb LSI. Acquisition of knowledge is the vital feature of LS and afterwards skill, remembrance, thinking and biological factors were also included.

Similar to the cognitive style definitions, learning style definitions were also contradictory yet have some common features like acquisition of knowledge, information processing, interaction etc. The most challenging issue about both constructs to conceptualize is that both have been perceived as “umbrella term” for each other;

To resolve the LS and CS construct issues, researchers approached the Delphi techniques. Recently, two important researches i.e., have conducted focusing on the construct quest and future of the styles. Using the Delphi techniques, their second study define cognitive style as

Cognitive styles refer to individual differences in peoples preferred way of processing (perceiving, organising and analysing) information using cognitive brain-based mechanisms and structures. They are assumed to be relatively stable and possibly innate. Whilst cognitive styles can influence a person's behaviour, other processing strategies may at times be employed depending on task demands – this is because they are only preferences .

While the unanimously elected definition of learning style is

Learning styles are individuals' preferred ways of responding (cognitively and behaviourally) to learning tasks which change depending on the environment or context. They can affect a person's motivation and attitude to learning, and shape their performance , p.451-454).

The above mentioned definitions of both constructs established two major distinctions between cognitive and learning styles. The first difference is that the cognitive styles are associated with the cognitive processing of

information while learning styles are the response to the learning tasks. It depicts mind-behavior distinction. The second difference is that the cognitive styles are stable and innate which relate (on the basis of the notion of innate) them to the rationalism, whereas, learning styles can be changed and influenced from the external stimuli, therefore, they are not stable.

The above mentioned definition of learning styles relates the construct to behaviorism because the notion of external influence is fundamental process of classical and operant conditioning. Although, the learning styles researches are not experimental and their findings are ascertained through various inventories or questionnaires, they focused on the external influences on the behavior regarding learning. It also revealed that LS discipline has lack of experimental studies which must be conducted in future so that the explicit influences of specified variables over learning could be measured.

MODELS OF LEARNING STYLES

As it has been mentioned that learning styles theories, models and inventories have been widely invented and processed which produced dilemma of their simplification. Their expansion generated an intellectual movement that aimed to simplify the scattered literature of learning styles. The most influential models attempted to accomplish the task are as follow:

- Curry Onion Model (1987)
- LS taxonomy by Riding and Cheema (1991)
- LS typology by Rayner and Riding (1997)

Indeed, these models have some sort of similarities as Onion Model and Rayner and Riding Model utilized the cognitive direction to classify different inventories and models. The families of learning styles are another attempt to categorize various learning styles. The models and families of learning styles selected almost similar inventories/models to typify them. The difference lies in the metaphor they used to unite those inventories. The

scientific community prefers models of learning styles over families and these models are widely accepted as a step towards the unification of learning styles. The description of these models is as follow:

CURRY ONION MODEL

The model strived to structure the learning style construct that appeared as in organized onion metaphor. The model is comprised of four layers ranged from least to most stable characteristic and each layer has scales for measurement. The four layers are as follow:

(a) Instructional preference (b) Social interaction (c) Information processing (d) Cognitive personality style.

Instructional preference is least stable and dependent on cognitive styles because it is the most outer-layer in the model ;Price, 2004;_It refers to “individual's choice of the environment in which to learn” , p. 8). The stability of a layer determines by its susceptibility to effect and the more the layer situated outer, the more likely the layer will be influenced. Social interaction is the second layer which refers to one's preference of social interaction for learning. The third and most stable layer is Information processing ;). It does not influence by the external stimuli directly therefore it assumes as comparatively stable . The definition of Information processing is quit vary as it has conceptualized as (a) intellectual ability to use information (b) approach to assimilate information (c) the method to use newly learned information. The most stable and inner layer is cognitive personality style . It refers to approach the external environment with reference to the inner cognitive/personality characteristics.

LS TAXONOMY BY RIDING AND CHEEMA

They categorized the learning styles accessing the available literature at their time. classify 30 styles which aimed to explain the learning and cognitive styles. They labeled these identified styles as *wholist-analytic and verbalizer-imager* claiming that the accessed literature of styles could be

categorized at broader level. The difference between these two dimensions is based on the process and representation of the information. The wholist-analytic dimension refers to the way in which information is processed and the verbalizer-imager dimension represents the way in which information is presented. The wholist-analytic dimension tends to describe the way in which individuals process the information. The process of information could be wholist (as a whole) or analytic (component based). These two dimensions also associated with different types of labels: critical, formal and deductive for analytic and diffuse, informal and inductive for wholist.

They claimed that there are many styles available which were not used or used rarely for empirical researches instead they can include in this broader category. To integrate the invented classification of learning/cognitive styles, a computerized tool with the label of Cognitive style analysis (CSA) was formulated (Riding, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c) which has been used widely though it was doubted by ,.

THE LS TYPOLOGY BY RAYNER AND RIDING

Their presented typology of learning style is based on the description of style-based theory given by Rayner & Riding(1997). They classified learning styles as *learning, personality and cognitive centered* approaches. The personality centered approach was not extensively described by them because only one personality centered model was identified and it was not broadly process.

The cognitive centered approach was a successful attempt by them to integrate the earlier formulated model of and they also included the CSA in the focused work. The cognitive centered approach is based on the cognitive and perceptual styles differences that tend to identify the style of individual. Apart from the two major proposed groups by , they also identified another third form of learning styles which, they claimed, is not much expressed in cognitive style field rather it is associated with the learning strategies . The third form of learning styles has major emphasis on educational context like

pedagogy, environment and students . The learning approach has correspondence with activity centered approach proposed by Grigerenko and Sternberg (1995) describing its identification in the educational context. The learning centered approach emerged through its professional interests and impact on pedagogy. The approach is comprised of *process, preference and cognitive skill based* models. The process model defined as perceiving and information processing while the individual preferences of learning situation most appropriately reflect the preference models; the preferred environment could be light, sound, temperature, social interaction. The cognitive centered approach is the application of cognitive models on the learning environment.

LEARNING STYLES FAMILIES

LSF is another attempt to classify the various learning styles as it has been prepared by other scholars in forms model. Here, Coffield and his colleagues (2004) organized the various confusing literature of LS inventories and models without aiming to develop an organized model. The grouping of the various LS models and inventories are arbitrary and the families continuum is based on the extent of believe of the developers on stability of their devised LS models and instruments.

Coffield and his colleagues identified 71 learning styles available in the market for scholarly purposes which were, somehow, creating the confusion due to their overarching characteristics that demanded to be in order. In fact, their attempt was not initial work of LS typology because prior to their classificatory aim several models had also been devised like Curry onion model but their project typified focusing on the extensive literature which was not available at the time of Curry and other researchers. They reduced their review to the major 13 models which, according to their point of view, were most cited and influential while several other models and instruments were over dated that they excluded from the study.

CONCLUSION

It is clarified that learning style theories are the product of behavioristic movement while its domain was as much confusing as much it was expanded. The extensive literature of the domain was categorized metaphorically that synchronized different models. Curry, Riding and Cheema, Rayner and Riding, and Coffield and colleagues are most important names in this regard. Although, they have contributed in categorization of learning and cognitive styles, they did this without explicit definition of these constructs. Armstrong, Peterson, & Rayner (2012) initially identified the conceptualization issue of learning and cognitive styles and solved the puzzle by introducing a unanimously selected definitions of these both construct.

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China in the Indo-Pak War of 1971 and Post War Relations with Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the role of Communist China in India-Pakistan War of 1971. It also discusses and analyzes Sino-Pakistan relations in the decade of 1970s after war. In Seventies, on one hand Pakistan was aligned with United States but on the other hand enjoying cordial relations with China as well. The war provided a testing ground for both United States and China to support their ally and good friend, respectively. The tendency brought over also the Soviet Union to play its part by backing India and later Bangladesh. A balance of power was created by the competition of the super powers to support their South Asian allies in the conflict by changing it into a proxy war. It was the need of Pakistan's security and loneliness of China in international politics which strengthened their entente cordiale. Pakistan's enduring rivalry with India and bitter relations with Soviet Union; and China's enmity with India and hostility with Soviet Union paved the way for mutual cordiality. China not only threatened India by the use of veto in Security Council but also blocked Bangladesh's entry into the UN for membership. Chinese support continued and enhanced in the aftermath mainly to boost Pakistan's defense sector. China provided huge ammunition and tanks to Pakistan and helped in the construction of the Heavy Mechanical Complex at Taxila and Kamra Aeronautical Complex. The paper concludes that after the normalization of relations between China and India in late Seventies, Beijing abandoned to speak of Islamabad's position on Kashmir and took a neutral position on all Indo-Pak issues.

Keywords: Pakistan, China, War, Weapons

INTRODUCTION

The research encircles the process of Sino-Pakistan cordiality from the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971 to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. "The decade of 1970s saw steady development of the Sino-Pakistani relations and

continuous strengthening of friendly cooperation between the two governments and peoples” (MOFA China, 2003). The Bangladesh crisis was a test case for China-Pakistan friendship. China came forward to support Pakistan against the Indian aggression. Pakistan's another ally, the United States also reluctantly extended support to Islamabad. It created balance of power interplay between the China-Pakistan-America and the Soviet-India-Bangladesh. “The Bengali separatists, India and the Soviet Union opposed the Pakistani state, the United States, and China. Global polarities became aligned with local polarities” (Banerjee, 1987).

The Soviet Union and India signed their Treaty of Friendship, Peace and Cooperation. The Soviet Union gave assistance to India. Later on, India and Bangladesh also signed a treaty on the same line. China condemned the Indian hegemony in and outside the United Nations. She blocked the Bangladesh's entry into the World Body. In this regard, the PRC for the first time used her veto power. On the other hand, India and Soviet Union tried their best to get recognition for Bangladesh from the world community and admission to the UN. China remained aloof from the recognition of Bangladesh which described it the creation of India and Soviet Union. When Pakistan recognized Bangladesh in 1974, China then took a step. The informal alliance dimension became weakened between India and Bangladesh and the latter's relations with China and Pakistan became the sign of improvement.

Pakistani leaders paid official visits to Beijing. “Zulfqar Ali Bhutto visited China three times respectively in 1972, 1974 and 1976. In November 1974, CAAC (Civil Aviation Administration of China) opened its Beijing-Karachi-Paris flight. After coming into power, Zia-ul-Haque visited China in December 1977” (MOFA China, 2003).

With the “Open Door” policy by the coming of Deng Xiaoping into power and the Sino-Indian normalization of relations, China started getting itself away from the Indo-Pakistan race. She gradually took a neutral position

politically on Kashmir and all other issues to the subcontinent (Ruixiang, 2008). But in spite the political turmoil in Pakistan, Sino-Pakistan entente did not seriously hamper. The two countries worked together to strengthen the mutual security and China supplied a huge amount of weapons to Pakistan. She established a number of defense-related mega projects in Pakistan which later played a significant role in indigenous production of arms. An attempt has been made here to answer the following question i.e what was the Chinese policy in the Bangladesh War?

THE INDO-PAKISTAN WAR OF 1971 AND CHINA

After the Indo-Pakistan wars of 1948 and 1965, it was third war in 1971. This was a Pakistan's civil war which culminated in India's help of rebels' demand in the province of East Bengal for a separate state of Bangladesh. There was a long dispute between the politicians about the resources and authority of East and West Pakistan. The situation turned worse when the Indian-backed major party of Awami League in East Pakistan called for a general strike in March 1971. The Pakistan military started operation in East Pakistan on 25 March to bring an end to the civil disorder. The problem further complicated over the Indian supported guerilla warfare in April. In June, the Government of Bangladesh in exile declared from India that it would not come back to a status quo position. By November, Indian and Pakistan forces had clashes in the Bengal border region while the Indian-backed Mukhti Bahini was effective to bring chaos in the rural areas of the Pakistan's Eastern wing. "Thus, when full-scale war finally broke out on December 3, India quickly gained full mastery of both the air and water around Bangladesh, sealing the fate of the four Pakistani divisions bottled up in East Bengal in the space of 14 days" (Simon, 1973).

Now the question is what kind of role China did play during the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971? Like the previous support for Pakistan in 1965's war, this time too China condemned the Indian expansionism. Before the start of war, Indians had guessed the possible intervention of China for backing

Pakistan (G.S., 1971) which proved later for China's support in the war. It was serious situation for China in the middle of its Cultural Revolution and clashes with the Soviet Union on the border. Analyzing the effect of war on China, Sheldon W. Simon has argued: "For China, the East Bengal rebellion constituted perhaps the most difficult problem it had confronted since the Cultural Revolution had tapered off in 1969. The Bangladesh issue pitted Peking's revolutionary ideology against its ties to a friendly regional middle power whose territorial integrity was deemed essential in helping to protect China's Western borders. Considerations of ideology and geopolitics had seldom clashed in such stark terms" (Simon, 1973).

China was closely watching the situation in the subcontinent. Over the overt Indian assistance for rebels in Bengal province, China protested over the Indian indulgence in the domestic matters of Pakistan. Zhou En-lai sent a message of sympathy to Yahya Khan stating the full support of the Chinese Government and people to the Pakistani Government and people to safeguard its sovereignty and just struggle against Indian penetration. China described the "disturbance" in Pakistani land as an Indian effort to "split Pakistan" (Ibid.).

On the occasion of the Bhutto's visit to Peking on 7 November 1971, at a banquet Chi Peng-fei supported Pakistan against India. He remarked: "In order to defend their state sovereignty, territorial integrity and national independence, they [the Pakistani people] have waged unremitting struggles against foreign aggressors, interventionists and domestic secessionists. The Pakistan Government has adhered to its foreign policy of independence and contributed to the defense of peace in Asia and the promotion of Afro-Asian solidarity". And also "the Indian Government has crudely interfered in Pakistan's internal affairs, carried out subversive activities and military threats against Pakistan by continuing to exploit the East Pakistan question. The Chinese Government and people are greatly concerned over the present tension in the Subcontinent" (Jain, 1977). He further maintained that the

Bengal problem was the internal matter of Pakistan and no outsider was allowed to interfere in another country's domestic issues. China had followed the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and never interfered in another state's internal matters. Chi Peng-fei stated that “certain persons are truculently exerting pressure on Pakistan by exploiting tension in subcontinent, in a wild attempt to realize their ulterior motives” and stressed once again “that should Pakistan be subjected to foreign aggression, the Chinese Government and people will, as always, resolutely support the Pakistani Government and people in their just struggle to defend their state sovereignty and national independence” (Ibid.).

The India-Pakistan “local split in South Asia became tied, and reinforced by, the global level patterns of the US-Soviet and Chinese-Soviet rivalries” (Buzan & Waeber, 2003). Apart from China, the Soviet Union and the United States were also involved in the war.

The following figure illustrates the balance of power game in Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent



SUB CONTINENTAL BALANCE OF POWER IN THE EARLY 1970S

It was a time for US and PRC to prove their commitments, already showed to Pakistan in the process of Sino-American normalization of relations. The

power politics of the subcontinent turned to balance of power; thus Pakistan, China, and America on one hand while India and Soviet Union on the other hand. In the word of M. S. Rajan: "The struggle for Bangladesh and its establishment had sounded the death knell to the policy of balance of power practiced by some external powers for many years in the Indian sub-continent - notably the United States and China" (Rajan, 1972). The American policy was based on the fact that Pakistani channel had been used in her rapprochement with China, thus a neglected ally came once again forward in the directions of the US' strategy. Further, China was hostile to India and both the US and China had identified the Soviet Union as their rival, the consequence of this pattern of relationship was the United States' orientation towards China and therefore against India (Jackson, 1973). United States supported Pakistan because of the reason that the Soviet Union was planning with India move to the South and South-East Asia. Nixon feared that an Indian invasion of West Pakistan would mean total Soviet domination of the region, and that it would seriously undermine the global position of the United States and the regional position of America's new tacit ally, China. In order to demonstrate to China the bona fides of the United States as an ally, and in direct violation of the US Congress-imposed sanctions on Pakistan, Nixon sent military supplies to Pakistan, routing them through Jordan and Iran, while also encouraging China to increase its arms supplies to Pakistan.

On 4 December, Kissinger stated that India was an aggressor one. On a telephone conversation, the President asked Kissinger that had the Jordan had sent planes to Pakistan? Kissinger replied that 17 planes had been sent (Haig, 1972). It was reported that three F-5 fighter aircrafts with Pakistan markings by the Pakistani pilots had been transferred from Turkey to Pakistan on December 6 (US State Department, 1971). In geopolitical terms, America considered that Pakistan's geo-strategic position could be useful for her competition with the Soviet as was in the past. This was later confirmed during the Soviet attack on Afghanistan. "As an ally, Pakistan had granted the

United States bases for U-2 flights over the Soviet Union and intelligence-gathering posts to monitor Soviet nuclear testing. American weapons soon flowed to Pakistan, foreign aid to India stopped, and a naval task force steamed into the Bay of Bengal without specific orders” (Paterson et al., 2000). But the US Navy backed off after the Pakistan's defeat and surrender in Bengal when India restrain from the war in West Pakistan. The American policy was greatly flawed and thus the US-Indian relations remained frozen until the end of the Cold War. Dr. Kissinger was held responsible for the failure of US policy (Hanhimeaki, 2004).

On the other side, the Soviet Union was backing India against Pakistan for the creation of independent state of Bangladesh. The Indo-Soviet high-level exchange of visits increased. India and Soviet Union signed a bilateral Treaty of Friendship, Peace and Cooperation in August 1971 for twenty years which “resulted in the augmentation of Russian shipment to India, one of several developments which were cause for a great deal of alarm in Pakistan” (Sidky, 1976). The article VIII of the treaty was of great importance in the sense that it bound the Soviet and India, not to join alliances which would be against other party. “The Indo-Soviet Treaty was the logical consummation of Indo-Soviet relations in the past and a momentous outcome of the extraordinary situation prevailing in the Sub-continent” (Singh, 1987). The treaty was the confirmation of the 1969 call of the Soviet proposal for Collective Asian Security. The Soviet got a chance to weaken the US-PRC rapprochement and also was a blow for Pakistan in the midst of war. After the weak position of Pakistan in the war, the Nixon Administration sent the USS Enterprise to the Bay of Bengal on 11 December. The Soviet Union replied by the dispatching of two groups of ships, armed with nuclear missile from Vladivostok on 6 and 13 December. Later, the Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister, Vasily Kuznetsov went to India on 12 December 1971 “to discuss the political recognition of Bangladesh”. He assured the Indian leaders that the Soviet Union would use veto, not to allow the cease-fire. “He stressed the

importance of quick and decisive Indian action in liberating Bangladesh in the shortest time possible”. Both the Indians and the Soviet leaders were agreed on the possibility of Chinese attack from the Sikkim (US State Department, 1971).

China was fully aware of the Soviet commitments with India. Beijing repeated its assurance of support to Pakistan and condemned the act of aggression made by India. Chinese Vice-Premier Li Hsiennien expressed on 29 November 1971 about the Indo-Soviet alliance against Pakistan in these words: “In the past few days, because the Indian Government, supported and encouraged by social-imperialism, has been carrying out subversive activities and military provocations against East Pakistan, the tension on the Subcontinent has been aggravated” (Jain, 1977). The Chinese voice also heard in the UN against the India and the Soviet Union on 4, 5, 7 and 15 December 1971. The USSR had vetoed the resolution for cease-fire three times for the purpose that India could easily succeed by dividing Pakistan and establishing a state of Bangladesh. China maintained her previous position regarding the East Pakistan crisis. Huang Hua stated in the UNSC that “Chinese Delegation maintains that according to the United Nations Charter, the Security Council should strongly condemn the aggressive acts of the Indian Government and demand that the Indian Government immediately and unconditionally withdraw all the Indian armed forces from Pakistan”. Beijing strongly protested against the creation of Bangladesh “and of subverting, dismembering and committing aggression against Pakistan”. The Chinese delegation also presented a draft resolution (S/10421) to the Security Council. “The Chinese delegation voted against the Soviet draft because it would constitute direct interference in the internal affairs of a Member State. The present armed aggression by the Indian Government against Pakistan is being carried out with the connivance, support and shield of the Soviet Union. Countless facts have proved this. Over a long period the Soviet Government has energetically supported India's expansion and has provided the Indian expansionists with large

quantities of arms and other war material. It has encouraged India in its scheming activities to subvert and dismember Pakistan, and has at the same time openly exerted all kinds of pressure on the Pakistan Government". Huang Hua described the Indo-Soviet Treaty as a "military alliance" which encouraged India to "flagrantly sent troops to invade Pakistan". Later the Chinese representative at the UN made a speech that India was an "outright aggressor", the Soviet Union was the boss of India in this action and the "United Nations should not repeat the mistakes of the League of Nations". China called for the UN ability to take an action against the Indian aggression, must call all countries to support Pakistan "and thoroughly expose the shameless support given by the Soviet social-imperialists to the Indian aggressors". India must withdraw her all forces immediately from Pakistan and both countries must reach to a cease-fire to create favorable conditions for settlement of disputes (Ibid., pp. 188-196). Eventually, on 16 December 1971, the fall of Dhaka happened and Bangladesh created.

Although the Chinese and the United States' assurances did not stop the creation of Bangladesh but it was obviously their support to at least save, West Pakistan. The reputation factor was also instrumental that in crisis an ally will come to help the repressed ally. The change of US policy for tilt towards Pakistan came after the Chinese assurances to Islamabad which gave the impression to Kissinger that China would intervene militarily in the crisis. The China's military action in the crisis was strongly hindered by the snowy weather in the Himalayas and the huge number of Soviet soldiers on her Western border. If Chinese military involved in the war to back Pakistan, it might caused severe bloodshed on the Sino-Soviet border by the USSR.

SINO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS IN THE AFTERMATH OF WAR

After the war China carried on her condemnation of India's aggression and the Soviet Union plot against Pakistan as well. From 31st January to 2nd February 1972, the then Pakistan's President Z. A. Bhutto paid an official

visit to Peking on the invitation of China. The Chinese leaders extended him a warm welcome. Zhou and Bhutto signed a joint communiqué in which they condemned the naked aggression of India and demanded the withdrawal of forces from the Pakistani territory. "The President and the Prime Minister noted with satisfaction the developments of economic co-operation between the two countries. The Prime Minister stated that in order to help the development of the national economy of Pakistan, the Chinese Government had decided to change grants into four loans which have already been provided to Pakistan and are being utilized, and the repayment period of the loan provided in 1971 shall be deferred for 20 years. The Prime Minister further expressed the Chinese Government's readiness to provide Pakistan with fresh loans on similar terms when that loan has been utilized" (Ibid, 207-209). Bhutto also secured military aid on considerable scale for his country.

Focusing on the persistent Sino-Pakistan developments in relations, India signed a Treaty of Friendship, Peace and Cooperation with Bangladesh on 19 March 1972 for a period of twenty five years, on about the same lines of the Indo-Soviet Treaty. There were twelve articles in the treaty, of which, the following two articles VIII and IX were of prime importance. In accordance with the ties of friendship existing between the two countries, each of the contracting parties solemnly declares that it shall not enter into or participate in any military alliance directed against the other party. Each of the parties shall refrain from any aggression against the other party and shall not allow the use of its territory for committing any act that may cause military damage to or continue to threat to the security of the other contracting parties; and Each of the contracting parties shall refrain from giving any assistance to any third party taking part in an armed conflict against the other party. In case if either any party attacked or threatened to attack, the contracting parties shall immediately enter into mutual consultations in order to take necessary measures to eliminate the threat and thus ensure the peace and security of their countries.

To bring an atmosphere of peace, India and Pakistan signed the Simla agreement in July 1972. From Pakistan Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and from India Prime Minister Indira Gandhi were signatories. Both countries agreed on peaceful settlement of the problems and release of the 90,000 prisoners.

As far as the Pakistan's demands were not satisfied China had stopped the Bangladesh's way of admission to the UN. On 10 August, 25 August, 23 September and 3 October 1972, the Chinese delegate condemned the Bangladesh's representation in the World Body without fulfilling conditions. China vetoed the Indo-Soviet and other countries resolution for the entry of Bangladesh. The Soviet described the act as a Chinese hypocrisy which had always raised voice for the Third World countries. India and Bangladesh intensified the “anti-Chinese” propaganda in their countries. The Chinese opposition was on the ground that Bangladesh was an outcome of the Indo-Pakistan war and its application for admission could only be accepted when the last year's UN resolutions implemented, and the Indo-Pakistan and Pakistan-Bangladesh disputes find a settlement. If Bangladesh became a member of UN, then the withdrawal of Indian forces from the Pakistani territories, release of prisoners of war and other unresolved issues could further damage the peace of the subcontinent. That is why “USSR and India hurriedly pushed the resolution in the Security Council. China had no alternate but to veto the resolution” (Rind, 1973).

The Soviet delegate again brought up the Bangladesh's issue to the General Assembly floor on 23rd September where China opposed it and stated that PRC was not fundamentally against Bangladesh but “the principles of the UN Charter must be observed and that the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council must be implemented”. On 29th November, finally the General Assembly passed the resolution, calling for implementation of December 1971 resolution and return of prisoners of war according to the Geneva Conventions of 1949. “It was a great victory for the

Chinese diplomacy”. Huang Hua clarified the Chinese position that China had friendly gestures for the people of East Bengal and hoped that Bangladesh would “make their own decisions independently” (Ibid.). China knew that India and the Soviet Union were not ready for the peaceful resolution of the problems in the subcontinent by raising the Bangladesh's issue. Thus China hoped for Bangladesh's free decisions in future, without the influence of any country.

“The Soviet purpose in pressurising the UN was to embarrass China in the UN by forcing her to exercise veto and to alienate the people of Bangladesh from China”. Moreover, it was a scheme “to sanctify the Indo-Soviet offensive in the region”. The Chinese support for Pakistan and opposition to Bangladesh was for the purpose to make sure their mutual security stronger. The Chinese fear was right that the creation of Bangladesh “led to the tightening of the Soviet noose around China” (Ibid.).

There was sustenance in the balancing strategy between Pakistan-China-United States, and India-Soviet Bangladesh. Pakistan was backed by China to stop the Bangladesh's membership in the UN until 1974. However, by the end of March 1973, ninety eight countries of the world had recognized Bangladesh. At the time when Z. A. Bhutto was busy in preparation to convene the second Summit Meeting of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) from 22 to 24 February 1972 at Lahore, the environment was compelling for the recognition of Bangladesh by Pakistan, as many friends and Muslim countries had already suggested. At last, in the year of 1974, Pakistan recognized Bangladesh and on 18 January 1976, after the overthrow and assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the full diplomatic relations have been established. The new government of Zia-ur-Rahman kept Bangladesh at a distance from its allies, the India and the Soviet Union. Since then, a working relationship has emerged between the two countries.

As long as Pakistan was opposing Bangladesh and was not ready to extend recognition, China too followed Pakistan. China and Bangladesh had signed

a preliminary document at the end of 1975 to make a way for possible peaceful relationship. But only when Pakistan recognized Dhaka Regime, China did the same. The then-President of Bangladesh, General Zia-ur-Rahman went on an official visit to China in 1977.

SINO-PAKISTAN DEFENSE TIES

After the Indian occupation of the Muslim-majority Princely State of Kashmir, the cutting off the Eastern wing in the shape of a creation of Bangladesh was a severe blow for Pakistan's national security. Both events were hijacked by the hegemony of India where she was directly involved. The war-mourn Pakistani nation was greatly worried over its vulnerability to future Indian or any other expansionist power. The region's stability further deteriorated when India tested her first nuclear weapon in 1974. India had been working on the said project for almost three decades. The intensity came with the Chinese nuclear explosion in 1964. The shift in the security environment with the emergence of a nuclear adversary on the Indian borders caused a policy of retaliation and call for a nuclear deterrent. Thus for Indians, the long-held Chinese threat was a pushing factor. "When a country develops nuclear weapons capability, for instance, its relative power increases" (Rourke and Boyer, 2006). The increasing power of Chinese at the doorstep of India after their nuclear test was looming greatly in the Indians' mind. The US sending of Enterprise believed to be loaded with nuclear weapons to the Bay of Bengal for the support of Pakistan in the Bengal Crisis might also lead also India to go nuclear, as was already criticized by India and her ally, the Soviet Union.

Same was the problem with Pakistan. The change in power parity with the Indian nuclear test, Pakistan became more inferior to Indian military and political might. India was already more superior than Pakistan in all fields. According to Hasan- Askari Rizvi, "Pakistan decided in principle to work toward building a nuclear weapon capability in 1972 in the aftermath of the military debacle in the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war, but it did not acquire any new

technology for that purpose before India's first nuclear explosion in May 1974" (Rizvi, 2005). The Pakistani leadership took the issue seriously and Prime Minister Z. A. Bhutto ordered for the development of the nuclear arsenal. He called the Pakistani scientist Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan to come back from Netherlands and take the said responsibility. In 1975, Pakistan began to acquire technology for uranium enrichment plant using ultra high-speed centrifuges. The uranium enrichment program was launched in 1976 and for this purpose, the Pakistan's Government established Engineering Research Laboratories (ERL) which changed later into Khan Research Laboratories (KRL) as recognition of the Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan's services in the field for his nation.

Pakistan was terrorized by the Indian threat and its efforts were, to bring a balance of power by nuclear weapon which is sometimes also called the "balance of terror" (Nye, 2004). With the indigenization of nuclear weapons' development, Pakistan looked to its allies, the United States and China, for the acquisition of conventional arms. The United States' flow of ammunition to Islamabad later hindered by the Symington-Glenn Amendment about the supply of US weapons to the nuclear weapons' developing states. The Carter initial policies also hampered the process.

To balance the Indian threat, China has previously flourished its assistance for Pakistan to boost the defense of her informal ally. "The Indian nuclear explosion of 1974 introduced a new dimension to the strategic balance in the region and gave fresh impetus to expanding Pak-China defense cooperation. Between 1971 and 1978, China assisted Pakistan in building two defense-related mega projects, first, the Heavy Rebuild Factory for T-59 tanks, and second, the F-6 Aircraft Rebuild Factory" (Rahman, 2007). China helped more by supplying its weapons and other conventional weapons' related accessories to Pakistan's Air Force, Army and Navy. From 1970-73, Beijing supplied 80 F-6 Fighters, 210 T-59 MBTs, 53 T-63 LTs, 12 SHANGHAI PBs and 4 HUCHUAN FACs to Islamabad. Between 1973-76, Pakistan received

from China 15 F-6 Fighters, 159 T-59 MBTs, 200 T-531 APCs, and 2 HAINAN PBs. From 1977-79, 24 F-4 Fighters, 150 T-59 MBTs, 200 130 MM TGs and 50 122 MM SPHs came from China to Pakistan. Pakistan established Heavy Mechanical Complex (HMC) with the Chinese assistance in 1979 at Taxila. The Heavy Forge Factory (HFF) at this complex has a great value for the defense production of the country (Singh, 1996). Chinese further assistance to Pakistan has been displayed here in the following two tables.

Table 1: *Pakistan's Naval Procurements from China* (1972-1978)

Sr. No.	Name of the Weapon System (Remark in Parentheses)	Time of Transfer	No
1	Shanghai-II class: Fast Attack Craft 4 (Converted into missile boats, currently with Pakistan's Maritime Security Agency. 5 kept by NSA for spares).	1972 -1976	9
2	Huchuan Hydrofoil (39-ton)	1974	4 6
3	Romeo -class Submarines	1976	2
4	Luda-class Destroyers (China's first exports of Destroyers)	1976	2
5	Hainan -class Fast Attack Craft-gun	1978	3

Yaacov Vertzberger has listed the following contribution of Chinese arms to Pakistan in the said period.

An important aspect of the Chinese policy towards Pakistan was aid and assistance without any pre-condition. Unlike the Western ambition, another significant dimension was the Chinese desire to see Pakistan as self-sufficient in her military needs and not dependent one. The massive set up of defense infrastructure in Pakistan is illustrating the Chinese behavior. Since Pakistan has become able to produce defense related “made in Pakistan” equipments (Shisheng, 2008).

Table 2: *China's Military Aid to Pakistan 1972-1979*

Year of Delivery	Tanks	Aircraft	Naval Vessels	Other Weapons systems
1970/71	110 T -54/55 100 T -59	MiG -19 number u.a.	9 Gunboats	-
1972	100 T -59	50 MiG -19	6 Shanghai Gunboats	-
1973	-	Tu -16 number u.a.	-	-
1974	159 T -59	1 Squadron Shanyang MiG19	-	-
1975	-	-	-	-
1976	-	30 F -6	Submarines Destroyers 2 Patrol Boats number u.a.	-
1977	50 T -59	30 F -6	-	-
1978	50 T -59	24 F -4 (MiG -17 version)	3 Hainan Patrol Boats	-
1979	50 T -59	-	-	-

CONCLUSION

In seventies, the Sino-Pakistan relations were on a positive track. The political upheavals in Pakistan did not obstruct the course of the bilateral warmth. With the normalization of relations with India and the reform policy of Deng Xiaoping, China began to pursue a pragmatic and neutral policy towards Indo-Pakistan rivalry. However notwithstanding the opening up, the Sino-Pakistan cooperation in defense sector remains unchanged. It means that at the time, China started to work on a two-pronged policy. She toned down her political support for Pakistan on Indo-Pak disputes, with the purpose to continue the modernization by good trade relations with India.

But the historical legacies of unresolved issues and strategic hostility with India also compelled China to strengthen Pakistan in subcontinent to produce a balancing environment. Obviously, a powerful India would pose a serious threat to China as was clear by the New Delhi's nuclear test and conventional weapons' build up.

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REGIONAL INTEGRATION OR DISINTEGRATION: AN APPRAISAL OF THE CURRENT TRENDS IN SOUTH ASIA

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ABSTRACT

The paper explores the possibility of regional integration in South Asia on the pattern of European Union by examining the prevailing socio-economic and religio-cultural conditions, and political trends in the region. South Asian, once formed a single administrative, economic and political unit, had to be divided into several independent states on communal lines. The factors and forces that had caused partition of India in 1947 did not recede in the post-independence era and continued throughout to challenge the territorial integrity of regional states. The conditions that existed before launching of integration process in Europe did not appear before or after initiation of regionalism in South Asia. The most of SAARC members are faced with serious challenges of national integration and centrifugal forces are quite strong both at national and regional level. The region lacks significant centripetal forces which can help unite it. The disintegrative forces are prone to grow stronger in future making regional integration on European pattern less likely in South Asia.

Key Words: Integration, Ethnicity, South Asia, Religion, Partition, Disintegrative, Identity.

INTRODUCTION

The most parts of the South Asian sub-continent, i.e. Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, once formed a single administrative, political and economic unit. The boundaries of the British Empire stretched well beyond them, and also included Sri Lanka and Myanmar. The British had once controlled the foreign affairs of Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan and Iran. In this backdrop, some regional leaders and scholars, particularly Indians, view South Asian regionalism with the vision of brining the same political and economic unity

in the area. They believe that partition of sub-continent was a “mistake,” due to which all communities in South Asia are losers and it must be rectified through creation of a South Asian union. (Star enters new era, 2012; Nayar, 2014). Some Indian political leaders also aspire the same goal. In fact, the leadership of All India National Congress (AINC) not only wanted retaining the unity of British Empire after departure of colonial power but also had intentions to create a federation comprising the territories far beyond South Asia. Some statements of India's founding father and first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, give an insight to this end. As early as in 1939, he had dreamt of creation of an Asian federation in near future that might include “China, and India, Burma and Ceylon, Afghanistan and possibly other countries” (Acharya, 2009, p.33). Later on, Nehru had proposed the creation of a South Asian federation comprising all parts of the sub-continent as well as Burma in the east and Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq in the west (Jayasekera, 2003, p.346). From time to time, Indian leaders reiterate their commitment to this objective. For instance, in 2003, Yashwant Sinha, the then foreign minister of India, had stated that New Delhi was committed to the goal of South Asian union. He had suggested the regional countries to “start thinking of a South Asian Union.” If people of other regions could attain “this kind of Union,” he maintained, “there is no reason why we should deprive our people of this opportunity” (Sinha proposes South Asian union, 2003). Likewise, Jayant Prasad, a former Indian diplomat, stressed that creation of a South Asian Union should be the long term goal of the regional states (Prasad, 2014). Some Indian researchers and intellectuals share this dream. For instance, Kumar has tried to weigh and compare SAARC with EU. He argued that the ultimate end of regional integration under SAARC framework should be to create a South Asian Union (Kumar, 2005). Nair suggested the regional leaders to forget or ignore SAARC and rather focus on creation of a South Asian Union (Nair, 2001). Yet more profoundly, Kuldip Nayar argued: “Even an economic union of SAARC countries falls short of the region's requirements. Our aim should be to constitute a South Asian

Union, from Afghanistan to Myanmar, having soft borders, having one currency and having no custom or excise barriers” (Nayar, *Reminiscences of a Peace Activist*, 2004). However, such suggestions have met severe condemnation from some critics, who construed these proposals as a part of a scheme to create an “*Akhand Bharat*” or “United India” (Abedin, 2013). Probably due to the same reasons, some scholars have cautioned about such assertions. For instance, Dash (1996) besides others, argued that the setting such “grandiose” goals can be “counterproductive” for SAARC. The target of a South Asian Union or even an Economic Union, in the context of the prevailing conditions of mutual distrust, unresolved political disputes and “spillover effects” of the religious and ethnic conflicts, seem overambitious and unrealistic. The regional states, they maintained, should focus on joint development projects, creation of economic complementary and pursuance of “modest trade objectives.”

These incongruous objectives and views on the prospects of South Asian regionalism make future of SAARC uncertain and directionless. An in-depth investigation of the prevailing conditions and trends in South Asia can help give SAARC a clear direction and the vision to pursue with entire commitment from all members. An objective appraisal of integrative and disintegrative forces operating in South Asia can help achieve this objective. The present study endeavors to achieve this objective. It involves the qualitative research through employing historical, descriptive and analytical tools and an assessment of the existing secondary sources. The study has been divided into five Parts. The first section introduces the problem. Second section gives a brief overview of the conditions that prevailed in Europe at the time of launching of the integration process as it would help compare the distinct processes in two different regions of the world. It will also help build the conceptual framework of the study. The third section includes a brief profile of South Asia, its historical survey and nature of relationship between regional states. It will also give an assessment of the conditions that had caused disintegration of a single South Asian administrative and political

unit into several independent states. The fourth section will entail an appraisal if the conditions that had caused disintegration of South Asia over the time have weekend or otherwise. It will help make an estimation of the ongoing trends and predict the future course of events in the region. The fifth will be the concluding section.

BACKGROUND CONDITIONS TO THE INTEGRATION PROCESS: THE EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE

There were several continent-wide “large-scale” and well organized movements campaigning for a united Europe in the interwar period. Some of them argued for free trade and others for political integration of the continent. During the Second World War, several resistant groups sought economic and political integration of Europe. Haas claimed that hundreds of publications, movements and organizations were keenly striving for some sort of union of European states in the immediate postwar period which proved helpful for European integration process initiated in 1950s. Even more important was the intellectual work done much earlier for unity of the European states by influential thinkers like Dante, Pierre Dubois, Sully, Cruce, Penn, Saint-Pierre, Rousseau, Kant, Lamartine and Victor Hugo (Haas, 1948, p.528). Their writings were quite instrumental to prepare the necessary groundwork needed to build upon, later on, peace project that culminated into the European Union by the dawn of the twenty-first century. Moreover, the European states were religiously, culturally and ideologically homogeneous and the processes of national integration and state building had been completed before the launching of regional integration scheme in 1950s. Most importantly, some of the European states had gained political unification through peaceful means whereby schemes of economic integration with varying results had preceded political unification of countries like Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, the Scandinavian area and Austro-Hungarian Empire in the nineteenth century (Palmer & Perkins, 1985, p.560). Some external factors, like presence of an outside security threat, i.e. Soviet Union and desire of European leaders to decrease their

dependence on America had also contributed towards integration process. Some of the conditions found helpful in European integration process were only unique to Europe and did not exist in any other area of the world. As such, Haas had predicted that the integration process on European pattern witnessed in 1950s would not be replicated in any other part of the world (Haas, 1961, p.389). Similarly, Nye had observed that integration schemes among the developing states looked sometimes “to resemble the European animal but in causal terms turn out to be of a different genus or species” (Nye, 1968, p.2).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The existing literature shows that several factors certainly promote regionalism. These include: socio-cultural, religious and ideological homogeneity, convergent political interests, common external threat perception, weak nationalism, similarities in terms of level of economic and industrial development, prior integration experiences and economic complementarities etc. On the other hand, several conditions definitely impede the process. Haas had pointed out that the differences in the level of industrialization and socio-economic development, resource base and national economic planning as well as ideological divergences of the national leaders of member states prevented growth of regionalism. The states with strong central government and vibrant nationalism also inhibited growth of regionalism. Haas observed that the national leaders of states “poorly integrated internally” were generally reluctant in regional integration schemes fearing that it would “further undermine their control at home”. The smaller and less-developed members generally resented dependence on the core state “with varying degrees of intensity and consistency.” They were, therefore, “eager to minimize dependence on the more developed” partners. Haas had termed such relationship as “a disintegrative force” (Haas, 1970, pp.614–21).

A PROFILE OF SOUTH ASIA

A successful regional cooperative scheme must correspond to the objective realities of its region. In order to understand the true nature of regionalism in South Asia, it is imperative to objectively and comprehensively survey the prevailing political and socio-economic conditions that more or less influence the process of regionalism in the area. In order to understand the true nature of South Asian regionalism, a brief knowledge about the region itself and the constituent states is required.

Most of the IR scholars agree that South Asia, bounded by the mighty Himalayas in the north and northwest and Indian Ocean in other sides, forms a single geographical unit, though the use of the word South Asia itself has a very short history. There is disagreement among the scholars as where does South Asia begin or end. Some scholars include only seven founding members of SAARC in the region while some others contest to also incorporate Afghanistan and Myanmar in South Asia (Muni, 2003, pp.1–2). The region occupies about 3 percent of the world geographic area. It is the most densely populated region inhabited by over 1.5 billion people but has one of the lowest urbanization rates in the world (Ahmed & Ghani, 2010, pp.34–5). The regional states containing about 23 percent of world population have a total gross income of \$3 trillion (Jhamb, 2006, p.42). In 2005, South Asian share in the world trade and global production was reportedly about 1 percent and 1.5 percent, respectively. About 450 million of the poorest people and 50 percent of illiterates of the world lived in the region (Baral, 2006, pp.266–7). South Asia has been ranked as one of the “poorest regions” where about two-thirds of the world's poor lived. Its youth is “the least literate and the most malnourished” in the world (Jain, 2010, p. 300). It has been termed as “one of the most strife-torn and militarized regions of the world” (South Asian Partnership – International and South Asia Partnership Pakistan, 2003, p.152).

There exist several commonalities among its inhabitants, such as common

civilization and historical experiences, culture and traditions etc. but it is also probably the most diverse region of the world. South Asia is, in fact, in the words of a Bangladeshi scholar, “a world in miniature.” It is diverse in religious, cultural, racial, linguistic, political and ideological terms (Khan, 1991, p.48–50). In 1985, Junius Richard Jayewardene, the then President of Sri Lanka while addressing the first SAARC summit had highlighted diversities in South Asia in these words:

The countries in the South Asia Region assembled at this Conference consist of Monarchies; Republics with elected Presidents and multi-party system and Republics with Presidents but no multi-party system yet. They are populated with people of Aryan, Dravidian, Arab and Mongolian descent. A billion and a quarter people live here; some of them the richest and some the poorest in the World. Two of the World's great religions Hinduism and Buddhism originated here, and Christianity and Islam have millions of followers going back to the years of their origin (SAARC Secretariat, 1990 p.26).

SAARC states have large divergences. In 2005, India was inhabited by 74 percent of South Asian population and shared 80 percent of its GDP. Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal had 13 percent, 10 percent, 1 percent and 2 percent of regional population, respectively. Their share in regional output was 11 percent, 6 percent, 2.3 percent and 0.7 percent, respectively. The share of Bhutan and Maldives in South Asian GDP is minimal (Ahmed & Ghani, 2010, pp.34–5). The differences in their per capita incomes are also large. For instance, the per capita income of Bhutan and Maldives is greater than that of India and Pakistan. The large populations, of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, put “debilitating effects” on their per capita incomes. Sri Lanka having small population and developing economy has the third highest per capita income in the region. Among the LDCs, Bangladesh has the largest economy but its per capita income is far

below than those of Bhutan and Maldives. Nepal stands lowest in terms of per capita income in the region. Bangladesh and Nepal mainly export manufactured items such as textiles but Bhutan and Maldives only export primary goods (Razzaque, 2010, p.377).

South Asia as a region as well as the most of the regional states, are diverse under different criteria. For instance, Bokhari noted that India alone had 6 main religious communities and huge ethnic diversity with over 550 subdialects and 80 main dialects (1985, p.372). Other states are also multi-religious, multi-cultural, and multi-ethnic. Moreover, one religious community is in majority and hence dominant in every regional state, i.e., Hindus in India and Nepal, Muslims in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Maldives, and Buddhists in Sri Lanka and Bhutan. Different religious minorities also live in different states and their grievances, for whatever reasons, not only inflame tensions within their own states but also create cross-border conflicts. As such, religious divisions, along-with some other factors, have been major sources of divisions and conflicts among and within the regional states. These conflicts also brought wars and internal strife in South Asia (Khan, 1991, pp.48–9).

South Asia possesses some unique attributes “in terms of its historical background, geo-political configuration and cultural systems” (Jha, 2004, p.118). Particularly, the geopolitical characteristics of South Asia are distinctive in the world. India is the largest, both in terms of geography and population, and the most powerful nation – both in economic and military terms. It occupies central position in the region separating all other states from each other (Jha, 2004, p.48). None of other founding members has a common border with each other but India shared borders in land or sea with all of them. India is also the largest country of the region – even about three times larger than the rest combined. India possessed about three-fourths of region's geographic area and population, and four-fifths of regional production and exports. India is also far ahead than other members in

military and political terms. Among the South Asian countries (SACs), India is ranked as a “dominant major power” Pakistan as a “significant and reasonably cohesive middle power” and Bangladesh “a weak and dependent middle power.” The rest of the regional states are categorized as weak small powers (Sri Lanka and Nepal) and mini-states (Bhutan and Maldives). The UN put four out of the seven founding SAARC members, i.e. Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives and Nepal, in the list of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) (Bokhari, 1985, p.372; Sharan, 1991, p.2). Whereas, rest of the member states fell in the category of developing countries, India being more developed than others. India is the most resourceful state of the region with the potential to become one of the main industrialized states of the world. It could contribute, through providing peace and stability, towards speeding up the overall process of socio-economic development in the region (SAARC Secretariat, 1990, p.69). On the basis of its potential and policies, it can serve both as a centripetal or the centrifugal force, either by attracting other states towards itself or pushing them away through its friendly or unfriendly behaviour towards them, respectively. Therefore, it has been widely believed that “the key” to the success of SAARC rested mainly in India's hands (Ibid. p.197; Sharan, 1991, p.2).

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF SOUTH ASIA AND THE REGIONAL STATES

South Asia remained divided and suffered political turmoil during most of its history. There is no evidence of voluntary integration of India in the past. The unity of India had only been made possible through military conquests, at least thrice in the history. The first attempt to unite India under single political leadership was made by Chandra Gupta, the founder of the Maurya Dynasty (321–185 BC), which reached to its peak during the rule of his grandson Asoka in the third century BC. The latter was able to bring most parts of the present-day India, Bangladesh and Pakistan under his rule but his empire disintegrated into several independent states soon after his death (Viotti & Kauppi, 2013, p.62–3; Encyclopedia Britannica, 2005). India

witnessed hundreds years of internal strife, disorder and political divisions, before Muslims united it again by military means after the twelfth century. First, the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate and then Mughal Kings united India under their iron hands. Both the times – during the Gupta-Asoka rule and Muslim period – the rulers showed great tolerance towards their subjects particularly to those belonging to different faiths and religions. Chandra Gupta, initially a Hindu and an advocate of using violent means for political objectives, was converted to Buddhism and became preacher of non-violence. Similarly, the Muslims rulers showed unprecedented tolerance towards local people. Even Akbar, a Mughal ruler, had invented *Din-i-Elahi* to please and accommodate his Hindu subjects and to ensure political unity of India. This unity more or less remained intact, with little interruptions due to the revolts of local power claimants, for about a century. With increasingly weakening Mughal rule, several local governors and princes became independent before British reunited India for about two centuries (Inayat, 2007, p.13).

The British Empire was extended beyond the present day outer boundaries of founding members of SAARC. Sri Lanka and Myanmar were the part of British India and they were separated only in 1937 (Muni, 2003, p.2). The British had also defeated Afghanistan in the west and Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan in the north but did not merge them into its Indian Empire. Rather, an international agreement had made Afghanistan a buffer state between the British India and Russia. The British had also acquired the rights to run foreign affairs of Afghanistan in 1880 which Kabul regained in 1920s (Runion, 2007, pp.81–92). British India had also exercised influence in Iranian domestic and foreign affairs (Axworthy, 2008, pp.177–220). British had made Sikkim as its protectorate and subsequently also got the rights to conduct trade and build roads in the state (Encyclopedia Britannica). Nepal and Bhutan also became British protectorates and enjoyed only autonomy in their domestic affairs while their foreign relations were guided or conducted by the British (Encyclopedia Britannica; Chintan, 2003, p.74).

The British rule had integrated the region through administrative, economic and political systems and a widespread communication network (Bokhari, 1985, p.372). The British had expanded the boundaries of their empire to areas covering present day Sri Lanka, Maldives and Myanmar making the entire region a single integrated market where money, labour and goods could move freely. This integrated labour market was supported by a single currency from the time of Mughal rule. The coin of Aurangzeb was even used in Southern India and present day Sri Lanka. Similarly, rupee of British era was used as a common currency in all parts of South Asia as well as in the Gulf region. In order to serve their imperial goals, British had also given a single education, judicial, administrative and parliamentary system in Indian sub-continent. Moreover, these countries were physically integrated through a common energy, communication and transport network. The infrastructure of roads, rivers, and telecommunications developed during British period or even before that, had provided for free movement of people across all parts of the region. Sobhan rightly observed that SACs possessed the integrated physical infrastructure to the level at the time of partition of India which European states took 50 years to develop (Sobhan, 1998, p.5). The leadership of AINC wanted to retain the unity of British Empire. However, this dream did not come true and sub-continent had to be divided into several states

EMERGENCE OF SOUTH ASIAN STATES AND THEIR RELATIONS WITH EACH OTHER

In spite of being ruled under a single government for centuries, the region continued to be socio-culturally, religiously and ideologically heterogeneous (Bokhari, 1985, p.372), which ultimately led to the emergence of several distinct political units or independent states in South Asia. The two largest religious communities – Hindus and Muslims – could not evolve themselves into a single nation through overcoming their fundamental dissimilarities. Though, they both, along-with others, had fought together the unsuccessful war of independence against the British in 1857 but their differences became so widened in the years to come that they, just after 90 years since then, had to

divide the country on communal lines. The fear of majoritarian Hindu domination and their quest to preserve religious and cultural identity and protect their political and economic rights, forced Indian Muslims to create a separate homeland, i.e. Pakistan in 1947. Nonetheless, the newly established but the largest Muslim state in the World – Pakistan – could not maintain balance between its eastern and western wings. The geographical distance compounded with political grievances and economic exploitation of the East Pakistanis worsened the situation. The military operation after the general elections of 1970 resulted into a bloody civil war, which after direct Indian military intervention into East Pakistan, culminated into birth of Bangladesh (Islam, 1989, pp. 37–64 and 97–168; Sobhan, 1998, p.7). As such, the large part of South Asia, which formed the single political and economic unit during the British era, became divided into three separate and independent states.

The British had united the separate Tamil and Sinhalese domains or states into a single unitary state in the nineteenth century (Jayathanan, 2004, pp.143–4). With its waning position as a great power, the Britain gave it first a dominion status and then full independence in 1947 and 1948, respectively. Since then, Sri Lanka strived to preserve its political independence, national security and territorial integrity against the threats primarily emanating, directly or indirectly, from India. It sought to define its borders with India through resolution of disputes over Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait (K. Ahmed, 2005, pp.17–9). Due to its security concerns against India, Colombo had signed a defense pact with UK on November 11, 1947 (Gooneratne, 2007, p.54). The relations between two states more or less were less than cordial in the post independence era and got worsened in 1980s due to Tamil insurgency in Sri Lanka.

The state of Nepal under present borders was established in 1769. The British conquest of India in the nineteenth century had threatened the very survival of Nepal. However, its ruling Rana family was successful to reach to an agreement with the British. It accepted the latter's "guidance" in its foreign

policy against a guarantee of domestic autonomy as well as protection from internal and external enemies (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2005). As the British were ready to depart, Nepal began to strive for “security and her foreign policy goals and achievements.” Nepal was able to get recognition as an independent state from the US on April 21, 1947, i.e. before the independence of India. Katmandu also established diplomatic relations with UK and France besides the US, “which made it impossible for India to contemplate action against Nepal, as was done against the Indian princely states” (Josse, 2004, p.85), such as Hyderabad Deccan, Junagarh, Manavdar and Jammu and Kashmir. In the post British era, Nepal concluded several treaties with India including a tri-partite agreement, the UK being the third party, signed in 1947. The Nepalese leaders, intelligentsia and the people alike believed that these treaties had compromised Nepalese sovereignty and jeopardized its economic interests. Some of the provisions of treaties or the treaties as a whole were reportedly secret and could undermine the security of the state. Moreover, the Indian political and economic dominance over Nepal, its disputes on issues related to trade, immigration and sharing of waters continued to strain their bilateral relations (Chintan, 2003, pp.73–9).

The state of Bhutan, founded about three centuries ago, was invaded twice by the British, i.e. first in 1772 – 73 and then in 1864 – 65. After its defeat in the second war, Bhutan had signed a treaty with the British according to which the former had handed over some of its southern passes to the latter. Bhutan had also accepted the British mediating role in any of the future disputes with its neighbouring states as well as an annual British subsidy. In 1910, it under another treaty accepted British guidance in conduct of its foreign relations in return for internal autonomy and increased subsidy. In 1949, Bhutan signed a treaty with India in which the latter took over the British position in its relations with the former. Accordingly, Bhutan's external relations had been guided by India in exchange of the non-interference in its domestic affairs, payment of annual subsidy and transfer of a strip of land, Dewangiri, in Assam to Bhutan. The Chinese involvement in Tibet further pushed Bhutan towards, and increased its dependence on, India (Encyclopedia Britannica,

2005). Nonetheless, the search for its separate identity and national sovereignty constitute the main objectives of the state of Bhutan.

Bangladesh, yet another “India-locked,” South Asian state, is also geographically surrounded by India on three sides, besides a small border with Myanmar in the east. It is, however, more fortunate than Nepal and Bhutan as it touches the Bay of Bengal and could interact with outside world through sea routes. Like other smaller regional countries (SRCs), Bangladesh also perceived threats to its identity and security from India. The Two Nations Theory which Indira Gandhi claimed to have drowned in the Bay of Bengal was actually born in East Bengal during British rule and it had survived despite disintegration of Pakistan. It got a new shape in Bangladeshi nationalism, negating Bengali nationalism in reaction to Indian hegemony imposed on them during 1971–75. Initially being grateful to India for playing “midwife role” in its birth, the Bangladesh under the leadership of Mujibur Rehman had come too close to India, both politically and economically. It had entered into political and economic agreements with India. Both countries had signed a treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation in 1972. India had also pushed for economic integration of both countries, including integration of their transport and electricity systems. Sooner, the Bangladeshi nationalism got its roots and the pendulum swung in the opposite direction, as Dhaka strived to protect its Islamic identity, national sovereignty and economic independence. Bangladesh, initially declared as a secular state by its founding father, was later declared as an Islamic state by the successor governments. Since then, different issues such as: ideological and political differences; migration of people across the borders; sharing of waters; trade; terrorism; and border problems, continued to worsen relations of both states (Khosla, 2005, p.68–81).

Pakistan was created on the basis of the Two Nation Theory when the Muslim leaders had the conviction that partition of India was the only viable solution of the communal problem in the sub-continent. They hoped that it would bring peace and stability in South Asia as both newly independent states

would establish friendly relations. Particularly, Jinnah who had strived, initially for Hindu-Muslim unity, and finally to preserve the unity of India through accepting Cabinet Mission Plan, believed that both India and Pakistan would be able to enjoy friendly ties modeled on US-Canada relations. Even he had planned to live in Mumbai after his retirement as Governor General of Pakistan (Rumi, 2011). Later on, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had also said that Indo-Pakistan relations must have looked like “those between Sweden and Norway, countries which had to break apart in order to come closer together” (Makeig, 1987, p.282).

The ideological differences, the memories of the past and prevailing apprehensions among the leadership of both India and Pakistan prevented them from coming closer. Pakistan was created on ideological basis aimed at providing Muslims a state which would be governed by Islamic laws. It was based on a philosophy which provided for transformation of religious teachings into political laws and thus uniting politics with religion. It was an anti-thesis of secularism which the Indian founding fathers had chosen for their state. For Indian leadership, the failure of this ideology as well as of Two Nation Theory was tantamount to success of secularism and composite Indian nationalism (Maass, 1996, p.266–9). This thinking was a motivating force towards their behavior towards newly created state of Pakistan. On the other hand, Pakistani leadership believed that partition of India was the result of a “basic historical antagonism” between two nations, i.e. Hindus and Muslims. Partition had just fulfilled the faith and demand of Muslims that they had a separate national identity and independent political “destiny.” The refusal of the Indian leadership to accept the two-nation theory had convinced the Pakistanis that “India posed an ideological, as well as a military, threat to the nation's survival.” It believed that India “if afforded the opportunity, would re-establish *akhand bharat* ('undivided India') either by force of arms or by allowing the hybrid state to wither away under its own contradictions” (Makeig, 1987, p.282). Bahadur claimed that “bitter pre-independence controversies” between All India Muslim League (AIML) and AINC had cast a long shadow over bilateral relations of both states. AINC

believed that AIML had undermined its struggle against foreign rule, and targeted the composite Indian nationalism advocated by it. The congress leaders considered Pakistan movement as an attack on their efforts to get freedom for their homeland. The leaders of AINC believed that partition of India was a great tragedy which had left deep wounds on their souls (Bahadur, 2003, p.248). As Harrison observed, partition of India had “left deep wounds on Hindu psyche.” The majority of Indian leaders, “with vivid memories of past oppression” in the hands of Muslims for many centuries, accepted partition as an “unavoidable expedient” which would be “short lived.” At worst, they hoped “Pakistan would eventually settle down as a deferential junior partner within an Indian sphere of influence.” The ensuing bad relations between two states were the consequences of these historical facts. The continued Indian “ambivalent attitudes concerning the existence of Pakistan” prevented both states to come closer (Harrison, 1991, p.23). Maass rightly observed that “nightmarish experience of partition and the long history of invasions” which had shaped the linguistic, cultural and religious identities and social divisions in the subcontinent, as well as “partition related contentious issues” and finally controversial accession of Jammu and Kashmir to Indian union had “poisoned” the relations between the two states (1996, p.266–7). The deliberate attempts on the part of Indian leadership to create problems for the newly established resource-less state of Pakistan, through various measures were the part of the strategy to put burden on it to the extent of its collapse. The forceful annexation of Jammu and Kashmir, Manavadar, Junagarh and Hyderabad Deccan, stoppage of the water flow into rivers coming from India to Pakistan, anti-Muslim riots in India causing history's largest displacement of the people in any single geographical area, creating hurdles in transfer of assets and financial resources to Pakistan etc. made the situation worse and sowed the seeds of bitter relations between both states. Kashmir dispute in particular, remained a bone of contention between India and Pakistan. In the course of time, some new issues, such as Siachen and water disputes, also came to the surface to

further worsen the bitter relations between the two states (Sattar, 1997, p.62–7).

In sum, the South Asian region as well as international disputes and political problems in the area are mainly “Indo-centric.” India has one or another kind of problems with almost all of its neighbours partnering it under the framework of SAARC. India being the core state in the region due to its size and policies together did not serve as a centripetal force which could attract other regional states towards itself and help create a demand for integration of SACs. Rather, Indian behaviour and relations with its neighbours mostly served as centrifugal force, pushing them away to search for alliances with extra-regional states, such as China and the United States, to meet their security and economic needs.

INTEGRATION OR DISINTEGRATION: CURRENT TRENDS IN SOUTH ASIA

Does South Asian regionalism relate to the same genus or specie to which the European integration process belongs? Was there any significant integrationist movement in South Asia at the time of launching of SAARC or either exists today? Or the region experiences an opposite tendency? An understanding of the factors and conditions that had led to the political division and economic segregation of South Asian nations would in part help comprehend the dynamics of regionalism in South Asia. Moreover, comparing these conditions and factors with the prevailing ones in the region would help appreciate the phenomenon.

Till 1947, most of the SACs were integrated as a single political and economic unit with similar administrative, judicial, parliamentary, educational, transport and communication systems under which political elites of all communities were able to communicate with each other. South Asia also had all attribute of a common market with single currency. Thus, South Asian nations were more integrated in the pre-partitioned India than the European nations after about sixty years of the integration process

(Sobhan, 1998, pp.4–5). However, the region had to be divided on communal lines due to several reasons.

The fears of political domination and economic exploitation were the main factors of political division of sub-continent. South Asian Muslims, which constituted the second largest population in British India, had lost not only political power but also better socio-economic conditions in the society. They feared that after departure of British they would become a permanent minority in Hindu majority India where Hindus would always rule over them. Their neglect of British education system had relegated Muslims to socio-economically backward positions. They also feared that they would not be able to protect their economic interests in a united India where better educated Hindus were already dominant in all socio-economic fields. The primary reason that had caused partition of India was the desire of the Muslim elites to get political autonomy where they could increase economic opportunities for their people (Sobhan, 1998, pp.6–8).

Besides being worried about their political and economic rights, the Muslims were also concerned about their religio-cultural identity. The Muslim leaders feared that majoritarian Hinduism would absorb Muslims into its resilient culture and the fate of the Muslims would not be different from its predecessor nations who had entered into sub-continent as victorious powers but ultimately lost their separate identity and became part of a variant Hindu culture (Ahmad, 2005, pp.1–11). The fears of Muslims were not unfounded. Punj, a leader of BJP, has depicted this very fact in these words: “The ethnic diversity of India has never been a problem – for throughout her history she has been able to absorb different races and impose on them one common culture and tradition. The most important cementing factor has been the Hindu religion.” Punj went on to claim that from 327 BC to 400 A.D. the invaders like Greeks, Sakas, Kushana, and Huns had occupied some Indian territories “for some time before being won back by the Hindus. But the most important thing to note is that long before they have been physically defeated by the Hindus they became culturally Hindutised.” He noted that Huns were

most barbaric among them as being “more interested in destruction than in victory.” Their cruelty was unparalleled but ultimately they had to “yield before the resilient Hindu confederacy.” Their most cruel King Mihir Gul was converted to Hinduism and he had to worship Shiva. Huns “remained alive in genealogical currency but culturally, religiously and historically became Hindus” (Punj, 2003, pp.13–5).

The ethno-religious nationalism is yet strong in regional states and disintegrative movements continue to unleash violence and terrorize people in South Asia. The regional states have not been able to integrate their religious and ethnic minorities in their respective jurisdictions. The SACs are faced with the serious problems of domestic “political order and national integration” and their respective leaders had to focus more on their national borders (Rizvi, 1991, pp.206–8).

The concerns regarding religious and ethnic identity still prevail in South Asia to the extent of threatening the territorial integration of some states. The process of political divisions and economic disintegration did not stop with partition of India. Rather, search of ethno-linguistic identity, political autonomy and economic prosperity continued to haunt territorial integrity of South Asian states. For instance, in the post partition era, the newly created state of Pakistan could not accommodate the aspirations and concerns of the people of East Pakistan who were aggrieved over political alienation, cultural domination and economic deprivation in the hands of ruling elites from West Pakistan. Thus, this sub-national conflict led to disintegration of Pakistan in 1971 (Sobhan, 1998, p.7). Pakistan also faced challenges from separatists in North West Frontier Province (NWFP), now renamed as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, since its birth to 1970s, Sind in 1980s, and Baluchistan in 1960s, 1970s and again since the dawn of the twenty-first century. Micro-nationalism or sub-nationalism and issues of national integration also exist in other regional states. India, the largest of all regional states, is faced with several separatist movements (Muni, 2003, p.3). For

instance, the state of Jammu and Kashmir, besides being a bilateral dispute between India and Pakistan, also has another dimension. Kashmiri nationalism has its roots in the Indian-held territory and to some extent in Pakistan also, which wants to form an independent state. The decade of 1980s had witnessed the bloodiest movement for creation of a Sikh state, i.e. Khalistan, in Indian Punjab. Though Indian forces had crushed the Khalistan movement forcefully but the aspirations of creating an independent Sikh state did not die completely. India is also faced with several bloody uprisings and separatist movements in its eastern and northeastern areas. The red corridor continues to threaten territorial integrity of India and, in the words of Manmohan Singh, Maoists posed the greatest threat to Indian security (Naxalism gravest internal, 2010). Even Bangladesh, a cause of region's divisions twice, first on the name of Muslim nationalism and then on the pretext of Bengali nationalism, is not a 100 percent homogenous state. It faced Chakma unrest in a reaction to Islamic and Bengali assertion for decades since 1970s (Husain, 1997; Mohsin, 2006). Likewise Nepal, a predominantly Hindu state, faced the emergence of Terai movement in reaction to the dominance of Hill people. The country also witnessed the Maoist insurgency mainly in response to the attempts of making country a Hindu state. Similarly, Bhutan, a tiny Himalayan state, does not feel comfortable due to presence of people of Nepalese origin. Meanwhile, Sri Lankan territorial integrity has been challenged twice in its post independence history; first by Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) insurgents in 1970s and then by Tamils separatists since 1980s (Muni, 2003, p.3)

There has neither been any visible integrationist movement nor any significant demand for political unification of SACs made by any major segment of societies of the SACs particularly SRCs. AINC wanted a united India but its dreams did not come true and country had to divide on religious lines. This process of disintegration did not stop with the partition of India. Rather, the evidence shows that trend of disintegration persisted in the post-partition era. The SACs continue to experience centrifugal tendencies both at

the regional and state level. The very reasons which had caused partitioned of India in 1947 challenged the territorial integrity of present-day SACs. The failure of elites from majority communities to accommodate the genuine concerns and address grievances of minority communities compelled the latter to strive for political independence to preserve their ethno-cultural identity and ensure their economic prosperity (Sobhan, 1998, pp.7–8).

Primordial attachments and ethno-religious nationalistic feelings are still strong in the region. Both neofunctionalists and intergovernmentalists share the assumption that strong nationalism inhibits growth of regional integration. Naqash while highlighting the obstacles to the growth of regionalism in South Asia had depicted regional conditions in these words:

South Asian states are ascriptive in character owing to low level of socio-cultural and economic conditions. Consequently, their regional policies have been naturally influenced by their religious and linguistic traditions. The ethnic and cultural diaspora in the region where minorities are scattered under the jurisdiction of different states provides a readymade potential for sparking off fanatical outbursts and turmoil (1994, p.103).

South Asia is a conflict-ridden region and these conflicts are likely to escalate within and between regional states in the future. Johnson has identified “four areas” that could generate conflicts in the region. These potential areas of conflict include: perceived cultural threats; the challenge to Indian hegemony; resources and; environmental problems. He maintained that the “centrifugal forces of separatism” are likely to increase in the twenty-first century (Johnson, 2006, pp.232–4).

Under the prevailing conditions, the national elites of SACs are likely to strive more to preserve their national identities and focus on making efforts for more domestic control and national integration. Due to absence of any significant movement backed by some major segment of society in SACs, it

seems unlikely that ruling elites of regional states would take interest or make serious efforts for regional integration on the pattern of EU which involves transfer of sovereignty from member states to a central or supranational authority. Bhatta has rightly observed that South Asia lacks sense of “regionness” due to the prevailing ideological, socio-cultural and political divisions, and existence of inter–and–intra–state conflicts rooted in cultural and religious beliefs and antagonistic relations among regional states which mostly pursue independent and uncoordinated policies. Under these circumstances, the regional integration in South Asia on European pattern seems impossible (Bhatta, 2004, pp.11–5).

CONCLUSION

South Asia is religiously, socio-culturally, ideologically, politically and economically diverse region and the regional states are also heterogeneous in several respects. The region remained politically divided through most of its history and there exist no precedent of voluntary integration in the region. It was united into a single political unit by military means thrice in the history: first in the hands of Maurya Dynasty; then by Muslim rulers and; lastly by the British Empire. Both Gupta-Asoka Dynasty and the Muslim rulers had shown lot of accommodation towards their local subjects which was main reason of their success to hold on to power. The British had united the region into a single administrative, political and economic unit through their iron rule. As they were ready to depart, the communal divisions came to the fore and Indian sub-continent had to be partitioned into Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India. The leadership of AINC wanted to retain the unity of British India but their inability to accommodate the concerns of smaller communities particular Muslims led to the partition of India.

The fears among Muslim of their political alienation, cultural domination and economic exploitation in the hands of majority Hindus were the main reasons behind the partition. The factors that had caused partition of India in 1947 continued to threaten the territorial integrity of SACs in various shape in the post-independence era. The fear of Indian domination compounded

with its hegemonic tendencies against SRCs served as centrifugal force pushing other states away from core India in the region. Some SRCs were heavily dependent on India for different reasons which served as a negative factor for regional integration. All SACs also face challenges of nation-building as they are confronted with one kind of uprising, insurgency and separatist movement or another due to which they could hardly take serious interest in any effort for political integration of South Asia.

Intra-and-inter-state conflicts continue to haunt regional states, and centrifugal forces of disintegration are stronger than any significant movement for integration of South Asia. These conflicts and disintegrative movements are likely to increase in the years to come and would exacerbate the already tenuous relations among regional states. The prevailing socio-cultural conflicts, religious and ideological divides, asymmetrical economic conditions and strife-ridden political trends show a drift further away from any prospect of unification of regional states. Under these circumstances, it can be safely concluded that the regional integration in South Asia on EU pattern is not possible in the near future.

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