

**“FIFTH- GENERATION WARFARE AND THE BATTLE OF NARRATIVES ON  
SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS (2014-2022): A CASE STUDY OF INDIA AND  
PAKISTAN”**

*By*

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## THESIS/DISSERTATION AND DEFENCE APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have read the following thesis, examined the defense, are satisfied with the overall exam performance, and recommend the thesis to the Faculty of Social Sciences for acceptance.

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I also understand that if evidence of plagiarism is found in my thesis dissertation at any stage, even after the award of degree, the work may be cancelled and the degree revoked.

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to God the Almighty, who is my creator, my support system, my inspiration, and my source of strength during this MPhil program. I dedicate this work to my parents, who have always loved me without condition and whose positive examples have inspired me to work hard for the things I aim to achieve in my life. I also dedicate this thesis to all of my friends, who have continuously offered me support and inspiration throughout this program. I am grateful to all of you beyond words; having you in my life is a true blessing.



## Abstract

*This thesis investigates the war of narratives on social media between India and Pakistan and its impact on their national images. In the present era, warfare techniques have changed, and new methods of warfare, such as media propaganda warfare, the war of narratives, and fifth-generation warfare, are filling the gaps. In the fifth-generation warfare, countries attempt to undermine each other through information operations rather than military conflicts. Countries are waging ideological, political, social, economic, digital, and cultural wars against one another. The current scenario involves narratives building on social media, which has become a powerful tool. Social media platforms, including Twitter and YouTube, have become influential tools of fifth-generation warfare, used to drive radicalization and violence through disinformation campaigns. In the case of India and Pakistan, they have been engaged in continuous disinformation operations against each other. Since 2014, India has adopted various warfare means against Pakistan. Various Indian groups continue to publish narratives to damage the image of Pakistan in the international community. On the other hand, Pakistan has developed a comprehensive counter-strategy to overcome fifth-generation warfare. In light of the aforementioned context, this thesis thoroughly analyzes how the war of narratives between India and Pakistan evolved using social media tools. The thesis follows a timeline between 2014 and 2022, considering three events for assessment: Terrorism, the Pulwama attack, and the demise of the Imran Khan government. While only two platforms, namely YouTube and Twitter, are chosen to assess these events, this thesis also presents some recommendations regarding how Pakistan can manage the war of narratives towards India in the future.*

## INTRODUCTION

This study aims to analyze the war between Pakistan and India on social media and its impact on the national image of both countries. India and Pakistan are two neighboring countries in South Asia with a history of territorial disputes, armed conflicts, and political tensions. Currently, both countries are engaged in a fifth-generation war, which has a profound impact on their national images, leading to polarization, divisions, and influencing the international narrative and opinions. When addressing terrorism, it is a grave issue that affects nations worldwide. Pakistan faces this issue, unfortunately, various groups misuse it. Extremist ideologies and propaganda through social media incite violence and promote terrorism. India has labeled Pakistan as a terrorist state and has been linked to numerous attacks in Pakistan. Additionally, India is suspected of supporting terrorism in Pakistan by aiding Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), an organization operating out of Afghanistan that spreads terror and threats throughout Pakistan. According to a study published by the UN in 2020, several foreign terrorist fighters from India traveled to Afghanistan and joined ISIL-Khorasan<sup>1</sup>. India posts fabricated content on social media platforms, suggesting that Pakistan itself promotes terrorism and provides training to terrorists.

The assessment focuses on three major events: the Pulwama assault, terrorism, and the demise of the Imran Khan Government, analyzing the social media war between India and Pakistan on YouTube and Twitter. The Pulwama attack stands out as the most significant terror incident to have struck Jammu and Kashmir. It resulted in the tragic deaths of 44 CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) members, with numerous others targeted in the Pulwama district. The responsibility for this attack was attributed to Jaish-e-Mohammed. The incident raises critical questions concerning the security landscape, India's relationship with Pakistan, and the national security framework of the country<sup>2</sup>. Regarding the social media engagement, it was found that approximately 53% of tweets on Twitter favored India, while 58% were in favor of Pakistan. A substantial number of tweets originated from both Indian and Pakistani accounts, with nearly 95%

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<sup>1</sup> Tahama Asad, "Doval Doctrine Distorting Pakistan's image: An Appraisal," *The Pakistan Armed Forces Magazine* (October 2022): 3, doi: <https://www.hilal.gov.pk/eng-article/detail/NjY2MQ==.html>

<sup>2</sup> Bharat Kharnad, Brahma Chellaney and G Parthasarathy, "Responding to the Pulwama Terror Attack", *Centre for policy research*, February 19, 2019, <https://cprindia.org/responding-to-the-pulwama-terror-attack/>

of tweeters perceiving India as Pakistan's primary adversary<sup>3</sup>. Additionally, about 75% identified Pakistan as India's foremost enemy.

When it comes to the Imran Khan government, India-Pakistan ties under his administration have reached their lowest point ever in terms of bilateral relationships. Every year, there are more ceasefire violations along the Line of Control. The bilateral relationship between India and Pakistan continued to deteriorate in 2018 and 2019, with cross-border economic connections suspended and official avenues of communication remaining closed<sup>4</sup>. This was due to increased political and military tensions between the two nations. After Pakistan dismissed the Indian High Commissioner in August 2019 in protest over the Indian government's effective revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status, diplomatic ties between India and Pakistan further worsened. Numerous tweets from the Indian side criticized the Imran Khan government, alleging that Imran Khan is an American agent working for different organizations involved in illegal activities. In the event of a conflict between India and Pakistan, the international community also shows little interest in mediating, and previous efforts in this regard have been unsuccessful for both nations.

Warfare has undergone numerous stages of development, from first-generation warfare through seventh-generation warfare, with fifth-generation warfare currently being the most prevalent<sup>5</sup>. At present, the use of traditional military tactics is waning, while fifth-generation warfare, information warfare, media propaganda warfare, and the battle of narratives are filling the void<sup>6</sup>. The earliest indications of fifth-generation warfare were discovered in 1920 when Russian army leaders used a strategy called camouflaged war. This strategy encompassed a variety of measures meant to

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<sup>3</sup> Bharat Kharnad, Brahma Chellaney and G Parthasarathy, "Responding to the Pulwama Terror Attack", *Centre for policy research*, February 19, 2019, <https://cprindia.org/responding-to-the-pulwama-terror-attack/>

<sup>4</sup> Tunvi Kulkarni, "India- Pakistan relations under Imran khan and Modi 2.0: The lowest point in a decade," *South Asian Voices* , November 29, 2019, <https://southasianvoices.org/india-pakistan-relations-under-imran-khan-and-modi-2-0-the-lowest-point-in-a-decade/>

<sup>5</sup> Fatma Twfiak, "The Development of Warfare Through Seven Generations: Cyberattacks and impacts on international Relations," *The History of Cyberwar* (May 2020): 22, doi : <https://uca.edu/politicalscience/cyber-security-and-international-relations-csir-project/globalhacking-groups/>

<sup>6</sup> Irfan Ahmad Tahir and Manzoor Khan Afridi, "Fifth Generations Warfare (5GW)-The New Dimensions of Enemies Launched Warfare and Security Concern of Pakistan," *Global Regional Review (GRR)* IV, no. I ( January 2019): 259, URL: [http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/grr.2019\(IV-I\).27](http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/grr.2019(IV-I).27)

deceive the enemy and sway Western public opinion. Conflict in the fifth-generation is unpredictable. The concept of fifth-generation warfare is not synchronized; there is no optimum retaliation, no engagement spectrum, and the enemy is not clearly defined.

Fifth-generation warfare heavily relies on narrative construction, and the terminology "narrative building" is directly linked to fifth-generation warfare. The development of a narrative takes time; it does not happen overnight<sup>7</sup>. Building a narrative on social media is a potent weapon right now. To further advance their objectives in the public eye, the majority of political and social organizations today focus on creating narratives on social media. Social media has evolved into a powerful narrative-building tool in the age of the internet, enabling users of all ages to participate in the process. Narrative development on social media is done extremely strategically to draw in a wide audience. The storylines are crafted in a way that allows emotions and sentiments to transcend the screens. Building a political narrative, for instance, places greater emphasis on persuading people to embrace a political objective than anything else. If politics is fragile, the opposition can readily engage in fifth-generation warfare. Two provinces that exemplify the most political instability are FATA and Balochistan<sup>8</sup>.

The concept of fifth-generation warfare is closely linked to Western and European traditions, among other cultural elements<sup>9</sup>. The younger generation, in particular, develops strong feelings of loyalty as a result of their engagement in fifth-generation struggles. Both political and cultural factors play crucial roles. The exertion of political influence over other nations serves as a means for one nation to achieve cultural dominance over another. Campaigns are being initiated on both national and global scales to enhance the cultural relevance of Eurocentrism. One of the objectives of fifth-generation warfare is the establishment of cultural dominance. Following the cultural

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<sup>7</sup> Sumaiyah Taif, "Media: Building Narratives," *Pakistan institute of Developmental Economics*, January 1, 2022, <https://pide.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/par-vol3i1-16-media-building-narratives.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Zohaib Anjum, "How Pakistan combat with 5<sup>th</sup> Generation warfare," filmed September 2, 2021 in Utica, NY, TEDx video, 31:16, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWJlB-VN2\\_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWJlB-VN2_U)

<sup>9</sup> Javeria Jahangir and Naheed Bashir, "Fifth Generation Warfare: Response Strategy of Pakistan," *Academic Journal of Social Sciences (AJSS)* Vol. 6, Issue 2 (April – June 2022):76, URL: <http://www.ojs.lgu.edu.pk/index.php/ajss/article/view/1753/1271>

dimension, fifth-generation warfare also impacts the religious aspect. It manipulates people's perceptions to present a distorted view of the world and politics.

Fifth-generation warfare employs religious sentiments and cultural symbols to outwit the opposition. It aims to divide and control people, for instance, by creating schisms on ideological and religious grounds. Problems might also arise from ethnic and nationalist divisions. Another significant factor affected by fifth-generation warfare is unpopular leadership. When a leader is unable to effectively communicate, accept responsibility for problems, and doesn't listen to their followers, the public will dislike that type of leader. By using fifth-generation warfare tactics, the enemy has the opportunity to incite the populace against that leader, resulting in a hateful narrative being built towards them.

The media is essential and fundamental in notifying the public about significant events<sup>10</sup>. Media influences people's opinions and acts as a source of knowledge. The media, while sometimes acting as the government's mouthpiece, also reflects the nation's collective sentiments. Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that the information spread by the media can encourage change among people as a whole and also legitimize the state's activities, leading to broader social change. The state faces numerous challenges on various levels due to the rapid growth of social media as an influencer and creator of "narrative." Despite the fact that fewer than 5% of Pakistanis use platforms other than Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook, the detrimental impacts of fake news, interconnections with electronic media, and widespread smartphone use are all easily exploitable. Consequently, social media can be employed as a ready-made instrument to promote any kind of narrative, whether it is pro- or anti-state in nature.

People from India and Pakistan have been engaging in a virtual conflict on social media, which has emerged as the latest battleground between the two countries. On one side, online groups and personal websites have occasionally helped clarify misunderstandings and advance cooperative cultural activities aimed at promoting the peaceful coexistence and advancement of people. On the other hand, these groups have also fostered animosity among themselves. Examining the ideal and actual roles of media, particularly new media like social media, as well as the strength and potential

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<sup>10</sup> Sheikh Ghulam Jilani, "National Narrative Building: Role of Academia, Think Tanks and Media," *ISSA Papers* vol.12, (December 2020): <https://issrapapers.ndu.edu.pk/site/article/view/48>

of journalism in the contemporary information era or digital era, is necessary to comprehend the dynamics of the relationship between Pakistan and India. It's critical to consider whether social media is widening or narrowing the gap between India and Pakistan.

The false news campaign, widely disseminated on social media in India, was a meticulously planned operation aimed at promoting an "alternative narrative." Its specific objective was to undermine Pakistan's effectiveness in combating terrorism. The recent EU Disinformation Lab report unveiled an elaborate network constituting India's fifth-generation warfare effort against Pakistan, a revelation of particular significance<sup>11</sup>. According to the research, numerous fictitious NGOs and media outlets spearheaded a deliberate propaganda offensive against Pakistan, with the intention of tarnishing its global standing and perception. The organized propaganda campaign against Pakistan, which commenced in 2005, was found to involve 750 counterfeit websites financed by India, spanning 119 different nations. Additionally, the Srivastava Group of India provided support to these fake news organizations and websites. Asian News Agency in India also contributed to the dissemination of these false reports and propaganda pieces. Notably, ten of these fabricated NGOs had direct ties to the Srivastava family.

Since the partition, numerous unresolved issues have complicated the relationship between Pakistan and India. Despite bilateral discussions aimed at identifying common ground and advancing peace, a persistent cold war dynamic has endured in various forms<sup>12</sup>. Several crucial tips are in order for Pakistan to manage the ongoing narrative battle with India. The West-Indian nexus has adversely affected Pakistan, contributing to the nation's current predicament<sup>13</sup>. However, Pakistan is well-equipped and capable of overcoming the difficulties presented by fifth-generation warfare. Pakistan needs a comprehensive counter-strategy that involves all stakeholders at the federal and provincial levels to increase the effectiveness of its strategy against India. Currently,

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<sup>11</sup> Gary Machado Alexandre Alaphilippe et al., "Indian Chronicles: Deep Dive into a 15 year operation targeting the EU and UN to serve Indian Interests," *Indian Chronicles*, December 9, 2020, <https://www.disinfo.eu/publications/indian-chronicles-deep-dive-into-a-15-year-operation-targeting-the-eu-and-un-to-serve-indian-interests/>

<sup>12</sup> Javeria Karim and Dr. Shahid Hussain, "An Analysis of Viewers' Perception Regarding Role of News Media in Promoting Peace Between Pakistan and India," *Media Role and Peace Between India and Pakistan*, Volume 03-Issue 02, (July-December 2019): 38, Doi: <https://doi.org/10.36968/JPDC-V03-I02-02>

<sup>13</sup> Muhammad Ashraf Nadeem et al., "Fifth- Generation warfare and its challenges to Pakistan," *Pak. Journal of Int'L Affairs*, Vol 4, Issue 1, (March 2021) : 230, <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v4i1.118>

Pakistan is at war, being the target of fifth-generation warfare by its adversaries. These adversaries are attempting to divide Pakistani society along ethnic and religious lines. Pakistan should take decisive action to thwart these plots, prevent further societal fragmentation, and address sectarian and ethnic conflicts. The Pakistani government must take strong actions to overcome these threats.

According to Alex Stamos, a former top security officer at Facebook, he said India and Pakistan have been conducting ongoing information operations against one another for so many years<sup>14</sup>. This situation might be a circumstance in which low-intensity invisible war acts as a destabilizing force between the two nations. Future efforts to reduce the impact of fake news will be exceedingly challenging. Media outlets must also realize that they need to update their approach to gathering information from various social media sites<sup>15</sup>. The triangulation of information is a standard journalism practice. From this point forward, there is no room for complacency on the side of major media organizations, and there is nothing wrong with refusing to air any content that originates from dubious sources and whose accuracy has not been verified according to the resources.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Both India and Pakistan are engaged in fifth-generation warfare against each other, utilizing social media platforms like Twitter and YouTube to manipulate their respective national images and reputations. In fifth-generation warfare, nations seek to undermine each other through digital operations, involving ideological, political, social, and cultural battles. Twitter and YouTube exemplify how social media sites have transformed into potent instruments of fifth-generation warfare, fostering radicalism and inciting violence. India and Pakistan have been waging ongoing information operations not only within South Asia but also on a global scale. India aims to isolate Pakistan on the international stage, employing three major events – terrorism, the Pulwama attack, and the fall of Imran Khan – between 2014 and 2022 to weaken Pakistan internally. India

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<sup>14</sup> Kate Fazzini, “In India-Pakistan conflict, there’s a long-simmering online war, and some very good hackers on both sides,” *CNBC*, February 27, 2019, <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/02/27/india-pakistan-online-war-includes-hacks-social-media.html>

<sup>15</sup> Fahad Nabeel, “Weaponisation of Social Media and Indo-Pakistan Conflict,” *Centre for Strategic and Contemporary Research*, April 3, 2019, <https://cscr.pk/explore/themes/defense-security/weaponisation-of-social-media-and-indo-pakistan-conflict/>

consistently spreads narratives to distort the global perception of Pakistan. In response, Pakistan has adopted anti-propaganda strategies to counter Indian misinformation. This study concentrates on the narrative struggle between Pakistan and India, as executed through social media platforms, with the intention of tarnishing each other's reputations.

### **Significance of research**

This thesis holds significant importance as it leverages social media platforms such as Twitter and YouTube to reframe threats stemming from fifth-generation warfare in the context of Pakistan and India. The study delves into the transformation of security concepts from conventional to non-conventional paradigms and explores how Pakistan's and India's political, social, ideological, and cultural practices impact their respective reputations and images. Pakistan bears considerable repercussions from India's engagement in fifth-generation warfare, which in turn jeopardizes regional peace and stability. The shift from traditional combat approaches to utilizing social media platforms for disseminating narratives resembles virtual ammunition. The primary objective of this thesis is to enlighten readers about the clash between Indian and Pakistani narratives on social media platforms. Additionally, it aspires to establish and advance theories in this specific field of study. This thesis is poised to function as a policy paper for Pakistan, serving as an alert to India's utilization of fifth-generation warfare indicators to manipulate Pakistan's internal and external security. It aims to assist Pakistan in formulating countermeasures against India's tactics.

### **Objectives of the study**

To understand how war of narratives evolved between India and Pakistan.

To understand how India and Pakistan inflict damaging impact to each other's' national image.

To elucidate how should Pakistan manage war of narratives towards India.



## Research Questions

How has the war of narratives evolved between India and Pakistan?

How do both India and Pakistan inflict damage on each other by using social media Platforms?

How should Pakistan manage the war of narratives with India in the future?

## Theoretical framework

The constructivist approach best highlights the significance of ideas, identity, constitutive rules, norms, culture, history, and the social structure of state interaction for understanding and analyzing the India-Pakistan relationship. According to social constructivism, the world we live in is one that we have created on our own<sup>16</sup>. As a result, any reality we experience or understand about the world is socially produced. According to social constructivism, a variety of elements, including the interaction of agency and structure, identities and interests, and social norms, contribute to the social creation of this reality<sup>17</sup>.

Constructivist theory has been developed by numerous authors, among them John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Jerome Bruner, Lev Vygotsky, Ernst von Glasersfeld, and Alexander Wendt<sup>18</sup>. With the subsequent contributions of Peter J. Katzenstein and Alexander Wendt, constructivism gained even more popularity<sup>19</sup>. The foundation of constructivism lies in the idea that individuals actively create

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<sup>16</sup> Sulman Ali, “Pakistan –India Relations through the Prism of Constructivism,” *geo politics and diplomacy*, June 11, 2015, <https://southasianvoices.org/pakistan-india-relations-through-the-prism-of-constructivism/>

<sup>17</sup> Western Governors University, “What is Constructivism,” WGU, last updated May 27, 2020, <https://www.wgu.edu/blog/what-constructivism2005.html#close>

<sup>18</sup> UBC Masters of Educational Technology program ETEC 512, “Constructivism in Education,” UBC, last updated September- December, 2015, <http://constructivism512.weebly.com/meet-the-theorists.html>

<sup>19</sup> Sulman Ali, “Pakistan –India Relations through the Prism of Constructivism,” *geo politics and diplomacy*, June 11, 2015, <https://southasianvoices.org/pakistan-india-relations-through-the-prism-of-constructivism/>

and construct their own knowledge, and that one's experiences as a learner shape their perception of the world<sup>20</sup>.

"In essence, students build upon their prior knowledge with new information, using it as a foundation. As a result, each person's learning is unique to their own experiences. Based on the foundation of past experiences, we can construct new ideas. Social constructivism emphasizes the collaborative nature of learning in education. How people interact with one another, their culture, and society at large shapes knowledge<sup>21</sup>."

Alexander Wendt's claims suggest that constructivism can be employed to analyze how propaganda and misinformation impact the way individuals form their identities and values, as well as how political discourse develops<sup>22</sup>. The complex relationship between Pakistan and India demonstrates that there exist more profound disparities between the two countries than mere physical animosities like territorial disputes and nuclear weapons<sup>23</sup>. Instances such as the dispute between Urdu and Hindi prior to the partition, the differing Muslim and Hindu perspectives on cow slaughter, and the ideological, theological, and political variances, including the violence during the 1947 India-Pakistan war, illustrate these non-material divisions.

Social construction is significantly influenced by social media on both sides. The primary goal of social constructivism is to demonstrate how individuals and communities participate in creating their own perceptions of social reality. The constructivist theory supports the notion that change can only come about through the dissemination of ideas and the globalization of norms. Media always plays a role in how identities are constructed. The administrations of both countries, India and Pakistan, currently keep an eye on everything being discussed on social media to gauge and

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<sup>20</sup> Western Governors University, "What is Constructivism," WGU, last updated May 27, 2020, <https://www.wgu.edu/blog/what-constructivism2005.html#close>

<sup>21</sup> UBC Masters of Educational Technology program ETEC 512, "Constructivism in Education," UBC, last updated September- December, 2015, <http://constructivism512.weebly.com/meet-the-theorists.html>

<sup>22</sup> Western Governors University, "What is Constructivism," WGU, last updated May 27, 2020, <https://www.wgu.edu/blog/what-constructivism2005.html#close>

<sup>23</sup> Sulman Ali, "Pakistan –India Relations through the Prism of Constructivism," *South Asian Voices*, June 11, 2015, <https://southasianvoices.org/pakistan-india-relations-through-the-prism-of-constructivism/>

monitor public opinion. There seems to be an ongoing social media war, particularly on hot topics like the Line of Control tension (LOC) and the Balochistan conflict, which are heavily debated on social media.

Social media armies on both the Indian and Pakistani sides are known for producing YouTube videos and disseminating them through Facebook and Twitter. As YouTube stands out as the most popular and successful video sharing platform globally, creating YouTube videos becomes a pivotal strategy in winning the social media war. However, the Pakistani government prohibited the use of YouTube due to the posting of blasphemous information. This decision drew significant condemnation from Pakistani society, leaving Facebook and Twitter as the primary platforms for social media warfare. Observing the comments under any YouTube video allows us to easily analyze the prevailing sentiments on both sides. Participants from both factions tend to place extreme blame on each other, often resorting to nasty rhetoric. Over a three-year span, it was noted that 86% of the anti-Muslim content on Twitter originated from India<sup>24</sup>. This content not only criticizes individuals but also delves into the primary sources of conflict, namely, "religion and ideologies."

The spread of the Hindutva ideology is another factor contributing to the antagonism. With the rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its Hindutva ideology from 2014 to 2019, the already strained relations between India and Pakistan have deteriorated further. The BJP has implemented discriminatory policies towards Pakistan in an attempt to transform India into a Hindu Rashtra. Modi's "Moditva" and Hindutva's primary focus is on leveraging social media platforms to disseminate misinformation about Pakistan. India's main objective is to tarnish Pakistan's reputation and image on social, political, cultural, and ideological fronts.

However, the identities of the two states, India and Pakistan, have not remained constant and unchangeable. The Hindutva movement criticized the Congress's pseudo-secularism for favoring religious minorities, particularly Muslims, at the expense of Hindus. It sought to "re-imagine" India as a masculine Hindu Rashtra, signaling the beginning of the decline of India's secularism in

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<sup>24</sup> CJ Werleman, "Twitter hate: 86percent of anti- Muslim content comes from US, UK, India," *TRTWorld*, 2017-2019, <https://www.trtworld.com/opinion/twitter-hate-86-percent-of-anti-muslim-content-comes-from-us-uk-india-60801>

1980<sup>25</sup>. India's conception of "self" and "other" was also increasingly influenced by this discourse. With India's identity being re-articulated on the premise of Akhand Bharat one nation, one people, and one culture narratives were used to portray Hindus as a homogeneous in-group, while considering all other communities living within India, such as Muslims and Christians, as heterogeneous communities. In terms of criticism, the "Muslim question" helped to revive Hindu nationalism. Conversely, in Pakistan, the Hindu Rashtra was constructed in opposition to the Muslim and Pakistani "other."

The establishment of BJP governments in 1998 increased the power of Hindutva. Nevertheless, the constraining effects of India's liberal-democratic frameworks forced Hindu nationalist parties to compromise their ambitions to maintain their status and power. India's self-conception has been defined by conflicts, agreements, and even convergences between secular and Hindu nationalist narratives, rather than by the fabrication of a Hindu Rashtra.

In the 1980s, Pakistan also underwent a "re-imagining" as Islamization efforts, particularly under the Zia-ul-Haq regime, aimed to reshape Pakistan's identity in accordance with orthodox Islam. Jihad and madrassas were used to recast Jinnah and the anti-colonial movement as Islamists who sought to establish an Islamic state. This symbolized the new and innovative narratives about the nation's founding. Additionally, maintaining Pakistan's "ideological frontiers" and safeguarding its Islamic identity became essential for attaining stability and national cohesion, according to Pakistan's self-perception. According to Zia-ul-Haq, the security of the nation's borders is not as vital as preserving Pakistan's philosophy and its Islamic identity, Islamization has also been seen as essential to achieving Pakistan's primary goal of distinguishing itself from the Indian community, as evident from the concern that "if Pakistan does not become and remain aggressively Islamic, it will become India again<sup>26</sup>."

While material reasons may have some bearing on the relationship, it is crucial to understand the non-material and often historical variables that shape India-Pakistan ties. The antagonism existing

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<sup>25</sup> Atif Shafique, "The Case for Constructivism In Analyzing the India Pakistan Conflict," *E-International Relations*, (September 2011): 38, <https://www.e-ir.info/2011/09/07/the-case-for-constructivism-in-analysing-the-india-pakistan-conflict/>

<sup>26</sup> Ziafat Zishan et al., "The rise of Hindutva: Implications for Indian Minorities," *Pakistan Journal of Social Research*, Vol. 4, No. 2, (June 2022): 932, [www.pjsr.com.pk](http://www.pjsr.com.pk)

at the political and military levels has received extensive discussion, but what is most neglected are the social and grassroots levels. People-to-people interactions and regional and global politics are inextricably linked in today's world. Yet, when it comes to the Pakistan-India relationship, this fact is frequently overlooked. When used positively, social media can play a significant role in setting the stage for the development of stronger bilateral ties between the two nations. Otherwise, it adopts a war journalism technique with a clear hidden motive.

Constructivism might not be the primary method for explaining the relationship between Pakistan and India, but it can certainly be employed to cultivate strong connections, especially at the social level. The establishment of shared standards, concepts, and beliefs can assist people in getting along better, even amidst political and military conflicts. Alongside enhancing people-to-people ties, this will contribute to creating a more stable South Asian region.

Just as individuals do, states can vary in their identities and pursuits based on their interactions with other states. The social construction of these identities and interests can be changed, leading states to shape their interests to align with their identity. Taking the example of larger and smaller states: the identity of a stronger and bigger state indicates a set of interests revolving around worldwide supremacy, whereas a smaller state will prioritize its interests in order to survive<sup>27</sup>. Integral to constructivism are social norms; states adapt their behavior according to their identity and these social norms. The concept of appropriateness is also crucial to constructivism, wherein a nation behaves in a certain way because it is deemed proper behavior.

## **Literature Review**

This study is unique as it examines the relationship between social media platforms and fifth-generation warfare. The thesis discusses several significant events that occurred between 2014 and 2022. While there has been extensive research conducted on this topic, the main emphasis of this study is on the social media platforms (such as Twitter and YouTube) that fuel state conflicts and influence public perception, subsequently damaging the image and status of the states.

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<sup>27</sup> Ziafat Zishan et al., "The rise of Hindutva: Implications for Indian Minorities," *Pakistan Journal of Social Research*, Vol. 4, No. 2, (June 2022): 932, [www.pjsr.com.pk](http://www.pjsr.com.pk)

The article titled "Fifth-Generation Warfare in Pakistan,"<sup>28</sup> written by Raashid Wali Janjua, delves into the characteristics of fifth-generation warfare. This type of warfare is defined as the sudden and unexplained outbreak of violence directed towards the outward manifestations of state power. These manifestations encompass law enforcement agencies, government buildings, financial institutions, and even the wealthier segments of private property. The root cause of fifth-generation warfare is frustration, leading to both political and economic hardships. The deprived and poor classes impose fifth-generation warfare on a state when it fails to establish order through effective governance and neglects to provide economic fairness.

Fifth-generation dangers or threats must be identified initially to be effectively countered. Alongside religious extremism, ethnic populations in Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan, Sindh, and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa face perils arising from political, intellectual, cultural, and economic marginalization. The lack of progress, limited access to healthcare and education, and high unemployment rates all contribute to the buildup of frustration, which can erupt in violent acts of disobedience against the state. The Baloch Liberation Front, led by Allah Nazar Baloch, and the MQM, led by Altaf Hussain, were both responsible for the bloodshed resulting from these political and economic hardships. Thus, the state must institute substantial political changes that empower local citizens and work towards rectifying the economic and political inequalities faced by all marginalized groups. The core principles of our national security plan (NAP) should revolve around improving infrastructure in communications, water supply, healthcare, and education, with a primary focus on eradicating poverty. Another crucial aspect of the approach should involve adopting a zero-tolerance stance towards extremism and preventing the exploitation of individuals under the guise of religion or ethnic particularism. Additionally, a pressing issue that the state must address is the reform of outdated madrassah curricula, as well as the management of their registration and financing.

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<sup>28</sup> Raashid Wali Janjua, "Fifth-generation warfare in Pakistan," *Islamabad Policy Research Institute*, March 19, 2018, <https://ipripak.org/2018/03/19/fifth-generation-warfare-in-pakistan/>

"Analyzing the State of Digital Information Warfare Between India and Pakistan on Twitter Space"<sup>29</sup> is a piece of writing authored by Shabir Hussain, Farrukh Shahzad, and Adam Saud. In this article, the authors discuss the social media conflict between Pakistan and India on Twitter and how it has affected the public perceptions of both countries. Information warfare entails the use of information and communication technology, as well as its strategic management, to gain a competitive advantage over one's adversaries. It encompasses all techniques aimed at utilizing information to further political and military objectives. Instead of reporting on conflicts objectively, the media has encouraged jingoistic patriotism and promoted the nationalistic agendas of belligerent states. The media in both countries have been embroiled in a proxy conflict that distorts the factual and impartial reporting of events in the subcontinent. Jingoism and overt patriotic posturing are the underlying factors in all of this. Journalists, columnists, TV hosts, and analysts from each nation are diligently working to expose the bias and hypocrisy of the other. The widespread use of social media platforms provides rival groups with significant opportunities to coordinate their propaganda efforts. Many tweets contribute to fostering animosity between the two nations. For instance, Indian major Gaurav Arya tweeted, "All Pakistanis believe that their politicians are the most corrupt", however, the actual recipients of the most corrupt label in Pakistan are the #PakMilitaryMillionaires<sup>30</sup>. They plunder the populace's funds, implore the impoverished to send their sons for jihad, and yet send their own sons abroad. This tweet exemplifies the sentiment of animosity towards the Pakistan Army.

Another article titled "The Indian Hybrid Warfare Strategy: Implications for Pakistan"<sup>31</sup> is authored by Muhammad Nadeem Mirza and Summar Iqbal Babar. The authors of this article describe India's policy to isolate Pakistan internationally. Pakistan holds significant geostrategic importance as it serves as a connection between West Asia and Central Asia. Thus, any attempt to

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<sup>29</sup> Shabir Hussain et al., "Analyzing the State of Digital Information Warfare Between India and Pakistan on Twittersphere" *SAGE open*, ( July-September 2021): 11, DOI: 10.1177/21582440211031905 [journals.sagepub.com/home/sgo](https://journals.sagepub.com/home/sgo)

<sup>30</sup> Major Gaurav Arya, "Major General Gaurav Arya Twitter" July 2016,

[https://twitter.com/majorgauravarya?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/majorgauravarya?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)

<sup>31</sup> Muhammad Nadeem Mirza and Summar Iqbal Babar, "The Indian Hybrid Warfare Strategy: Implications for Pakistan," *Progressive Research Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 2 (1),( November 2020): 52, <https://shs.hal.science/halshs-03013546/file/Indian%20Hybrid%20Warfare%20Strategy%2C%20Implications%20for%20Pakistan.pdf>

isolate Pakistan would also isolate India. India has reaped benefits from its altered policy towards Pakistan through the utilization of hybrid warfare. With both the Indian and Afghan sides attempting to engage Pakistan at its borders, Pakistan has been compelled to remobilize its troops, incurring a substantial financial cost. Speaking of Pakistan's economy, it has also been shaken by India's hybrid warfare strategy, posing a grave threat to Pakistan's economy. Additionally, this tactic introduces a new dimension to conflict. Among all of Pakistan's direct conflicts with India, this strategy has inflicted the most severe security damage on Pakistan.

Another paper titled "Hybrid Warfare against Pakistan: Academic Components"<sup>32</sup> is written by Gulshan Rafiq. In this article, the author explains how propaganda has been used in "hybrid warfare" throughout recorded human history. From the Peloponnesian Wars to the current conflicts, spreading false information and fake news has proven to be a practical way to achieve goals. When it comes to attaining state-level objectives, the ever-evolving nature of human interactions in politically charged environments, whether in times of war or diplomacy, has a significant impact on the effectiveness of strategically positioned narrative-building through propaganda.

Disinformation tactics have become a backbone in this regard, especially with the emergence of new technical developments on both the political and military strategic fronts. They are now the weapon of choice for rivals to use against one another in the twenty-first century. The use of non-state actors is notable, and over the last ten years of the twenty-first century, there has been an effective utilization of information manipulation as a fifth-generation warfare tool. This tool shapes the results of national elections and molds the global narrative into manipulated perceptions and ideas that serve one's own bias and agenda. However, a European group produced the most concerning disclosure in late 2019 and again in 2020.

A comprehensive analysis was released by the EU DisinfoLab report on Indian actions, which aggressively spread false information through an Indian mega-disinformation network targeting Pakistan's interests, reputation, and image on a worldwide scale since 2005. This type of propaganda is mostly based on decades' worth of biased academic literature and opinion that tends

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<sup>32</sup> Gulshan Rafiq, "Hybrid warfare against Pakistan: Academic Components," *Islamabad Policy Research Institute*, January 13, 2021, <https://ipripak.org/2021/01/13/hybrid-warfare-against-pakistan-academic-components/>



to favor Pakistan's powerful institutions. Additionally, false information is used to weaken Pakistan's worldwide reputation. The Pakistan Army and its intelligence agency have recently continued to be of particular interest to these disinformation campaigns by the pro-India influence networks. Their goals are solely to delegitimize Pakistan.

Furthermore, another article titled "Balochistan and Fifth-Generation Warfare and the Role of External Powers"<sup>33</sup> by Muhammad Ashraf Nadeem Baloch, Dr. Ghulam Mustafa, Dr. Allauddin Kakar, and Sher Ali Kakar, exposes the authors' perspective. They assert that India's detrimental intentions have now been unveiled to the public. The notion that India supports insurgency in Balochistan is no longer concealed. The country has been providing assistance to Balochistani insurgent organizations to propagate terrorism in the region. Leaders of the Baloch insurgency have repeatedly acknowledged receiving assistance from India. The residence of the representative of the Balochistan Liberation Organization in India since 2009 has been disclosed. Pakistan has accused India of using its consulates in Kandahar and Jalalabad to supply arms, provide training, and offer financial backing to militant Baloch groups. Approximately 600 Baloch militants, as claimed by a senior Pakistani official a decade ago, purportedly underwent training from India's intelligence service in Afghanistan to carry out acts of terrorism in Balochistan<sup>34</sup>.

The Indian intelligence agency has been conducting covert operations for a while now, utilizing proxies and a network of terrorists that align with the hybrid definition of terrorism<sup>35</sup>. In 2009, Pakistan presented a dossier detailing RAW's involvement in terrorist activities, primarily within the province of Balochistan<sup>36</sup>. Subsequently, Pakistan frequently submitted these dossiers to the

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<sup>33</sup> Muhammad Ashraf Nadeem Baloch et al., "Balochistan and Fifth Generation Warfare: Role of External Powers," *Research gate*, Vol. 58, No2, (April-June 2021): 146, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352258800\\_Balochistan\\_and\\_Fifth\\_Generation\\_Warfare\\_Role\\_of\\_External\\_Powers](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352258800_Balochistan_and_Fifth_Generation_Warfare_Role_of_External_Powers)

<sup>34</sup> Abdul Rahman, "Media and Fifth-generation Warfare: A Case Study of Indian Disinformation Campaign against Balochistan," *Journal of Mass Communication*, Vol. 26, (November 2022): 115, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/365287935>

<sup>35</sup> Epaper, "BBC exposes India's fake media outlets that discredit Pakistan," Epaper, last updated December 11, 2020, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/756606-bbc-denudes-india-s-fake-media-outlets-to-discredit-pakistan>

<sup>36</sup> Abdul Rahman, "Media and Fifth-generation Warfare: A Case Study of Indian Disinformation Campaign against Balochistan," *Journal of Mass Communication*, Vol. 26, (November 2022): 115, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/365287935>

UN, showcasing how India's intelligence services have utilized Afghan territory to train and fund terrorists in Balochistan and the former FATA zone. Moreover, by covertly supporting insurgents and affiliated armed groups, India actively contributes to the insurgency in Balochistan. The majority of racial and religious unrest, along with the financial backing sustaining it, are often linked to India. In a video confession, Indian agent Kulbushan Jadhav acknowledged, "My goal was to meet with Baloch terrorists and carry out actions in Balochistan with their cooperation"<sup>37</sup>. The killing of Pakistani civilians resulted from these illegal acts. He clearly indicated that Pakistan's separatist movement received support from India's intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW). Throughout this process, I have come to understand that RAW is involved in actions connected to the Baloch liberation movement in Pakistan and the surrounding region<sup>38</sup>.

The article titled "Media and Fifth-Generation Warfare: A Case Study of India's Disinformation against Balochistan"<sup>39</sup> was written by Abdul Rahman. According to the author, social media has become an essential tool in fifth-generation warfare for circulating misinformation and propaganda against adversaries in the current post-truth era. The advancement of contemporary technologies, such as information technology and sophisticated communication channels, has transformed international relations. In the twenty-first century, non-state actors have also posed threats to states' abilities to wage war and engage in diplomacy. Information is now utilized to undermine governments and carry out deadly propaganda operations against foes. The primary objective of information warfare is to spread doubt and ambiguity among opponents.

Fifth-generation warfare is primarily perceived as a war of information and propaganda aimed at influencing people's perceptions and beliefs. Countries engage in information warfare using these tactics to exploit their adversary's vulnerabilities and aid in political subversion. There are

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<sup>37</sup> Abdul Rahman, "Media and Fifth-generation Warfare: A Case Study of Indian Disinformation Campaign against Balochistan," *Journal of Mass Communication*, Vol. 26, (November 2022): 115, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/365287935>

<sup>38</sup> Dawn News Paper, "Transcript of Raw agent Kulbhushans confessional statement", Dawn paper, last updated March 30, 2016, [http:// www. Dawn.com/news/1248786](http://www.Dawn.com/news/1248786)

<sup>39</sup> Abdul Rahman, "Media and Fifth-generation Warfare: A Case Study of Indian Disinformation Campaign against Balochistan," *Journal of Mass Communication*, Vol. 26, (November 2022): 115, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/365287935>

numerous fault lines, including religious divisions, ethnic differences, political disagreements, and marginalized minorities. States manipulate news, fabricate stories, and support insurgencies in fifth-generation warfare to sow uncertainty among the population. The rise of social media has ushered in new trends in warfare. Twitter and YouTube are two examples of social media platforms that are now employed in modern warfare. These platforms play a particularly active role in disseminating false information, misleading reports, and propaganda against rivals.

The book "Social Media Warfare: Equal Weapons for All,"<sup>40</sup> written by Michael Erbschloe, helps us to easily understand how social media warfare might impact a country or organization. Social media tools can now be easily used as weapons nowadays. Nation-states and governmental organizations have to contend with social media warfare. Managing the threat of social media warfare and dispelling doubts requires significant commitment and sustained focus over time. Developing the ability to defend against social media warfare attacks is essential for maintaining security. Addressing unconventional warfare methods and strategies takes time, experience, planning, determination, and dedication.

The article "Social Media: An Information Warfare"<sup>41</sup> is written by Jarred Prier. The author claims that social media platforms like Twitter and YouTube use a process to examine words, phrases, or hashtags, and produce a list of subjects arranged in terms of fame. This trend list offers a short summary of the subjects that are often discussed at any given time. A social media study conducted in 2011 found that a hot topic "will capture the attention of a large audience for a short time" and "contribute to agenda-setting mechanisms"<sup>42</sup>. Social media networking, manipulation, and heavy reliance on unverified online news sources all increase the risk of completely fabricated news items becoming widely accepted in the public mind. This phenomenon is referred to as fake news. Fake news encompasses more than just items with weak sources and weak headlines. A specific type of

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<sup>40</sup> Michael Erbschloe, *social media warfare equal weapons for all*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2020), 327, eBook Collection, <https://www.routledge.com/Social-Media-Warfare-Equal-Weapons-for-All/Erbschloe/p/book/9780367657987>.

<sup>41</sup> Jarred Prier, "Social media and information warfare", *Strategic society quarterly : SSQ; Maxwell Air Force Base* Vol.11, Iss.4, (Winter 2017): 85, <https://www.proquest.com/trade-journals/commanding-trend-social-media-as-information/docview/1972152688/se-2>

<sup>42</sup> Jarred Prier, "Social media and information warfare", *Strategic society quarterly : SSQ; Maxwell Air Force Base* Vol.11, Iss.4, (Winter 2017): 85, <https://www.proquest.com/trade-journals/commanding-trend-social-media-as-information/docview/1972152688/se-2>

propaganda, known as fake news, consists of a deceitful story presented as news. This is especially risky on social media, as exaggerated fake news articles spread like wildfire.

The article titled "Information War: India's Disinformation Campaign against Pakistan,"<sup>43</sup> written by Rahat Iqbal and Murad Ali, asserts that India's disinformation campaign against Pakistan is not a recent development. Since gaining independence, India has employed a variety of tactics to destabilize the internal stability of Pakistan. Social media is used to disseminate disinformation and false information, while propaganda has been historically utilized by India. Substantial evidence suggests that India is funding anti-state organizations in Balochistan through espionage activities in the region. The proliferation of false information about Pakistan on social media is deeply concerning, given the significant number of social media users in the country, capable of influencing its internal socio-political structure.

Moreover, India spreads baseless information and unfounded rumors about Pakistan, alleging that it sponsors terrorism in the region. India claims that Pakistan supports terrorists in Afghanistan, providing them with weapons and training. India's primary objective is to tarnish Pakistan's reputation within the global community. This article highlights how India undermines Pakistan's political strength both domestically and internationally by disseminating fabricated information on social media platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, and other channels. One of India's central aims in its communication campaign against Pakistan is to depict the nation as a supporter of terrorism, a defaulter, cheater, and an indifferent entity in the eyes of the world.

The article titled "Image of India and Pakistan in the Digital Age: A Comparative Study on Tweets"<sup>44</sup> was authored by Dr. Muhammad Riaz Raza, Dr. Syed Abdul Siraj, and Muhammad Usman Saeed. Pakistan and India are two significant South Asian neighbors possessing nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, the history of the two countries' uneven foreign relations has been hostile and unfriendly. Since 1947, both nations have engaged in four conventional wars, exacerbating

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<sup>43</sup> Rahat Iqbal, Murad Ali, "Information war: India's disinformation campaign against Pakistan," *Journal of Xi'an Shiyu University, Natural Science Edition*, Vol. 18, Issue 12, (December 2022): 931, <https://ciss.org.pk/information-war-indias-disinformation-campaign-against-pakistan/>

<sup>44</sup> Dr. Muhammad Riaz Raza et al., "Image of India and Pakistan in Digital Age: A Comparative Study on Tweets," *International Journal of Distance Education and E- Learning (IJDEEL)*, Volume VI-, Issue I, (December 2020): 185, : <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348785829>

their relationship. The influence of the media on international relations is enormous. To assess a country's international standing, it is crucial to examine how states and nations are perceived. The authors of this article investigated and compared how Pakistan and India are portrayed in tweets. In news tweets, both Pakistan and India receive unfavorable coverage. However, in contrast to India, Pakistan appears to have a worse reputation in the eyes of international news organizations and the public when it comes to the coverage of peace and conflict concerns. Both nations should take action to create a compelling strategy for building and promoting their favorable online reputations.

The article "The Influence of Social Media on the Design of the National Image in the Context of Globalization"<sup>45</sup> is authored by Minggang Yang and Hongling Wan. A number of methods for distributing information have reportedly emerged globally due to the rapid spread of mobile internet, the quick advancement of science and technology, and various other factors. The role of social media as the primary vehicle for information dissemination is also highly prominent. The process of globalization has been accelerated by the speedy and convenient transmission of information, bringing nations around the world closer together. In contrast, the pace of information dissemination is also increasing. Today, information is being shared between various nations in the fields of economics, politics, and culture. The strength of a nation's image will directly impact its ability to express itself and compete in the global community. As a result, the construction of the national image is becoming increasingly significant as a component of the country's "soft power."

The construction of a country's national image will be more important than ever in the current accelerating process of globalization, as globalization can significantly impact a country's influence in the international community and its freedom of speech. With the advancement of network technology and the evolving ecological context of media communication, social media will inevitably assume greater importance as a tool for shaping the nation's image.

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<sup>45</sup> Minggang Yang and Hongling, "The Influence of Social Media on the Design of the National Image in the Globalization Context," *Social computing and social media*, (June 22, 2016): 246, doi: [10.1007/978-3-319-39910-2\\_22](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-39910-2_22)

The book "Rising Hindutva and Its Impact on the Region"<sup>46</sup> is written by Sultan Mahmood Hali. The book demonstrates in detail how political history, or history written with a political agenda in mind, distorts objective history. It creates self-fulfilling myths and generates enemies and dangers, which are used to whip up an emotional frenzy against vulnerable targets. This is done in order to avenge perceived centuries of imagined and actual humiliations against outsiders, particularly those who have long since settled and become fellow Indians, but who still adhere to the faith of their ancestors - the same ancestors who brought that faith to India. Hali draws attention to the current state of hostility in ties between Pakistan and India, spanning from Mumbai to Kashmir to Modi's ascension to power. This hostility has led to four wars, the development of nuclear weapons by both India and Pakistan, and the ongoing potential for catastrophic events if rationality does not prevail. The author accurately explains how Hindutva goals and the belief in India's destiny to reclaim all territories impact Indian foreign policy, not only in relation to Pakistan but also concerning India's other neighboring countries.

The book "Hybrid Age: International Security in the Era of Hybrid Warfare"<sup>47</sup> is written by Brin Najžer. The author claims that humanity has always sought out creative and novel ways to wage conflict, creating new types of warfare. Hybrid warfare is a novel and complicated phenomenon that has emerged over the last two decades against a backdrop of global strategic instability. Hybrid warfare presents a special challenge that seems to puzzle policymakers and security experts, while providing the actors who use it with a new way to achieve their goals in the face of long-standing Western conventional, doctrinal, and strategic superiority. Hybrid warfare differs from other forms of modern warfare in several key aspects. This book aims to develop a comprehensive theory of hybrid warfare. It not only defines the term but also contextualizes it and offers the resources necessary for observers to recognize and respond to future instances of hybrid warfare.

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<sup>46</sup> Sultan Mahmood Hali, "Rising Hindutva and its impacts on the Region," 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Islamabad: Rumi Academy, 2018), 342, *eBook collection*, [https://books.google.com.pk/books/about/Rising\\_Hindutva\\_Its\\_Impact\\_on\\_the\\_Region.html?id=Jg3ixQEACAAJ&redir\\_esc=y](https://books.google.com.pk/books/about/Rising_Hindutva_Its_Impact_on_the_Region.html?id=Jg3ixQEACAAJ&redir_esc=y)

<sup>47</sup> Brin Najžer, "The Hybrid Age: International Security in the Era of Hybrid Warfare," 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Columbus: Bloomberg publisher, 2020), 248, *eBook Collection*, doi [10.5040/9780755602544](https://doi.org/10.5040/9780755602544).

The book "Hybrid Conflicts and Information Warfare: New Labels, Old Politics" <sup>48</sup> was written by Ofer Friedman, Vitaly Kabernik, and James C. Pearce. In this book, the authors discuss their opinion on hybrid warfare and the role that information plays in today's conflicts. "Hybrid Conflicts and Information Warfare" examines these issues from the perspectives of both Western and Russian experts, considering the impact of the technological revolution of the past two decades. This revolution has significantly increased the threat posed by non-military methods of political conflict. The authors engage in a comprehensive discussion about the nature of war in the second decade of the twenty-first century, incorporating both theoretical concepts and modern realities, particularly focusing on the case of the Islamic State.

This volume, titled "Handbook of Fifth-Generation Warfare,"<sup>49</sup> is written by Daniel H. Abbott. It presents examples of fifth-generation warfare and offers source materials regarding the emergence of fifth-generation warfare as well as previous generations of warfare. The volume provides two lists for further reading and concludes with a final section. This volume discusses fifth-generation warfare within the context of the framework of previous generations of warfare and in relation to other conceptions of fifth-generation warfare. In other words, the fifth-generation warfare theory is addressed and understood in this volume. Warfare in the fifth-generation is not a new phenomenon, nor is it revolutionary or a novel idea. The experience of warfighters has always been a component of the human condition. It is now time for analysts, researchers, and academics to become aware of it as well.

The book "Media and War" <sup>50</sup> is written by Daya Kishan Thussu and Des Freedman. In this book, the authors critically assess how media coverage of war is evolving and take into account the complicated connection between the government and the media during a conflict. The book evaluates how 9/11 and its aftermath have impacted the political, cultural, and professional

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<sup>48</sup> Ofer Friedman et al., *Hybrid conflicts and information warfare: new labels and old politics*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc, 2018), 271, eBookCollection, [https://www.amazon.com/Hybrid-Conflicts-Information-Warfare-Politics/dp/1626377510#detailBullets\\_feature\\_div](https://www.amazon.com/Hybrid-Conflicts-Information-Warfare-Politics/dp/1626377510#detailBullets_feature_div).

<sup>49</sup> Daniel H. Abbott, *the Handbook of 5GWA Fifth Generation of War*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (USA: Nimble Books LLC, 2010), 253, 978-1-60888-007-2.

<sup>50</sup> Daya Kishan Thussu and Des Freedman, *Media and War*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Hong Kong: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2003), 266, SAGE Collection, <https://in.sagepub.com/en-in/sas/war-and-the-media/book226101#description>.

contexts of media coverage. It also examines how the 'War on Terror' has been portrayed in the media from both regional and global perspectives, including new actors like the pan-Arabic television network Al-Jazeera, a news outlet based in Qatar. In this book, the authors highlight how new information and communication technologies are affecting the creation, dissemination, and consumption of media messages. Powerful governments have refined their public relations apparatus in the era of immediate global communication and 24-hour news, especially in the way warfare is covered on television. They effectively market their version of events to both their domestic and international viewing public while also influencing the ideological, cultural, and political factors of states.

The book "LikeWar: The Weaponization of Social Media,"<sup>51</sup> authored by P.W. Singer and Emerson T. Brooking, delves into the impact of social media platforms like Twitter, which wield tangible effects on individuals and societies. The authors explore the propagation of misinformation, which contributes to the emergence of political instability. Today, the battleground has shifted to smartphones and the digital realm. In 2013, there were 2 billion mobile broadband subscriptions globally, a number that surged to 6 billion by 2016, with expectations reaching 8 billion by 2020. The book also delves into pressing questions concerning privacy and truth, while also examining the perils associated with increasing interconnectivity.

## **Research Methodology**

The primary focus of this thesis is to gain a detailed understanding of the nature and impact of the battle of narratives on social media between India and Pakistan, as well as its effect on the national image of both states. Content analysis is employed as the primary research strategy, which involves analyzing and interpreting various forms of communication, including written text, videos, audio, and visual images. Within this research, content analysis is utilized to examine media content such as articles, television broadcasts, and different social media posts. Moreover, political speeches and debates have been subjected to analysis. Content analysis is also employed to scrutinize the content of specific advertisements in order to comprehend the targeted audience. Furthermore,

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<sup>51</sup> P.W.Singar and Emerson T. Brooking, LikeWar: The Weaponizaion of Social Media, (Eamon Dolan/ Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018), 416, [https://www.amazon.com/LikeWar-Weaponization-P-W-Singer/dp/1328695743#detailBullets\\_feature\\_div](https://www.amazon.com/LikeWar-Weaponization-P-W-Singer/dp/1328695743#detailBullets_feature_div).



content analysis is utilized in qualitative research methods like focus groups and interviews. In the current study, Twitter and YouTube posts are analyzed to understand public opinion and the spread of misinformation.

Secondary data plays a crucial role in literature studies and forming conclusions about arguments. This thesis relies on secondary data sourced from books, research articles, important reports, and governmental records. The research follows a qualitative approach. The first part elaborates on the essence of fifth-generation warfare through a descriptive research design, highlighting the distinctions from earlier conflict generations and the key technologies utilized in fifth-generation warfare<sup>52</sup>. The second part delves into the repercussions and counterstrategies employed by Pakistan in response to fifth-generation warfare, employing an exploratory research design.

In this thesis, social network analysis is employed to examine views of Pakistan and India. Numerous studies have shown that social network analysis is a useful tool for studying transnational communication. To further analyze the data, a content analysis technique is applied. Due to their close ties to larger governmental and media narratives and their relatively open access to data, Twitter and YouTube are regarded as the best platforms for analyzing global debates on important issues.

For this study, we identified two opposing hashtags originating in India and Pakistan regarding the two conflicts: the Pulwama attack and the surgical strike. We selected #Pulwamaattack because it had the highest number of tweets among all hashtags from the Indian side, and #Pulwamadrama because it was the most prominent hashtag representing the Pakistani perspective on the incident. Similarly, for the surgical strikes, we chose #Indiastrikesback from the Indian side and #Pakistanzindabad from the Pakistani side. We also included tweets from Indian national Gaurav Arya, who criticized the Imran Khan Administration/government. Data were collected using Twitter Deck. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted, allowing participants complete freedom to express their views within the scope of the research topic.

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<sup>52</sup> Javeria Jahangir and Naheed Bashir, "Fifth Generation Warfare: Response Strategy of Pakistan," *Academic Journal of Social Sciences (AJSS)* Vol. 6, Issue 2 (April – June 2022): 76, URL: <http://www.ojs.lgu.edu.pk/index.php/ajss/article/view/1753/1271>

## **Delimitation**

The main topic of this study is Fifth-Generation warfare. It highlights the conflicting narratives between India and Pakistan on social media sites such as Twitter and YouTube. The study also examines how these narratives affect the national image of the countries and damage the credibility of the states.

## **Organization of the Study**

This first part of the thesis will be the "Introduction," where an overview of the study will be presented.

**Chapter One:** This chapter covers the development of fifth-generation warfare and the war of narratives between India and Pakistan on social media platforms, including Twitter and YouTube. Through the use of the internet and media outlets, propaganda and disinformation are disseminated as part of fifth-generation warfare. Unfortunately, Pakistan has also been subjected to fifth-generation warfare due to the malicious intentions of its opponents. The EU DisinfoLab report, released in Brussels, unveiled a network of 500 fake media outlets that India had been utilizing for 15 years to portray a derogatory image of Pakistan within the European Union (EU). This revelation has shocked the global community. Historically, the primary goal of warfare has been territorial occupation. However, in today's context, social media platforms like Twitter and YouTube are employed to challenge adversaries and manipulate their perceptions on a global scale.

Presently, social media narratives center around the ideological, cultural, social, and political aspects of the involved states.

**Chapter Two:** This chapter emphasizes the state's national image and the struggle of narratives. Many countries have issues with their national image, but they don't know how to address this problem. Developing a national brand might be the solution to these issues. Nation branding revolves around maintaining a country's reputation and national image. Social media platforms like YouTube and Twitter often construct false narratives about countries to damage their reputations. The misuse of social media platforms has also become very common, with various

channels being used to incite violence, spread political unrest, and encourage instability. Turning to India, its underlying motivation is the pursuit of hegemony and regional leadership. The Indian government closely monitors any efforts being made, whether directly or indirectly, to undermine Pakistan. On the other hand, Pakistan's academic community and civil society are working to enhance the country's reputation abroad. Pakistan has put anti-propaganda campaigns in place. Establishing a strong governance framework on social media is crucial for Pakistan. The role of the Telecommunication Authority is also discussed in this chapter. The key events that occurred between India and Pakistan from 2014 to 2022 are also explored in this chapter.

**Chapter Three:** The main topics of this chapter are Fifth-Generation Warfare and the growing tensions between India and Pakistan. India is aware that it cannot engage in a full-scale conflict with Pakistan due to its nuclear weapons. As a result, it has employed hybrid forms of warfare, such as media strategies, to weaken the will of Pakistani youth and damage Pakistan's reputation abroad. Over the last few years, Indian news stations have not only beaten the drums of war but have also successfully manipulated a vast number of listeners. Apart from its media sources, Indian films play a significant role in disseminating extremely unfavorable propaganda towards Pakistan by including anti-Muslim content in their movies that severely damage Pakistan's image. Additionally, India spreads fake news about the Pakistan Army.

**Chapter Four:** The relationship between Pakistan and India has remained tense since the partition due to numerous unresolved concerns. This chapter offers ideas for Pakistan on how to handle the war of narratives on social media when dealing with India. Despite both nations making efforts to reach an understanding and benefit from peace through bilateral talks and agreements, a cold war has persistently existed in some form. The chapter presents crucial guidelines for Pakistan to follow in order to effectively manage the ongoing war of narratives with India on social media.

**Conclusion:** This study aims to investigate the battle of narratives on social media platforms between India and Pakistan and its impact on the national image of both states.

## CHAPTER ONE

### EVOLUTION OF FIFTH-GENERATION WARFARE AND WAR OF NARRATIVES BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

This chapter examines the rise of fifth-generation warfare and the battle of narratives between Pakistan and India on social media platforms. Fifth-generation warfare employs propaganda, information, perceptions, and fake news<sup>53</sup>. Unfortunately, conflicts have played a significant and undeniable role in major changes throughout human history. When it comes to wars, they have always been the driving force behind the emergence and collapse of civilizations and empires. The wars that have influenced world history have evolved over five generations, spanning from ancient times to the present day. Conflicts based on hand-to-hand combat are referred to as first-generation warfare. In this era, swords and spears were utilized as weapons. "Fire and gunpowder" were employed in second-generation warfare. Following the ancient era, this period is characterized by advancements in warfare. With the introduction of gunpowder, rifled firearms, and breech-loading guns, these new tactics were implemented in combat.

Warfare in the third generation might be seen as the start of "modern warfare." Long-range weapons and air forces were introduced during this time of conflict. The closest example of third-generation conflict is World War 2. Fourth-generation warfare was a brand-new stage of conflict; in fourth-generation warfare, civilian losses outweighed enemy casualties, "guerrilla" tactics became more popular, and paramilitary and terrorist organizations were even used as subcontractors<sup>54</sup>. The most dangerous phase of warfare is the fifth generation. The quest for a sustainable world and dreams of world peace in the twenty-first century are seriously threatened by this stage. It is a time when nations choose information operations over armed combat as a means of pacifying one another. Countries are engaged in "information and perception" wars in fifth-generation warfare. It is a time when nations are at war with one another on the bases of commerce, finance, the economy, culture, politics, and ideologies.

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<sup>53</sup> Ahsan I Butt, "Has a fifth-generation war started between India and Pakistan," *Aljazeera*, January 14, 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2021/1/4/are-india-and-pakistan-in-a-fifth-generation-war>

<sup>54</sup> Kerem Alkin, "Fifth-generation warfare and global challenges," *Daily Sabah*, August 13, 2022, <https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/columns/fifth-generation-warfare-and-global-challenges>

An all-encompassing form of expression is a narrative. Every age, location, and society contains narratives<sup>55</sup>. The development of narratives is at the heart of contemporary strategic communication plans in business, politics, and even in warfare, especially concerning social media story-building. The primary foundation of global politics is now the war of narratives, and social media serves as a powerful weapon in this conflict. The unique quality of social media is that it empowers and enables people to interact in entirely new ways. The term "propaganda" refers to a long-standing tactic used in conflicts to influence public opinion and affect outcomes. However, policymakers, military commanders, and intelligence agencies struggle to keep up with and respond to the ease with which social media and digital manipulation methods are being deployed on the battlefield<sup>56</sup>.

The various forms of modern media include print media, which encompasses books and novels; press media, consisting of magazines and newspapers; and social media, encompassing radio, television, cell phones, movies, video games, music, direct mail, computer networking, and the internet. All these media types possess materials and a means of delivering them. The communication sector employs a substantial workforce. While using force to dominate people's thoughts is an age-old phenomenon, nowadays, media has become a powerful and affordable tool for achieving objectives. On the other hand, media also serves as a significant and primary source of propaganda, leading to real conflicts. According to Salma Malik<sup>57</sup>, "Social media platforms, such as YouTube and Twitter, exhibit diverse viewership patterns. From Pakistan, there is pro-Kashmir content against Indians, while from the Indian side, there is anti-Muslim content against Pakistan. Different advertisements on social media sometimes manipulate the minds of youths on both sides. People form various perceptions about things on social media, which can be either positive or negative, depending on their perspectives. Social media can both positively and negatively impact the audience, and this is thought-provoking." History has demonstrated that

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<sup>55</sup> Zara Qurban et al., "Narrative Building for Comprehensive National Security of Pakistan," *Global Strategic & Security Studies Review*, Vol. VI, No. I ( Winter 2021): 38-46, doi: 10.31703/gssr.2021(VI-I).05

<sup>56</sup> Dr. Jean-Marc Rickli and Anja Kaspersen , "The Global war of narratives and the role of Social media," *World economic forum*, July 8, 2016, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/07/the-global-war-of-narratives-and-the-role-of-social-media/>

<sup>57</sup> Salma Malik, Associate Professor, *Department of Defence and Strategic Studies, Quaid-e-Azam University*, 28 July 2023, Islamabad

during World War 2, the United States and its allies employed media propaganda to influence public opinion and foster animosity towards Germany<sup>58</sup>.

Social media, like traditional media, is essential and plays a critical role in India-Pakistan ties. According to Hassan Zafar<sup>59</sup>, "Social media platforms are multilayered platforms that change people's ideologies and perceptions. Muslims and Hindus are already divided into two groups, so people believe what they see on media; they find the news credible without investigation. They see both negative and positive things and form opinions based on what they listen to and what they see. Social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram post content that people consider as solid knowledge." In the past, mainstream media in both India and Pakistan was state-owned and served as the government's official mouthpiece. After some time, privately owned mainstream media started to appear, but they were also used as tools by stakeholders to advance their own agendas. Both India and Pakistan accuse each other of using the media to inflame the situation and spread false information about the other through the use of war-mongering components<sup>60</sup>. When informing the public about events related to a war situation, the media plays a critical role<sup>61</sup>. This job becomes even more significant. The media is supposed to act professionally, fairly, and impartially in this regard. However, when a state is engaged in war with another state, journalists and media organizations frequently take up the job of agenda-setting in support of that state. This is due to a variety of factors, including nationalist sentiments, political shifts, and individual interests.

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<sup>58</sup> Fazal Abbas Awan et al., "Media and Propaganda: Framing of the Mumbai Terror Attacks by the Indian and the Pakistani State Media", *Journal of Indian Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2, (July – December 2019): 158, [http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/indianStudies/PDF/2\\_v5\\_2\\_19.pdf](http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/indianStudies/PDF/2_v5_2_19.pdf)

<sup>59</sup> Hassan Zafar, Assistant Professor of Film and amp; TV at *Lahore School of Economics*, 30 July 2023, Lahore

<sup>60</sup> Zulfiqar Ali and Nashia Ajaz, "Social Media and Indo- Pak relations: Applying agenda setting theory," *Research Gate* ( March 2014): 43, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336263285>

<sup>61</sup> Muhammad Ahmed Qadri et al., "The role of media in shaping Narratives on the India- Pakistan war of 1971" *Pakistan Journal of Society, Education and Language (PJSEL)*, Vol 7 (2)( July 2021): 113, <https://pjsel.jehanf.com/index.php/journal/article/view/457>

The media is powerful and influential, always rebounding from censorship and crackdowns in both Pakistan and India<sup>62</sup>. India and Pakistan are no longer two evolving nations looking to establish themselves in international affairs; they are currently two nuclear-armed states with the power to wipe out the whole of South Asia. As a result, when the powerful mass media of both countries discuss war, missile assaults, and "ending the problem once and for all," it incites fear throughout the entire world. Internally, in both of these countries, a malicious spiral begins to form: the public's unease over the media's war rhetoric puts pressure on the media to maintain its hostile tone.

Social media enhances reach, frequency, and intimacy more effectively than traditional media. It can transmit content in various forms, such as voice, visuals, or text, to anyone worldwide and enables interactive connections between people without temporal limitations. Social media has evolved into an amplifier of ideas, a creator of meaning, and a generator of conflicts. An example of this is the Disinfo Lab. Since 2005, India has been actively striving to undermine Pakistan's reputation and global perception through social media platforms. India has achieved notable success in masking its own misdeeds, which encompass extensive human rights abuses in the illegally occupied region of Jammu and Kashmir and the sponsorship of terrorism in neighboring countries<sup>63</sup>. This also includes actions that adversely affect Pakistan's interests. The "Indian Chronicles" could potentially be the initial step in revealing India's nefarious plans now that the international community is starting to grasp the realities. Pakistan earnestly hopes that the United Nations and the European Parliament will take notice of this report and undertake appropriate corrective measures.

Modern military operations now include information warfare as an essential component, with social media platforms like Twitter and YouTube being increasingly used for organization, mobilization, and dissemination. Social media and mobile phone technology offer numerous avenues for distributing instructions and commands among various groups in different locations,

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<sup>62</sup> Dwaipayana Bose, "Journalism Caught in Narrow Nationalism: The India-Pakistan Media War," *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism*, 2011, <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/our-research/journalism-caught-narrow-nationalism-india-pakistan-media-war>

<sup>63</sup> Mehwish Hafeez, *Indian Chronicles: An eye opener for the world Community*, *Institute of strategic studies Islamabad* (January 2021): 3, doi: [www.issi.org.pk](http://www.issi.org.pk)

serving as tools for organizing operations. The first group to employ social media as a force multiplier was ISIS. To enable the organization's members to safely share information, many applications have been created. When used effectively, social media can be a potent instrument for mobilizing and recruiting people. Initially, ISIS made significant efforts to recruit new members on Twitter. The organization even released a smartphone application specifically designed to teach Arabic to kids, which also propagates the organization's principles alongside jihadist ideologies. Due to the widespread dissemination of adversaries' actions on social media, through images, tweets, videos, and Snapchats, conflict is fueled on all sides.

The media has become an essential tool of fifth-generation warfare in the current post-truth era for disseminating false information and propaganda against enemies<sup>64</sup>. The advancement of contemporary technologies, such as information technology and sophisticated communication channels, has changed international relations. Non-state actors have risked the state's ability to wage war and engage in diplomacy in the twenty-first century. Information is now used to undermine governments and wage a malicious propaganda war against opponents. The main goal of information warfare is to spread doubt and vagueness among adversaries. According to Salma Malik<sup>65</sup>, "There are a lot of risks associated with this form of warfare. This warfare targets every sector, creating fake narratives against each other on social media accounts to damage each other religiously, culturally, politically, and economically. For example, spreading the narrative that Muslims are terrorists and implying that Muslims support terrorism can damage the international image of Muslims. These narratives manipulate people's thinking, and they develop negative perceptions about the things they see on social media." With the introduction of new and cutting-edge technologies, warfare has changed over time. Warfare has evolved from generation to generation as a result of advances in technology and weapons of mass destruction.

The essence of today's interstate conflicts, or fifth-generation warfare, is based on the use of communication and information technologies as weapons. According to Syed Sibtain Hussain

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<sup>64</sup> Abdul Rehman, "Media and Fifth-generation Warfare: A Case Study of Indian Disinformation Campaign Against Balochistan," *Journal of Mass Communication*, Vol. 26, (November 2022): 115, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/365287935\\_Media\\_and\\_Fifth-generation\\_Warfare\\_A\\_Case\\_Study\\_of\\_Indian\\_Disinformation\\_Campaign\\_Against\\_Balochistan](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/365287935_Media_and_Fifth-generation_Warfare_A_Case_Study_of_Indian_Disinformation_Campaign_Against_Balochistan)

<sup>65</sup> Salma Malik, Associate Professor, *Department of Defence and Strategic Studies*



Shah<sup>66</sup>, the "War of narratives" begins between India and Pakistan on social media. Both countries damage their image and reputation by using Twitter and YouTube, platforms with a significant viewership. Almost 50 to 60 percent of the youth use these platforms. Different attractive hashtags and hateful content on YouTube tarnish their image. Various journalists or anchorpersons from both sides spread hate speeches towards each other. Propaganda in different videos using thumbnails further fosters hatred. Different news channels receive funding from the Indian side, which further disturbs the relationship between the two countries. Fifth-generation warfare is often referred to as the fight of perception, and information has become a well-known style of contemporary conflict. The primary objective of fifth-generation warfare conflict is to influence people's perceptions and opinions through information and propaganda. India and Pakistan engage in an informational conflict to exploit the fault lines of the conflict and promote political subversion. There are various types of fault lines, including religion, ethnicity, politics, ideologies, cultural differences, and marginalized minorities. In the fifth-generation conflict, states fabricate news, spread false information, and support insurgencies to sow disbelief among the populace.

The rise of social media has brought about new tendencies in warfare. In modern warfare, platforms like Twitter and YouTube are used as examples of social media sites. These platforms are employed to disseminate false information, engage in deceptive reporting, and spread propaganda against adversaries. The utilization of information and communication technology to gain a strategic advantage over a rival is known as media warfare. Similarly, India has employed propaganda and deception to participate in fifth-generation warfare against Pakistan. The introduction of nuclear weapons in South Asia was the reason for shifting from conventional to unconventional warfare strategies. India and Pakistan had to develop new means of warfare without directly engaging in combat due to the presence of weapons of mass destruction.

The Indian government has posed a threat to Pakistan through fifth-generation warfare on multiple fronts, including political, social, intellectual, cultural, and economic realms. India has taken measures to isolate Pakistan from the international community. Through coercive diplomacy, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has demonstrated a desire to isolate Pakistan. India is fueling sectarianism, religious extremism, and ethnic disputes within Pakistan by employing media as a

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<sup>66</sup> Syed Sibtain Hussain Shah, Assistant Professor, *National University of Modern Languages*, 27 July 2023, Islamabad

weapon in this fifth-generation war. Baloch separatist organizations have received diplomatic and media support from the Indian spy agency RAW. The arrest of Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav in Balochistan exposed India's involvement in funding terrorism within Pakistan. Pakistani government officials have also revealed RAW's assistance to sectarian organizations in Karachi. A comprehensive network of bogus NGOs and media organizations supported by India was exposed in a 2019 report for their role in propagandizing against Pakistan globally. India has also advocated for Pakistan to be included in the FATF's (Financial Action Task Force) "blacklist."

The Indian media offensive against Pakistan focuses on four major sectors. Firstly, the Indian mainstream media undertakes a hateful campaign against the Pakistani military. Secondly, social media and digital platforms in India seek to stir up instability in Pakistan by spreading fake information. In October 2020, false reports of a civil war in Karachi spread like wildfire when Indian media outlets reported that tanks had been stationed on the city's streets. Thirdly, Kashmir continues to be the target of prominent anti-Kashmir propaganda due to Pakistan's claimed assistance for terrorist groups there. Fourthly, the Indian media uses cognitive discord to alter public perception in order to stall the development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). China and Pakistan are friendly neighbors who work together strategically. The Belt and Road Initiative's China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has improved commercial and political ties between the two nations. Meanwhile, India has consistently threatened the expanding strategic partnership between China and Pakistan. India has created a "special cell" inside RAW to broadcast false information and otherwise undermine the economic corridor. In 2016, eight employees of the Indian embassy in Islamabad were expelled from Pakistan due to their involvement in covert operations.

The nature of warfare has transformed due to the advancements in communication and information technology. These technologies have given rise to the phenomenon of information and media warfare in the modern world. In today's era, the internet and social media have provided states with new avenues for conflict, including battles over perception and information. India, with the aim of fomenting sectarianism and instability in Pakistan, has initiated deceptive media operations. Balochistan has been a particular target, where India has been accused of funding terrorism and spreading false information. The primary objective of these deceitful media operations is to create a divide between Baloch citizens and the government.

Furthermore, India, Israel, and the United States have jointly launched a media campaign against Pakistan to tarnish its reputation on the global stage. India is striving to depict Pakistan as a perilous nation supporting terrorism. To incite the Baloch population against the Pakistani government, India established radio stations broadcasting in the Balochi language. An investigation conducted by the EU Disinfo Lab in 2019 exposed an extensive network of ostensibly RAW-sponsored NGOs and media organizations working to defame Pakistan in the international community's eyes. The Indian efforts were aimed at isolating Pakistan. Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India, made a commitment to undermine Pakistan's standing in the international arena. Additionally, India has lobbied for Pakistan to be placed on the FATF's (Financial Action Task Force) "blacklist." In the aftermath of the Pulwama and Uri attacks, India accused Pakistan of supporting terrorism and sought to isolate it by advocating for its inclusion on the "blacklist."

China and Pakistan, two friendly neighbors, collaborate strategically. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, a component of China's Belt and Road Initiative, has improved the nations' political and economic ties. According to India, the corridor goes through the contentious Kashmir area. The Indian government claims that the Chinese government's presence in the Indian Ocean is expected to grow as a result of the CPEC project. Kulbhushan Jadhav disclosed Indian plans to harm CPEC and Balochistan. To undermine the economic corridor, it was confirmed that India has reportedly established a "special cell" within RAW.

India and Pakistan have had a history of hostility towards one another since gaining independence from British domination. The agreement of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir marked the beginning of the conflict between the two nations in 1948. The two neighbors have maintained their intense animosity towards one another ever since. Based on the two-nation principle, the Muslim-majority state of Pakistan and the Hindu-majority state of India were divided. The two neighbors' friendship could never become stabilized due to their disparate cultural and religious backgrounds.

India and Pakistan have been involved in four major conflicts. The first Indo-Pak war was fought in 1948 over the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, which resulted in the division of Kashmir into two parts. The second Indo-Pak conflict broke out in 1965 and was eventually settled through Russian intervention. As a consequence of the third war between the two nations in 1971, Pakistan was divided into two sovereign states: Bangladesh and Pakistan. The Kargil region saw the outbreak

of the fourth war between the two nations in 1999. In addition to these major battles, there have been other escalations between the two nations, including the attacks on the Indian parliament in 2001, Mumbai in 2008, Uri in 2013, and Pulwama in 2019. The terrorist incident in Pulwama, which claimed the lives of numerous Indian soldiers, was attributed by Indian authorities to Pakistan.

The Pulwama attack in Indian-administered Kashmir and the retaliatory surgical strike by India in Pakistani territory are two recent events that have further strained the already shaky ties between India and Pakistan due to news media<sup>67</sup>. In this incident on February 14, 2019, a militant group attacked Indian soldiers, resulting in the tragic death of 40 of them in the Pulwama district. India promptly attributed the strike to Pakistan. Pakistan, however, had proposed a joint investigation into the attack. Despite this, India declined the offer. Subsequently, India claimed to have neutralized numerous militants during airstrikes conducted in Pakistan against alleged militant hideouts in February 2019 according to research journal<sup>68</sup>. Pakistan acknowledged these airstrikes executed by Indian pilots but contended that they only caused damage to uninhabited areas without any casualties or infrastructure harm. Unfortunately, more than 20 civilians lost their lives in border skirmishes that ensued on both sides due to this incident. In response, Pakistan also conducted airstrikes within the Kashmir region administered by India in February 2019. During these events, Pakistan managed to down an Indian aircraft and apprehended Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman, the pilot. Initially, India refuted Pakistan's allegations but eventually admitted that one of its pilots had gone missing and was in the custody of Pakistan. Throughout these incidents, mainstream and social media in both countries meticulously covered the events, driven by intense patriotic sentiments. However, the leading Pakistani newspaper Dawn criticized the prevailing media war fervor, cautioning against the potential catastrophic outcomes of a nuclear conflict between the two nations. This attack effects the economic, political situation of both countries according to verified resources.

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<sup>67</sup> Shabir Hussain et al., "Analyzing the State of Digital Information Warfare Between India and Pakistan on Twittersphere" *SAGE open*, ( July-September 2021): 11, DOI: [10.1177/21582440211031905](https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211031905)  
[journals.sagepub.com/home/sgo](https://journals.sagepub.com/home/sgo)

<sup>68</sup> Dr. Muhammad Haseeb et al., " Indian Press propaganda against Pakistan: An analysis of Pulwama Attack and Balakot Airstrike" *Journal of Cardiovascular Disease Research*, ( March 2021) : 7, DOI : [62440aef51f4f2.450221185](https://doi.org/10.2196/2020.11.11)

India has refuted the claims made by EU Disinfo Lab, asserting that Pakistan is responsible for them. Reports suggest that Ankit Srivastava, Vice Chairman of the Srivastava Group, is leading the orchestrated disinformation campaign. The Srivastava organization is affiliated with 265 pro-Indian websites across 65 countries, as per the research. This group is believed to be behind the creation of fabricated media outlets and NGOs, as well as the revival of defunct ones, and the registration of new domains. These enterprises, associated with the Srivastava Group, were focused on advancing Indian interests globally. The organizations primarily highlighted issues concerning Balochistan, Gilgit Baltistan, and minority rights in Pakistan.

Balochistan has frequently been targeted by foreign countries, particularly India, due to its low economic conditions, political unrest, and security concerns. Exploiting the province's vulnerabilities, anti-Pakistan forces are attempting to destabilize Balochistan. By providing support to religious and ethnic militants, India aims to sow discontent in Balochistan using fifth-generation warfare strategies. Kulbhushan Jadhav's confession confirmed India's involvement in a covert operation in Balochistan, as per information gathered from its dormant cells in Afghanistan. The Balochistani administration has revealed Indian interference in the region and exposed its media warfare tactics. Kulbhushan Jadhav was arrested in Balochistan on charges of espionage. During the investigation, he admitted to aiding separatists and undermining the province's peacekeeping efforts. However, these claims have been refuted by Indian authorities. Following the trial, a military court sentenced Kulbhushan Jadhav to death for his role in espionage.

The so-called "Doval doctrine," put forward by Ajit Doval, the National Security Advisor, served as a major influence on the Indian media campaign against Balochistan. The policy attempts to engage Pakistan in fifth-generation warfare by aiding insurgencies, risking CPEC, and disseminating false information through the media. According to Ajit Doval, India uses Balochistan to upset the balance of power in Pakistan. India has started employing print, digital, and social media for information warfare to promote false information about Balochistan. In an effort to mobilize the Balochi people against Pakistan, India has launched a variety of websites and radio programs in the Balochi language.

Pakistan has consistently dealt with security issues at its borders with India and Afghanistan. The Indian and Pakistani Armies have engaged in three conflicts. The Pakistan Army has remained the

nation's best-managed and most devoted organization<sup>69</sup>. This institution has a remarkable history of making sacrifices and contributing to nation-building. In addition, its primary functions include defending Pakistani territory. The Pakistan Army, often regarded as the backbone of Pakistan, has unfortunately garnered a poor reputation due to false propaganda spread by India against Pakistan. The Pakistan Army and Inter-Services Intelligence have been accused by opponents of regional aggression and support for non-state entities.

Furthermore, India consistently attributes responsibility for any incident occurring in its region to the Pakistan Army and ISI. India has indeed sought to divert attention from its actions in IOK (Indian Occupied Kashmir) and its questionable activities in Pakistan's Balochistan region. Pakistan has consistently been unfairly portrayed in foreign media, never receiving praise for the sacrifices it has made in the fight against terrorism. Alongside Israel and India, the United States is monitoring Pakistan closely, viewing the Pakistani army as a significant obstacle to achieving their foreign policy goals. As a result, they are targeting the Pakistani military from multiple angles. India is involved in fomenting unrest in Balochistan. Attempts to discredit reputable state institutions like this have become commonplace. Negative media coverage is exacerbating this issue, leading to distorted perceptions of Pakistan's armed forces and intelligence organizations. The Pakistani army and its premier intelligence service, ISI, have successfully thwarted terrorist plots. They have been involved in counter terrorism efforts there are many reports on this.

Opponents continue to face difficulty in attacking Pakistan conventionally. Therefore, they have initiated a propaganda campaign to undermine the country. India is creating an impression that it has consistently made efforts to maintain diplomatic ties with Pakistan, but the Pakistani Army prevents these efforts from succeeding, there are some official verified statements on this on specific media platforms like twitter and YouTube. Additionally, India is attempting to destabilize Pakistan's military establishment to conceal its intentions, which are perceived as unfavorable towards Pakistan that is already mentioned in newspaper "Dawn". The goal is to delegitimize Pakistan on a global scale by accusing it of obstructing regional integration and peace. India is

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<sup>69</sup> Muhammad Ashraf Nadeem et al., "Fifth- Generation warfare and its challenges to Pakistan," *Pak. Journal of Int'L Affairs*, Vol 4, Issue 1, (March 2021) : 230, <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v4i1.118>

undoubtedly working to weaken the social cohesion within our nation by sowing discord and uncertainty among its citizens.

The Pakistani Army has indeed successfully combated terrorism in the Ex-FATA zone and insurgencies in Balochistan. During the Munich Security Conference, the former Chief of the Army Staff, General Qamar Javed Bajwa, stated, "The presence of terrorists of various hues and colors cannot be ruled out. However, today I can confidently and with pleasure state that there are no camps for organized terrorism on our side of the border."

"At great human and material cost, the Pakistani Army has waged a deadly and persistent war against terrorism and violent extremism. Over 48,000 Pakistanis have suffered catastrophic injuries and disabilities, and over 35,000 people have lost their lives. This effort has incurred a cost of over US\$250 billion, only a small portion of which has been contributed by our international allies<sup>70</sup>."

"The Pakistani Army is completely aware of the covert goals and intentions behind India's slanderous activities."

Pakistan is currently facing the impact of Indian misinformation and propaganda across various domains, including the economy, society, politics, ideologies, culture, and security. To counter this media assault, Pakistan must adopt a comprehensive national approach aimed at exposing India's propaganda initiatives<sup>71</sup>. This requires the effective organization of internal affairs encompassing political, economic, and ethnic dimensions. Exploitable divisions within the country present opportunities for external involvement, thus Pakistan must address its economic, political, and ethnic vulnerabilities to safeguard its peace from external threats.

National divisions can become vulnerable targets in the context of fifth-generation warfare, making it imperative for Pakistan to foster and promote national unity to counter Indian efforts

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<sup>70</sup> Muhammad Ashraf Nadeem et al., "Fifth- Generation warfare and its challenges to Pakistan," *Pak. Journal of Int'L Affairs*, Vol 4, Issue 1, (March 2021) : 230, <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v4i1.118>

<sup>71</sup> Abdul Rehman, "Media and Fifth-generation Warfare: A Case Study of Indian Disinformation Campaign Against Balochistan," *Journal of Mass Communication*, Vol. 26, ( November 2022): 115, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/365287935\\_Media\\_and\\_Fifth-generation\\_Warfare\\_A\\_Case\\_Study\\_of\\_Indian\\_Disinformation\\_Campaign\\_Against\\_Balochistan](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/365287935_Media_and_Fifth-generation_Warfare_A_Case_Study_of_Indian_Disinformation_Campaign_Against_Balochistan)

effectively. Concurrently, Pakistan must establish robust relationships with both regional and international nations to counter India's attempts to isolate it within the global community. India's historical tactic of portraying Pakistan as a supporter of terrorism can be countered through collaborative efforts with domestic and international stakeholders to combat terrorism.

Lastly, Pakistan needs to expose India's misinformation campaigns on various national and international platforms. It should draw attention to India's disregard for international law and values, as evidenced by the Indian Chronicle presented to the UN.

The sources of communication in the twenty-first century have transformed warfare from conventional to unconventional methods, altering the landscape significantly. Fifth-generation warfare, centered on the manipulation of perception and information, has arisen in an era characterized by diverse mass communication channels. The objective of fifth-generation warfare is to disrupt the mental stability of enemy lines by distorting facts and propagating misinformation. India has engaged in fifth-generation warfare, employing media as a weapon against Pakistan, with a particular focus on Balochistan.

Balochistan, situated in Pakistan, holds immense global geopolitical significance due to its strategic location. Various global powers have consistently sought to exert influence on domestic politics in this region. Pakistan has witnessed conflicts, terrorism, wars, insurgencies, and ethnic issues over time. The adversaries of Pakistan have transitioned to fifth-generation warfare tactics, fueling racial and religious conflicts, financing deceptive media campaigns, and disseminating false information in an attempt to delegitimize Pakistan in the eyes of the world.

India, Pakistan's adversary, is primarily engaged in a fabricated media offensive against the latter country<sup>72</sup>. India is attempting to portray Pakistan as a haven for terrorists and a perilous place for minorities, depicting it as a nation with religious intolerance and insecurity for women and children. India alleges that people residing in Pakistan encounter numerous challenges, asserting that women are unsafe and devoid of educational rights. Thus, through its deceptive media

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<sup>72</sup> Abdul Rehman, "Media and Fifth-generation Warfare: A Case Study of Indian Disinformation Campaign Against Balochistan," *Journal of Mass Communication*, Vol. 26, ( November 2022): 115, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/365287935\\_Media\\_and\\_Fifth-generation\\_Warfare\\_A\\_Case\\_Study\\_of\\_Indian\\_Disinformation\\_Campaign\\_Against\\_Balochistan](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/365287935_Media_and_Fifth-generation_Warfare_A_Case_Study_of_Indian_Disinformation_Campaign_Against_Balochistan)



campaigns, India is conducting a propaganda campaign by leveraging various media channels, including print, digital, and social platforms.

The nature of intergenerational warfare has evolved significantly. The utilization of fifth-generation warfare, the latest iteration, is purported to be the most potent and efficient among all prior generations. Fifth-generation warfare has the capability to damage a state's reputation and affect the well-being of its citizens, as it influences both internal and external structures of a nation. Given the ubiquity of social media in people's daily lives, this conflict has gained increasing importance and effectiveness over time. In this form of warfare, besides designated forces, every individual becomes a participant, assuming different roles and endorsing various perspectives without direct confrontation<sup>73</sup>.

Controlling people and shaping their mindsets has become notably easier, facilitated by the propagation of fabricated events and dissemination of false news through social media. Information readily available online is exploited by those who infringe upon privacy, intrude into the online lives of others, and subsequently exploit acquired information against the state. The progression of information technology in the future could considerably heighten the significance of this struggle. This fifth-generation conflict is commonly referred to as the "Hybrid Battle" due to these characteristics.

Groups engage in this conflict to establish their cultural dominance and superiority. They utilize stories as tools to manipulate emotions, which could ultimately lead to the destruction of humanity. To create confusion and uncertainty, images are crafted, and stories are constructed in the media, causing competitors to feel anxious and afraid. Some individuals contribute to the promotion of peace by highlighting the sacrifices made by law enforcement, while others criticize their actions severely, aiming to diminish national morale and spread false information to erode people's trust in those working to maintain state tranquility.

Citizens will engage in the fifth generation of combat in place of professional armies. To elaborate on this idea, it occurs when people seek justice from the government rather than relying on the government or working for it. The myths surrounding social movements, which might manifest as

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<sup>73</sup> Awais H. Gillani et al., "Media as a Weapon of Narrative Building : A Case of Fifth-generation War," *Pak. Journal of Int'L Affairs*, Vol 4, Issue 4, ( June 2021) : 500, <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v4i4.340>

mobs or groups, serve as fuel for this battle. Due to the lack of control and the ease of sharing audio, video, and static content, these groups are able to amass a large number of narratives in line with their goals and motivations through propaganda. Thanks to the development and accessibility of information technology, media has proven to be a successful fifth-generation warfare tool. Anything can be presented with false evidence and facts to bolster the narratives and make them more credible, which can then be widely spread by people who accept it.

As an increasing number of individuals become captivated by sharing every single detail with their followers, stories have grown increasingly popular and are shared with the audience regularly. There is a trend towards shorter headlines that are less clear and can be understood differently by readers with varying levels of cognitive ability. Journalists exaggerate their stories in an effort to outdo one another and spread them without any form of verification.

An uncertain degree of economic disturbance is one of the most significant setbacks this conflict can deliver to any state, but it can also contribute to economic stability if employed properly. Due to this technological revolution, we have witnessed significant economic cooperation initiatives, as well as small business owners finding ways to contribute to economic growth. As the GDP of many states progressively rises, this fifth-generation warfare conflict has been extremely effective in boosting economic growth. This signifies that it will ultimately become a potent force reshaping the economy and society of the twenty-first century. We must not undervalue the immense value the internet economy has provided to both wealthy and poor nations, as well as its potential to rejuvenate global growth as the impacts of the global financial crisis threaten our administration's and corporate leaders' extraordinary progress.

Political instability often arises due to a variety of factors that undermine a country's political system. These factors encompass terrorist activities as well as aggressive behavior from both political and non-political groups. Furthermore, the lack of synchronization between the state and the government hinders the government's ability to exert influence effectively.

The political landscape in the nation is susceptible to the influence of both domestic and foreign issues. Rather than having a multitude of honorary positions, it is crucial to consolidate all political identities within the nation under a single system. This consolidation would enable the nation to cohesively address challenges. The erosion of social values and norms due to public perception that predominantly blames the government adds another layer of destabilization.

To effectively manage the nation's political climate, the administration must establish a state of political equilibrium. Without such equilibrium, the faulty system could lead to the dismantling of the state system and regime.

In this era of rapid technological advancement, conflicts have transformed at an astonishing pace. Social media has evolved into a potent weapon of war, facilitating the swift spread of information across territories, whether that information is factual or mere hearsay. In this fifth age of warfare, hostile nations find themselves being dismantled through the strategic use of propaganda, rather than traditional battles on the field.

For instance, India's recent election campaign heavily leaned on anti-Pakistan sentiments. While this approach succeeded in solidifying the candidate's support base, it concurrently managed to tarnish Pakistan's reputation by disseminating false claims about fabricated surgical strikes and the Pulwama assault, among other things.

At present, India creates an array of fictional characters, some of whom possess professional backgrounds and mutually provide validation for each other. Consequently, they orchestrate events to garner recognition, despite the fictitious nature of these characters. They establish gathering pages, wherein they assume administrative roles and promote their public relations, recognizing the importance of an influential digital presence. These fabricated personas offer services as consultants, lawyers, engineers, and educators. They also weave narratives involving their graduating class and concoct artificial memories imbued with a sense of nostalgia. Additionally, they include familial elements in their profiles to lend them greater credibility.

In this scenario, India allegedly dispatched its agents into Balochistan to incite animosity. These actions were subsequently publicized on social media, suggesting that Balochistanis were dissatisfied with their government. India's motivation appears to stem from its opposition to the success of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It is speculated that India aims to portray Pakistan as a hazardous region for outsiders. To this end, India is believed to be orchestrating attacks on international cricket teams within Pakistan, coupled with threats conveyed through fabricated emails.

Consider a situation in which all of Pakistan's adversaries collaborate to have Pakistan designated as a member of the FATF's "Black List." This endeavor entails demonstrating that Pakistan is

involved in financing terrorism, engaging in money laundering, fostering corruption, and facilitating human trafficking. If successful, such a move could undermine Pakistan's standing in global forums. It might deter foreign investors from considering Pakistan as a viable investment destination, thereby adversely affecting the nation's economy and reputation. India aims to propagate the notion that Pakistan maintains undisclosed financial channels that are specifically employed to support international terrorism. The exposure of this information could potentially place Pakistan in a precarious diplomatic position.

The law and order situation in Pakistan is managed by the intelligence agency (ISI), according to prevailing views. India aims to portray the ISI as having a hand in its internal affairs. Additionally, the people of Balochistan express a desire to distance themselves from Pakistan's administration and military. However, through the arrest of Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav and the dismantling of his propaganda network disseminating false information, the ISI countered RAW's propaganda.

Given the ability for anyone to publish whatever they desire on social media, there is a suggestion that the government should establish restrictions to monitor these activities, as such activities could aid Pakistan's adversaries. The government needs to identify individuals who are spreading a false narrative against Pakistan, akin to finding the "black sheep." This would help curtail the dissemination of misinformation.

Pakistan remains vigilant for any potential conventional or fifth-generation military threats originating from India. Democratic nations prioritize resolving disputes through diplomatic means, engaging in bilateral, regional, and international discussions. Political leaders gather at local, regional, and global forums to deliberate on these issues. Similarly, Pakistan's political establishment strives to raise public awareness regarding the Indian threat of fifth-generation warfare. Urgent matters are presented to the international community using diplomatic channels. Pakistan's primary objective is to address these challenges through diplomatic and political avenues. International organizations provide Pakistan with opportunities to unveil the covert actions of the Indian government in South Asia. Forums such as the United Nations (UN) and the World Economic Forum serve as platforms to comprehensively outline the situation<sup>74</sup>. During the

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<sup>74</sup> Javeria Jahangir and Naheed Bashir, "Fifth Generation Warfare: Response Strategy of Pakistan," *Academic Journal of Social Sciences (AJSS)*, Vol. 6, Issue 2 (April – June 2022):76, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54692/ajss.2022.06021753>

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the Pakistani government addressed the topics of fifth-generation warfare and Islamophobia. The Indian media amplified this speech, as it marked the first instance in recorded history where Indian propaganda was exposed on a global stage.

Fifth-generation warfare targets political, ideological, cultural, societal, and leadership aspects. The construction of a narrative on social media is executed with utmost methodical precision, particularly concerning the political aspect. Loyalty feelings are cultivated within individuals, either towards their political party or a specific political leader. The stories are crafted in a manner that transcends the confines of screens, deeply engaging one's emotions and sentiments.

Constructing a political narrative places paramount importance on persuading people to adopt a particular political objective. The prime examples of political fragility in FATA and Balochistan simplify the task for the opposition to partake in fifth-generation warfare<sup>75</sup>.

The concept of fifth-generation warfare is closely intertwined with Western and European traditions, among various other cultural elements<sup>76</sup>. The younger generation, in particular, tends to develop feelings of loyalty as a result of their engagement in fifth-generation struggles. Attaining political influence over other nations is another method through which a nation seeks to establish cultural dominance. Both national and global campaigns are being initiated to bolster the cultural relevance of Eurocentrism. One of the primary objectives of fifth-generation warfare is to achieve cultural dominance. Following the cultural dimension, this generation of conflict also exerts an influence on the religious aspect. Fifth-generation warfare manipulates people's perceptions to present a distorted view of the world, leading to a multitude of issues.

Fifth-generation warfare also leverages religious sentiments and cultural symbols to undermine the opposition. This involves creating divisions based on ideology and religion in order to control people. Ethnic and nationalist differences can also contribute to problems. Another significant factor influenced by fifth-generation warfare is unpopular leadership. When a leader is incapable

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<sup>75</sup> Zohaib Anjum, “How Pakistan combat with 5<sup>th</sup> Generation warfare,” filmed September 2, 2021 in Utica, NY, TEDx video, 31:16, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWJb-VN2\\_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWJb-VN2_U)

<sup>76</sup> Javeria Jahangir and Naheed Bashir, “Fifth Generation Warfare: Response Strategy of Pakistan,” *Academic Journal of Social Sciences (AJSS)* Vol. 6, Issue 2 (April – June 2022):76, URL: <http://www.ojs.lgu.edu.pk/index.php/ajss/article/view/1753/1271>

of effective communication, refuses to take responsibility for issues, and ignores their followers, the public will develop a strong aversion to such leadership. By employing fifth-generation warfare tactics, the enemy seizes the opportunity to incite the populace against their leader, resulting in the construction of a narrative of hostility towards that leader.

The increasingly argumentative media represents one facet of the fifth-generation warfare that Pakistan is currently experiencing. Additionally, there has been a concerted effort to create an ideological fracture within the nation, which can be attributed in part to the role propaganda and the media have played in shaping public opinion.

An organized campaign aimed at undermining Pakistan's spiritual components was what initially led to the ideological division. Surprisingly, it was observed that a significant portion of Pakistani opinion leaders and the media in the post-9/11 era were engaging in criticism of the core values of the nation. The narratives frequently disseminated ran counter to the cultural and religious traditions of Pakistan, depicting Islam as an impediment to modernization and implying a foreign cultural invasion, particularly in matters related to family.

It can be argued that the surge in religious extremism in Pakistan following the American invasion of Afghanistan, coupled with the utilization of media and cultural warfare, were not unintended consequences but rather deliberate components of a strategy aimed at creating an ideological fault line within Pakistan. This strategy has led to a situation where two opposing ideological extremes are in conflict with each other.

Dividing a country along racial, economic, and religious lines becomes relatively straightforward when there are doubts surrounding the foundational elements of that nation's identity.

## CHAPTER TWO

### WAR OF NARRATIVES AND STATE'S NATIONAL IMAGE

This chapter discusses the national image of the State and the War of Narratives. Many countries have issues with their public image but are unsure of how to fix them. Developing a national brand might be the answer to all these issues. Nation branding is all about maintaining a country's reputation and image. Nation branding is a topic of study that is propelled more by professionals than by academic researchers. According to Albert and Whitten's definition of organizational identity, national identity is the collective awareness of a nation's people regarding the characteristics that are considered fundamental and stable, setting the nation apart from other nations<sup>77</sup>. Thus, a nation's image is what its citizens want the outside world to perceive as the most fundamental, lasting, and distinctive aspects of their country.

India is utilizing social media platforms such as YouTube and Twitter to construct false narratives about Pakistan. Having been on the front lines of the fight against terrorism, Pakistan has incurred significant costs. In the 'war on terror' led by the US from 2004 to 2013, Pakistan lost nearly 80,000 lives. Despite Pakistan's sacrifices, India and the West still perceive it as an unfaithful ally that openly supports Islamic militancy.

Pakistan faces numerous difficulties, such as an uneven economy, unstable security, and precarious governance. However, reestablishing its reputation in the eyes of the world may be Pakistan's biggest obstacle. The government is making efforts to present a favorable image of the nation, but it remains unclear whether Pakistan's establishment is aware of the underlying problems and their causes. The characteristics of a nation's foreign policy are used to evaluate it, at least in part. The perceived danger from India is at the center of Pakistan's national security ideology, which heavily influences its foreign policy. As a result, the goals of foreign policy are expressed and determined by the imperatives of national security.

The security narrative generally adopts a uniform perspective of the world, placing emphasis on one nation, one set of values, and one national tradition. Refusing to follow this unified philosophy

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<sup>77</sup> Ying Fan, "Key Perspectives In Nation Image : A Conceptual Framework For Nation Branding," Brunel Business School Research Papers( March 2008):13, <http://bura.brunel.ac.uk/handle/2438/1872>

results in rapid stigmatization. This procedure discourages a true depiction of the nation, weakening pluralist society by eliminating diversity and enforcing conformity. The security narrative, which fills Pakistani culture to a significant extent, is founded on a very strict notion of national interest. It conveys the idea of a nation where issues of democracy are secondary to matters of sovereignty and where the primary focus is the defense of borders.

Pakistani nationalism takes the form of a defensive story about security. The Pakistani leadership, institutions, and sizable portions of the populace are convinced by the security state narrative and the idea that Pakistan is surrounded by hostile nations like India, Afghanistan, and Iran. It feels as though the outside world is working against them according to social theory<sup>78</sup>. The class interests of many groups are aligned, forming a potentially explosive version of this nationalist narrative, with the unifying force of religion apparently holding them together.

Pakistan has been unable to establish the desired tactical partnership with the West, particularly the United States (US), despite emphasizing the security narrative. The connection has been attempted to evolve into a strategic one, but at best, it remains transactional and lacks a true strategic depth. The dominance of the security establishment is not the sole factor contributing to Pakistan's unfavorable image abroad. Political parties lack organization and are ill-equipped to address broader questions of security and international policy, as they rarely engage in internal policy discussions according to the reports of various media channels. On the other hand, India regards Pakistan as a state that supports terrorism and aims to isolate it on the international stage. India carries out various covert activities in Balochistan, further damaging Pakistan's reputation and overall image. Balochistan is the biggest example<sup>79</sup>.

Slightly put, there have been issues with the interactions of the Pakistani government with the international media. The emergence of social media has weakened the government's monopoly on information and made it challenging to control sources of information. While the state may still exert pressure on local Pakistani media organizations, the international media quickly becomes

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<sup>78</sup> Ying Fan, "Key Perspectives In Nation Image : A Conceptual Framework For Nation Branding," Brunel Business School Research Papers( March 2008):13, <http://bura.brunel.ac.uk/handle/2438/1872>

<sup>79</sup> Ying Fan, "Key Perspectives In Nation Image : A Conceptual Framework For Nation Branding," Brunel Business School Research Papers( March 2008):13, <http://bura.brunel.ac.uk/handle/2438/1872>



aware of this due to its strong connections with local media outlets. Pakistani officials which include bureaucrats and federal secretaries are convinced that the world media, particularly the Indian media, focuses on Pakistan's negative elements, assuming that stories about Pakistan's negatives sell more effectively. This claim might hold some merit. However, the establishment's fixation on this issue may mean that the true causes of problems are not being addressed, further damaging the nation's reputation and image in the eyes of the international community.

The global think tank sector in Western nations and India is increasingly exhibiting anti-Pakistan sentiments. Public opinion, media coverage and academic discourse they are being part of anti-Pakistani sentiments. Immediate attention is required to address this matter. However, Pakistan's prevailing nationalism, which is superficially defined, fosters intolerance towards opposing viewpoints. Academics and other members of the intelligentsia who engage with international think tanks are often labeled as disloyal or anti-state according to reports<sup>80</sup>. The establishment is incapable of acknowledging the value and necessity of critical thinking in academic discourse. It fails to acknowledge that scholars who scrutinize government actions do so with the intention of enhancing society and government functionality. They are by no means anti-national. It is important to note that anti-Pakistani sentiments vary within and between western nations and India. Not all academic and think tank share the same perspectives.

The sole reliance on perceived external security threats as the guiding factor for Pakistan's current foreign policy is unsustainable. It is imperative to reassess national interests to incorporate aspects such as social and economic welfare. The prevailing national security paradigm must be substituted with one that bases both domestic and foreign policies on the requisites of human development, as the present approach is excessively limiting. For Pakistan's economy to prosper in the future, the presence of an educated, healthy labor force with proficient human resources is indispensable. Involving the academic community is crucial if Pakistan is to thrive in all its complexity and if a more intricate and accurate portrayal of Pakistan is to be presented. Pakistan

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<sup>80</sup> assedel.org, "Countering Disinformation on Social Media," Association euro penne pour la defense des droits et des libertés, last updated February 25, 2021, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Expression/disinformation/2-Civil-society-organisations/Association-europeenne-pour-la-defense-des-droits-et-de.pdf>

should not only focus on external security threats that is insufficient for Pakistan development Pakistan should focus on foreign policy that is good for Pakistan development and economy.

In the present, social media has developed to a point where it can compete with traditional media. In contrast to traditional media, it allows for active feedback from information consumers and users. As a result, it offers users a level of engagement and thought-sharing flexibility never before possible. However, the freedom of expression offered by social media has damaging effects on countries that oppose democracy.

One of these effects is social media misinformation. Users have the potential to mislead others by circulating inaccurate information about various topics. When it comes to delicate social issues, including discrimination, or the propaganda related issues, this misdirection can be quite problematic. Additionally, issues like terrorism, political conflicts, the India-Pakistan war, and the Kashmir dispute are major subjects that are frequently misinterpreted on platforms like Twitter and YouTube. Many tweets from India portray a negative image of Pakistan, Indian social media accounts tweets against Pakistan such as Pakistan being a state that involve in terrorism and supports the Taliban government. In the Pulwama incident, India placed all blame on Pakistan, alleging that Pakistan orchestrated the event and supported different groups to initiate war against the Indian government.

Governments and social media corporations must come to an agreement to address the problem of misinformation spread on these platforms<sup>81</sup>. To avoid undermining the right to free speech, it is vital to curb information pollution on social media.

## **Pulwama Attack**

### **Distribution of viewpoints in the Selected Hashtags include both India and Pakistan**

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<sup>81</sup> assedel.org, “Countering Disinformation on Social Media,” Association euro penne pour la defense des droits et des libertés, last updated February 25, 2021, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Expression/disinformation/2-Civil-society-organisations/Association-europeenne-pour-la-defense-des-droits-et-de.pdf>

Hashtags	Favour to India Tweets	Favour to Pakistan Tweets	Neutral Tweets	Total Number of Tweets
Pulwama Attack(India)	4836	74	90	5,000
Pulwama Drama(Pakistan)	455	3890	655	5,000
Surgical Strike(India)	4800	48	152	5,000
Pakistan Strike back	13	4978	19	5,000
Total	10094	8990	916	20000

### India Terrorists activities against Pakistan

←
Thread



**Imran Khan** ✓

@ImranKhanPTI

⋮

Pakistan has consistently drawn attention of int community to India's subversive activities to undermine democracies in the region; & export/ fund extremism through structures of fake news orgs & "think tanks". Recently GoP provided dossier to UN of India's state terrorism in Pak

7:55 PM · Dec 10, 2020 · Twitter for Android

6.3K Retweets
286 Quote Tweets
25.6K Likes

### Indian Tweets against Imran Khan



**Simi Garewal**  
@Simi\_Garewal

#ImranKhan I'm deeply ambivalent about the victory. It's a poisoned chalice! Many years ago @ImranKhanPTI told me that a pir had predicted he will become PM of Pakistan one day - and will be assassinated. Seems Imran wanted it.. despite the cost.. Its sad.

11:54 pm · 25 Jul 18



**FrontalAssault**  
@FrontalAssault1

EXPOSE: Pak Army soldier revealing true nature of Pak Army & how they discard their soldiers. Also reveals how Pak Army is planning to up Terrorist activities against India. Different techniques of Terrorist attacks that can be implemented by Pak Army in future also revealed.

1. THE BATTLE OF BAHAWALPUR WAS A MAJOR VICTORY FOR THE INDIAN ARMY. SOUTH KOREA IS TWICE AS LARGE AS INDIA AND SOUTH KOREA HAS A POPULATION OF 45 MILLION. SOUTH KOREA HAS A GDP OF 1.1 TRILLION DOLLARS. SOUTH KOREA HAS A GDP PER CAPITA OF 24,000 DOLLARS. SOUTH KOREA HAS A LIFE EXPECTANCY OF 82 YEARS. SOUTH KOREA HAS A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX OF 0.915. SOUTH KOREA HAS A CORUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX OF 73. SOUTH KOREA HAS A RISK MANAGEMENT INDEX OF 85. SOUTH KOREA HAS A COMPETITIVENESS INDEX OF 80. SOUTH KOREA HAS A GLOBAL INEQUALITY INDEX OF 0.35. SOUTH KOREA HAS A GINI INDEX OF 0.31. SOUTH KOREA HAS A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX OF 0.915. SOUTH KOREA HAS A CORUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX OF 73. SOUTH KOREA HAS A RISK MANAGEMENT INDEX OF 85. SOUTH KOREA HAS A COMPETITIVENESS INDEX OF 80. SOUTH KOREA HAS A GLOBAL INEQUALITY INDEX OF 0.35. SOUTH KOREA HAS A GINI INDEX OF 0.31.

2. COMMANDER IN CHIEF SAHAB ZAHEER KHAN IS A MAJOR VICTORY FOR THE INDIAN ARMY. SOUTH KOREA IS TWICE AS LARGE AS INDIA AND SOUTH KOREA HAS A POPULATION OF 45 MILLION. SOUTH KOREA HAS A GDP OF 1.1 TRILLION DOLLARS. SOUTH KOREA HAS A GDP PER CAPITA OF 24,000 DOLLARS. SOUTH KOREA HAS A LIFE EXPECTANCY OF 82 YEARS. SOUTH KOREA HAS A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX OF 0.915. SOUTH KOREA HAS A CORUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX OF 73. SOUTH KOREA HAS A RISK MANAGEMENT INDEX OF 85. SOUTH KOREA HAS A COMPETITIVENESS INDEX OF 80. SOUTH KOREA HAS A GLOBAL INEQUALITY INDEX OF 0.35. SOUTH KOREA HAS A GINI INDEX OF 0.31.

3. PAKISTAN IS A MAJOR VICTORY FOR THE INDIAN ARMY. SOUTH KOREA IS TWICE AS LARGE AS INDIA AND SOUTH KOREA HAS A POPULATION OF 45 MILLION. SOUTH KOREA HAS A GDP OF 1.1 TRILLION DOLLARS. SOUTH KOREA HAS A GDP PER CAPITA OF 24,000 DOLLARS. SOUTH KOREA HAS A LIFE EXPECTANCY OF 82 YEARS. SOUTH KOREA HAS A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX OF 0.915. SOUTH KOREA HAS A CORUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX OF 73. SOUTH KOREA HAS A RISK MANAGEMENT INDEX OF 85. SOUTH KOREA HAS A COMPETITIVENESS INDEX OF 80. SOUTH KOREA HAS A GLOBAL INEQUALITY INDEX OF 0.35. SOUTH KOREA HAS A GINI INDEX OF 0.31.

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3:26 pm · 10 Jun 20 · Twitter for Android

425 Retweets 769 Likes

Social media wields a significant influence on society. Approximately 300 million new photos are published on Facebook every day, while 6,000 Tweets are generated every second. About 500 million people use the messaging app Telegram, and the most popular YouTube channels amass over 14 billion weekly views<sup>82</sup>. Social media platforms facilitate cross-societal connections and information exchange in ways that were inconceivable just two decades ago. Today, nearly everything is achievable through social media. However, the misuse of these platforms has also become rampant, with channels being utilized to incite violence, disseminate political unrest, and foment instability.

Moreover, not every negative social media post is entirely false. Some may promote problematic claims that don't necessarily classify as immediately harmful. These posts might also contain partial truths or be mostly accurate but presented in a misleading or out-of-context manner. Furthermore, establishing the source of certain false information can be quite challenging. Disinformation spread through social media can also be a component of influence operations, which are long-term efforts typically orchestrated by states and non-state organizations.

For instance, India created fake websites and channels to harm Pakistan, tarnishing its image and undermining its credibility. India even enlisted students to write anti-Pakistan content aimed at inflicting economic, social, and political damage to the country.

Domestic political instability, including killings, is more likely to occur when there are socio-political divisions. These divisions encompass serious governance or security crises, anti-democratic or weakening democratic regimes, and significant societal and political rifts. Severe social and political polarization is defined as the reinforcement of divisions within and between groups, coupled with the decline of socialization processes that would otherwise help alleviate tensions. Brutalizing ideologies, both formal and informal policies, as well as practices, contribute to its propagation. Furthermore, it serves to perpetuate perceived normative gaps between groups, with outgroups being perceived as threats to the security, survival, or pursuit of in-group objectives. In its most extreme manifestation, this polarization increasingly takes the form of

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<sup>82</sup> Kristina Hook and Ernesto Verdeja, "Social Media Misinformation and the Prevention of Political Instability and Mass Atrocities," *STIMSON*, July 17, 2022, <https://www.stimson.org/2022/social-media-misinformation-and-the-prevention-of-political-instability-and-mass-atrocities/>

aggressive behavior, including attacks on rivals. Highlighting the mutually reinforcing nature of radicalization dynamics, misinformation both feeds on and amplifies polarization.

In reality, the primary purpose of fake news is often disruption. It steers us away from the real issues at hand. The central problem lies in social media platforms and the tools that enable the dissemination of false information. Twitter and YouTube are two examples of social media sites that bear responsibilities in preventing the spread of misinformation. We are diverted from acknowledging the larger societal gaps that contribute to polarization by these social media platforms<sup>83</sup>. It is very important to consult the academic research and news reports, it is important that researchers and organizations continues to investigate the impact of fake news.

Each nation maintains a distinct foreign policy, primarily directed towards its neighboring countries in the modern era, emphasizing the avoidance of war, the peaceful resolution of disputes, and economic development. However, Indian policymakers have exhibited an uncertain approach, revealing an unclear stance towards Pakistan. Indian politicians assert that the most pressing foreign policy concern today revolves around Pakistan. On one hand, a significant disparity exists between Pakistan's nuclear capabilities, its policy concerning Kashmir, and its ambition to challenge India's existing order<sup>84</sup>. On the other hand, India's inability to effectively overcome these obstacles highlights the limitations imposed by significant policy decisions. The international weapons manufacturing industry stands out as the sole apparent beneficiary after nearly seven decades of hostilities between India and Pakistan. Since attaining independence, India and Pakistan have maintained distinctly antagonistic foreign policies towards each other, fueled by their historical rivalry. Owing to India and Pakistan's differing philosophies, the two nations have harbored hostile relations because of war and conflicting ideas.

India needs to negotiate with Pakistan as it seeks to achieve the status of regional hegemony. India is receiving support from the other states in its efforts to compete with China as a rising regional force. However, due to the lack of direct accessibility to Central Asia and the West, the China-

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<sup>83</sup> Mathias Osmundsen et al., "How partisan polarization drives the spread of fake news," Brookings.edu, May 13, 2021, <https://www.brookings.edu/techstream/how-partisan-polarization-drives-the-spread-of-fake-news/>

<sup>84</sup> Mathias Osmundsen et al., "How partisan polarization drives the spread of fake news," Brookings.edu, May 13, 2021, <https://www.brookings.edu/techstream/how-partisan-polarization-drives-the-spread-of-fake-news/>

Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has introduced a new dimension to Indian foreign policy. Consequently, India has initiated a two-pronged strategy towards Pakistan.

Firstly, India has escalated its efforts to employ the terrorism blame game to diplomatically isolate Pakistan. Secondly, when faced with terrorism, India tends to deviate from traditional approaches and resort to more forceful measures. Throughout its history, India has consistently employed a sophisticated strategy to erode Pakistan's standing in the international community, pursuing these objectives. India's primary motivation is its aspiration for regional hegemony and leadership. However, Pakistan remains a significant obstacle to the Indian government's interests in this pursuit according to reports. The Indian government closely monitors any direct or indirect attempts to destabilize or weaken Pakistan.

The overarching goal of Indian foreign policy is to isolate Pakistan, and India has adopted a multidimensional strategy to attain this objective. To achieve the most favorable outcomes, India criticizes Pakistan across various forums which include twitter and YouTube. The Pakistani nuclear program has faced stringent criticism, particularly in the aftermath of 9/11, which led to heightened security concerns aimed at undermining Pakistan's nuclear capabilities. An extensive security panic has been generated to propagate the notion that Pakistan's nuclear assets pose a threat of falling into the hands of terrorists or unauthorized entities. Acting under Western influence, India has initiated an ongoing disinformation campaign to perpetuate this idea.

It appears that India is currently being seen as an agent influenced by the West. India's covert and overt activities, sometimes in collaboration with non-state entities, are perceived as seriously threatening the security of Pakistan's nuclear program<sup>85</sup>. These non-state actors, who seem willing to prioritize personal gains over national interests, possess the potential to place Pakistan in a humiliating situation while aligning with the interests of their foreign backers. Among various opposing intelligence agencies, India's Research and Analysis Wing actively seeks opportunities to exploit the possibility of non-state actors targeting Pakistan's nuclear program.

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<sup>85</sup> Muhammad Nawaz Bhatti et al., "Indian Policy to isolate Pakistan at International Forum and the way forward," *Review of Economics and Development Studies*, Volume 5: No. 4, (December 2019):712, doi: : [www.publishing.globalcsrc.org/reads](http://www.publishing.globalcsrc.org/reads)

India's intention to exert pressure on Pakistan is evident in its pursuit of advanced weaponry and the execution of military drills, aimed at showcasing its capacity for swift strikes in potential conflicts. An illustrative instance is India's frequent border crossings along the Line of Control in Kashmir and its disputed claims of carrying out surgical strikes within Pakistan.

"India's alleged plan involves interfering in Pakistan's domestic affairs by providing support to certain disgruntled individuals. According to Indian spy Kulbushan Yadav, who is reportedly working as a RAW operative, India is implicated in terrorist activities in Balochistan and Karachi. The assertion is that by doing so, India is fomenting internal security threats within Pakistan and framing the nation as a harbinger of terrorists. The international community is said to be well aware of the distinction between Pakistan's efforts against terrorists who target its allies and those who challenge the legitimacy of its state. This purported dishonesty is believed to be isolating Pakistan's allies in the fight against terrorism and potentially creating opportunities for India to exploit.

On the other hand, India has consistently accused Pakistan of being a sponsor of terrorist activities, claiming that Pakistan fails to take adequate action to counter terrorism. However, there are allegations that India itself has orchestrated attacks within Pakistan and has provided training and weaponry to terrorists. India has been criticized for employing aggressive propaganda and diplomatic maneuvers to directly link Pakistan with international terrorism. The recent announcement of India and the United States collaborating to designate certain individuals as terrorists through the UN has caused significant concern in Pakistan, particularly during a joint session of the US Congress. This indicates that India might receive substantial support from the United States in designating any militant group as an international terrorist organization. For Pakistan, these developments pose challenges, given its ongoing diplomatic efforts, and some speculate that India might be pursuing this terrorism-focused, Pakistan-specific diplomatic strategy as a follow-up to its attempts at isolating Pakistan on the global stage."

On the other hand, India has consistently accused Pakistan of sponsoring terrorist activities, claiming that Pakistan fails to take adequate action to counter terrorism. However, there are allegations that India itself has orchestrated attacks within Pakistan and has provided training and weaponry to terrorists. India has been criticized for employing aggressive propaganda and diplomatic maneuvers to directly link Pakistan with international terrorism. The recent announcement of India and the United States collaborating to designate certain individuals as



terrorists through the UN has caused significant concern in Pakistan, particularly during a joint session of the US Congress. This indicates that India might receive substantial support from the United States in designating any militant group as an international terrorist organization according to confidential reports. For Pakistan, these developments pose challenges given its ongoing diplomatic efforts, and some speculate that India might be pursuing this terrorism-focused, Pakistan-specific diplomatic strategy as a follow-up to its attempts at isolating Pakistan on the global stage.

Social media wields significant influence in disseminating information; however, it is also employed to propagate fake news among sizable, technologically adept, and nationalistic populations who are inclined to accept negative portrayals of neighboring nations<sup>86</sup>. Consequently, a substantial number of individuals may embrace such misinformation. Admittedly, both India and Pakistan are culpable of generating false news, but numerous sources assert that India engages in a notably more extensive production. The potential ramifications encompass heightened tensions. Fortunately, this scenario has yet to materialize. One factor contributing to this outcome is the frequent issuance of vehement denials and clarifications by official authorities in response to the dissemination of erroneous information. There are some authorities that correct the false narrative and provide accurate news to people according to news reports on different channels.

India's Fake News agency which include Asian news International , is still targeting both the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, as well as the religious minorities, particularly Muslims, who reside within the borders of this Hindu-majority state. Indeed, both within India and in its seized territories, as well as in the wider region, the hardline Hindu authorities' objective is polarizing, violent, and hegemonic. Authorities in Pakistan have substantial proof that accounts based in India established trends on Twitter and YouTube that incited sectarian, religious, and ethnic hatred with the express purpose of destabilizing Pakistan's image and reputation. Indians posted on shady websites developed and posted fake news and other content exclusively for Pakistan the verified resources claimed about that.

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<sup>86</sup> Amir Zia , “ India fake News Propaganda,” *Pakistan Armed Forces Magazine*, (November 2021): 3, <https://hilal.gov.pk/eng-article/detail/NTYwMw==.html>

The global community, particularly Western capitals, must establish connections to comprehend how fake news and materials give rise to terrorism and violence, both within India and throughout the region, notably in Pakistan. The Fake News agency of India, along with its operations, continues to wield a deadly impact similar to financial support for terrorism in Pakistan. The fundamental driving force behind India's fake content operations, pursued with dual objectives, remains the Hindutva ideology of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party.

According to Hassan Zafar<sup>87</sup>, "In the Modi government, fifth-generation warfare has escalated due to the conflict between Hindus and Muslims. Kashmir stands out as a major point of contention fueling this intensification. Modi has acquired control over social media platforms, news channels, and journalists. Concurrently, the rise of Hindutva gained momentum under the Modi administration, with RSS and BJP leading the charge against Muslims. These entities have constructed narratives on social media branding Muslims as terrorists and portraying them as outsiders, while labeling Indians as insiders and pure souls. Twitter and Instagram have been utilized to propagate different hashtags that manipulate public perception and worsen the situation." Numerous Hindu proponents aligned with the BJP and its allies, such as the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, target Muslims and incite public sentiment against them by disseminating half-truths and outright falsehoods, employing propaganda as their preferred weapon. These extremists, backed by the Indian government, produce fabricated content using technology and maintain centralized control for disseminating misinformation. Both the mainstream media in India and the leaders of the BJP and RSS then legitimize the misinformation originating from these clandestine news websites and social media platforms.

The Srivastava Group, a New Delhi-based organization reportedly linked to RAW, is said to have been responsible for creating and managing a network of fabricated outlets<sup>88</sup>. Recently, it has come to light that among the 15 information datasets recognized by Twitter, there were 1198 accounts that tweeted about Pakistan. According to Twitter authorities, the origin of these datasets was traced back to India. The active network shared messages in English, Hindi, and Urdu languages.

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<sup>87</sup> Hassan Zafar, Assistant Professor of Film and TV

<sup>88</sup> Masud Ahmed Khan, "Indian Propaganda," *The nation*, (October 2022), <https://www.nation.com.pk/03-Oct-2022/indian-propaganda>

A majority of these accounts utilized fictitious profile images and falsely claimed to be Kashmiris residing in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) region. Many of the account bios began with phrases like "I love my India and 100% follow back" or "proud Indians and proud Kashmiris," or variations thereof. Behind all these accounts, it is alleged that there was an Indian operation at work.

This is not an isolated incident, as the mainstream Indian media has a history of playing games by presenting videos with fabricated narratives. For instance, The Times of India once documented a by-election demonstration in Gilgit on video, portraying it as a protest against Pakistan. The network of accounts in question asserted that minorities are not safe in Pakistan and accused the Pakistani army of human rights violations and unwarranted targeting of civilians, which was later proven to be untrue.

China was the second target of this network, where they went to great lengths to spread false information. They claimed that the Indian army outnumbered the Chinese PLA at the borders, which was a gross exaggeration. The network also depicted Indian soldiers who lost their lives in the Galwan Valley and other locations as heroes, while blaming China for the COVID pandemic. Additionally, they highlighted the issues faced by Uyghur Muslims in the Chinese Xinjiang province.

The two most popular accounts were @KashmirTraitors and @KashmirTraitor1, which were founded in 2021 and 2022, respectively. Interestingly, to draw attention and confirm the execution of their assigned tasks, these accounts frequently tagged the official account of the 15th Corps, @ChinarcorpsIA. There are two corps in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) region; the 15th Corps is responsible for the Kashmir Valley, while the 14th Corps, situated in Leh, oversees Ladakh. The 15th Corps utilized platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram to highlight the Indian army's operations in the IIOJK. Additionally, the fake accounts posted derogatory tweets targeting Pieter Friedrich and American activists and writers who oppose the BJP-led administration and the Hindutva philosophy.

In March 2021, Twitter administrators took action to terminate the majority of these fake accounts. The ongoing efforts by India to discredit and destabilize Pakistan require serious attention from the international community, particularly the European Union and the Organization of Islamic

Cooperation (OIC). The peace and stability in South Asia are at risk due to the BJP/RSS-led administration's commitment to Hindutva dominance.

In opposition to the Imran Khan Administration, Indian Major General Gaurav Arya posted numerous tweets. Now that Mr. Khan's government is crumbling, Indian General Gaurav Arya has tweeted: "Jail Bharo." He is suggesting that Imran Khan is addressing all Pakistanis with this statement. There are reports of PTI supporters surrounding his home to prevent Imran Khan from being apprehended. In Lahore, Imran and his wife are reportedly safe, while in London, his sons are said to be secure. The situation suggests that the rest of Pakistan may face restrictions. According to Indian sources, Imran Khan dismissed/expelled the BJP and took harsh actions against it. Based on these statements, the Indian government stated that Imran Khan suggested following the example of Arab countries and taking strong actions against the Modi government<sup>89</sup>.

In the Arab world, on Twitter, Imran Khan announced a boycott of Indian products. These comments have been seen as a result of heightened religious tensions in India against the Muslim religion and Muslims. The Indian spokesperson of the BJP, Nurpur Sharma, expelled Narveen Kumar after his controversial remarks about Prophet Muhammad. Various Muslim groups have protested against these incidents, emphasizing the importance of respecting all religions and avoiding targeting any particular group. Personal attacks on someone's religion are considered inappropriate actions.

The Balakot attacks represent another significant incident in which India escalated animosity towards Pakistan. In relation to these attacks, India claims that it conducted airstrikes against militants operating in Pakistani territory in response to a notable increase in tensions between the two countries. According to the Indian government, the strikes targeted a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist training facility near Balakot. Pakistan asserted that its jets had repelled the Indian aircraft and denied any casualties<sup>90</sup>.

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<sup>89</sup> Outlook.com, "Imran Khan asks Pakistan government to sever Ties with India over controversial remarks," June 08, 2022, <https://www.outlookindia.com/national/imran-khan-asks-pakistan-government-to-sever-ties-with-india-over-controversial-remarks-news-201153>

<sup>90</sup> BBC.Com, "Balakot : Indian air Strikes Target militants in Pakistan," February 26, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-47366718>

The effects of the war on terror have been particularly harmful to Pakistan. The increasing number of terrorism-related incidents and their consequences have driven Pakistan further into lawlessness and economic decline. The negative repercussions of terrorism on Pakistani society have ranged from socio-cultural changes in lifestyle to an atmosphere of fear and intolerance, along with economic setbacks. The adoption of legislation by the Government of Pakistan and the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) are viewed as significant official responses to combat terrorism. It's important to consider the consequences of the commencement of "Operation Zarb-e-Azb" and "Karachi Operation," as well as the extensive support from Pakistan's political, defense, and civic sectors. The launch of Operation "Raad-ul-Fasaad" by Law Enforcement Agencies has dismantled the Pakistani terrorist network that was supported by India. India's supervision of attacks in Pakistan has damaged the internal stability of the country according to media reports<sup>91</sup>.

Law enforcement authorities have effectively neutralized experienced terrorists as well as their facilitators and supporters. Urban terrorism in Karachi and Baloch sub-nationalism have both been significantly quelled, in addition to the Federally Administered Tribal Area. Pakistan is bravely making substantial efforts at the global and regional levels to sustain the fight against terrorism through inter-governmental cooperation. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that Pakistan has evolved into a frontline state in the war against terrorism. Over time, Pakistan's efforts against terrorism will become more apparent. Normalcy is quickly returning to daily life in Pakistan following the defeat of the terrorists. This is evident from the increased participation of people from all walks of life in leisure and recreational activities, such as celebrating national holidays, cultural festivals, and the staging of the PSL cricket tournament final in Lahore.

On the other hand, India is waging an ongoing propaganda war against Pakistan through its media and intelligence service, RAW, as well as other intelligence agencies hostile to Pakistan. India say that Pakistan is an unsafe country for travel and has also cancelled cricket matches with Pakistan according to verified reports<sup>92</sup>. This blame game by India needs to be addressed comprehensively.

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<sup>91</sup> BBC.Com, "Balakot : Indian air Strikes Target militants in Pakistan," February 26, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-47366718>

<sup>92</sup> Masud Ahmed Khan, "Indian Propaganda," *The nation*, (October 2022), <https://www.nation.com.pk/03-Oct-2022/indian-propaganda>

By presenting a counter narrative that highlights India's own strengths and weaknesses, particularly the state-sponsored terrorism being perpetrated in various states of the Indian union, Pakistan needs to effectively counter India's efforts to distort its international image.

Pakistan can deal with the security risks posed by India and continue to maintain a credible deterrent. Pakistan needs to address the expanding support of the United States for Afghanistan and India. To achieve this, Pakistan will need to formulate strategies that can counter any harmful American attitudes towards its vital interests while also preserving its tactical cooperation with China. Given the ongoing tension between China and the United States, this stands as the major foreign policy challenge for Islamabad. Thus, Pakistan must clearly and effectively plan and execute its foreign policy to safeguard its interests within the international community.

The time has come for Pakistan to take the initiative and launch new diplomatic efforts aimed at urging its longtime allies in the Arab world to acknowledge their strategic mistakes. Pakistan should initiate an international campaign to promote its genuine identity and prioritize nuclear deterrence as its primary strategic objective. The security of Pakistan holds the utmost importance. Prompt and effective measures must be taken to thwart the Indian-Afghan intelligence-sponsored attacks on Pakistan's security forces and civilians from Afghanistan, which are being carried out under the guise of TTP militants and Balochistan Liberation Army rebels.

To prevent India from destabilizing Pakistan, comprehensive measures are necessary to counter its efforts to incite domestic unrest in Balochistan, rural Sindh, and Karachi. Islamabad should now engage both military and civilian leadership to thoroughly assess India's intentions and policies towards Pakistan, and to formulate a rational strategy to counter each aspect of their approach. In terms of viable countermeasures within the ongoing comprehensive dialogue, Pakistan needs to be clear.

To enhance Pakistan's reputation within the international community, civil society organizations and academic institutions should play a role. Pakistan should implement anti-propaganda programs and strengthen its presence on social media. The construction, regulation, and maintenance of telecommunication services in Pakistan are rigorously overseen by the Pakistan

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Telecommunication Authority, which plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the rights of Pakistani telecommunications users.

Regarding India's actions against Muslims amounting to genocide, it is crucial for Pakistan to take a stand. Acts targeting Muslims and other minorities must cease, and freedoms of prayer and speech should be granted without constraint.

## CHAPTER THREE

### FIFTH-GENERATION WARFARE AND GROWING TENSIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN

The main themes of this chapter are Fifth-Generation Warfare and the rising tensions between India and Pakistan. In 2019, the EU DisinfoLab report discovered a significant operation aimed at Pakistani organizations, furthering Indian objectives. The "Indian Chronicles," a series of 55 operations, revived obsolete media, think institutes, and NGOs. This network operates in Geneva and Brussels, spreading anti-Pakistan misinformation<sup>93</sup>. In 2019, false media, think tanks, and NGOs supporting Indian objectives were uncovered. According to the EU DisinfoLab, over 750 websites with Indian support have been active in 119 nations. Their primary effort was to undermine Pakistan. They submitted fake addresses to the UN and registered websites with fake phone numbers. The Indian Chronicles also organized apparently multi-stakeholder gatherings where all speakers were obligated to them. Additionally, Indians invented dozens of journalist identities and registered the names of deceased people to attend events five years after their passing. Indian media outlets frequently quoted and republished one another. India employed politicians who genuinely cared about minority or women's rights to further geopolitical interests. They provided a platform for far-right politicians when their objectives aligned.

Furthermore, the war of hashtags has played a crucial role in disseminating false information about Pakistan. The propagation of misinformation and anti-state content on platforms like Twitter, web links, and YouTube exemplifies this phenomenon. According to Digital Rights Monitor, 61% of the tweets within the hashtag campaign "Civil war in Pakistan" - which falsely asserted the existence of a civil war in Pakistan - originated from India. India propagated fabricated news regarding a civil war in Karachi with the intention of tarnishing Pakistan's international image. Among the contributors to this trend, New Delhi accounted for the highest proportion at 10% of the total tweet volume. The hashtag generated a total of 84,000 tweets, replies, and retweets, reaching its peak at 6,688 tweets per hour. Retweets comprised 85% of the hashtag's usage, indicating a deliberate effort to amplify the trend. Notable cities such as Mumbai, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Pune, and Jaipur were the top contributors to these hashtags. Notably, several of the

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<sup>93</sup> Aqeel Ahmad Gichki, "Role of Media in the Fifth Generation Warfare: The Indian Information War against Pakistan," *Journal of Mass Communication*, Vol. 27, (November 2022):68, <https://jmcd-uok.com/index.php/jmcd/article/download/240/110/631>



most active, popular, and prominent accounts that propagated the fake hashtag were from India, disseminating false information against Pakistan.

The Digital Rights Foundation has examined the practice of using false images and videos to spread misinformation and create a counter-narrative about the government. According to the investigative report, anti-Pakistan Twitter campaigns involved pro-Indian accounts. The report lists the following factors as key themes in carrying out tricks through this campaign: the operation was shaped by two categories of Twitter accounts - verified and unverified accounts. Verified accounts used the Karachi bombing incident and the opposition marches to disseminate content related to the civil unrest and instability in Pakistan. Furthermore, they made an effort to spread the word about the instability and unrest in the main province of Punjab and the financial center of Karachi. On Twitter accounts, fake images were posted in an attempt to spread false information. In 2020, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority requested that Twitter take action against the perpetrators of anti-Pakistan propaganda on its platform. There were 18,700 and 3,384 tweets using the hashtag (#) against Pakistan. India has traditionally employed false information to advance its propaganda against Pakistan. In October 2020, on Indian Twitter accounts, rumors of a civil war in Karachi, Pakistan, flourished. The allegations were baseless, yet the story still garnered a lot of attention on Indian news websites.

Outsourcing news articles to promote Baloch separatist organizations in Pakistan is another propaganda and misinformation strategy that was employed by India. It has been discovered that several Indian websites post content promoting anti-Pakistan organizations. The following Indian YouTube channels share content critical of Pakistan.

<b>YouTube Channels</b>	<b>Anti - Muslim Content</b>	<b>Total Subscribers</b>
WION <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch=Peva7kGUpIk">https://www.youtube.com/watch=Peva7kGUpIk</a>	Shares dis-information related to Pakistan/ Imran khan arrested videos	7.47Million
Study IQ education <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BEGc16SFi7Y">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BEGc16SFi7Y</a>	Anti-Pakistan content	14.3Million

Hindustan Times (YouTube channel and Website) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/c/htdotcom/videos">https://www.youtube.com/c/htdotcom/videos</a>	Shares content related to separatist groups in Balochistan	5.44Million
Defensive Offensive <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEE06VropnQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEE06VropnQ</a>	Share anti-Pakistan views, glorify terrorist groups and incite the youth against Pakistan.	1.7Million
<b>Websites</b>	<b>Anti-Pakistan Content</b>	<b>Total Subscribers</b>
<a href="https://www.newsintervention.com/">https://www.newsintervention.com/</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/NewsIntervene?s=20">https://twitter.com/NewsIntervene?s=20</a>	Support Militant groups in Balochistan	13K
<a href="https://www.thehindu.com/search/?q=Balochistan+Liberation+Army&amp;order=DESC&amp;sort=publishdate">https://www.thehindu.com/search/?q=Balochistan+Liberation+Army&amp;order=DESC&amp;sort=publishdate</a>	Share news of insurgent attacks on security forces in Pakistan.	1.33M
<a href="https://www.hindustantimes.com/">https://www.hindustantimes.com/</a>	Content related to separatist groups in Balochistan.	5.44M

India is aware that it cannot engage in a full-scale conflict with Pakistan because of its nuclear weapons. It has been employing hybrid forms of warfare, such as media strategies, to weaken the will of Pakistani youth and damage Pakistan's reputation abroad. Over the last few years, its news stations have not only beaten the drums of war but have also successfully manipulated a vast number of listeners. In addition to its media sources, Indian films play a significant role in disseminating extremely unfavorable propaganda towards Pakistan.

Since the beginning of their rivalry, India and Pakistan have been at odds. India, being a larger nation with a bigger economy and population, has used negative propaganda against Pakistan more extensively than any other nation ever has<sup>94</sup>. The world is being exposed to anti-Pakistan messages through Bollywood films, where Pakistan is often portrayed as a failed state. Furthermore, there is a portrayal of Pakistan as a nation that harbors terrorist groups, with many Indian films depicting it as the main base of operations for the Taliban. The Hindu nationalist administration has intensified its propaganda efforts within the Indian film industry, leading to the yearly production of numerous anti-Pakistan films. These films might not seem to significantly impact Pakistan as a whole, but the subtle signals they convey will influence how the rest of the world perceives Pakistan.

Radical elements in various professions do not want the countries to establish peaceful relations, despite citizens from both India and Pakistan working to cooperate through sports and the arts. The Indian film industry has produced numerous anti-Pakistan films over the past 60 years.

### **Indian movies that are anti-Pakistan**

<b>Indian Movies</b>	<b>Anti-Pakistan Content</b>
Shershaah that was released in 2021	Against Pakistan army and anti-Pakistan
Sooryavanshi released in 2021	Against Pakistan army
Haider released in 2014	Against Pakistan and anti-Muslims
Children of War released in 2014	Against Pakistan army

<sup>94</sup> Aqeel Ahmad Gichki, "Role of Media in the Fifth Generation Warfare: The Indian Information War against Pakistan," *Journal of Mass Communication*, Vol. 27, (November 2022):68, <https://jmcd-uok.com/index.php/jmcd/article/download/240/110/631>

Phantom release date 2015	Anti-Pakistan
Sarbajeet Singh released in 2016	Against Pakistan army and anti-Pakistan
A Wednesday released in 2016	Against Pakistan and anti-Muslims

The Indian media often misrepresents Pakistan in its films, using both speech and visuals to promote conflict. For example, in Indian films, Pakistanis are sometimes portrayed as corrupt politicians, terrorists, and generally negative characters. This portrayal perpetuates the ongoing conflict between the two nations. This media war constitutes a modern form of conflict, where media focuses on and emphasizes one aspect of the situation<sup>95</sup>.

For instance, Indian media produces films critical of Pakistan, depicting the country in an unfavorable light. Pakistani characters are often portrayed as terrorists, which creates a false impression among international audiences that all Pakistanis are linked to terrorism. Bollywood movies like "Padmavat" and "Lipstick under My Burkha" have depicted Muslims as villains, presenting them as violent and oppressive. These films contribute to the misinformation about Muslims in India.

The year 2022 witnessed a surge in Islamophobic content in Hindi cinema. Notably, the film "Kashmiri Flies" falsely depicted Kashmiri Pandits being targeted by Muslims, distorting the reality of the situation. This movie was created to misrepresent Muslims and spread misinformation.

The movie "The Kerala Story," which was expected to release in 2023, has generated significant controversy due to regional and religious backlash it received<sup>96</sup>. In the trailer of the movie, a

<sup>95</sup> Faiza Bajwa et al., "Analysis of Indian Films Propaganda against Muslims and Pakistan," *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, Vol. 2, No. 1, ( June 2018): 380, <https://pssr.org.pk/issues/v2/1/analysis-of-indian-films-propaganda-against-muslims-and-pakistan.pdf>

<sup>96</sup> MuslimMirror.com, " How Bollywood is Fueling Islamophobia in India," November 23, 2022, <https://muslimmirror.com/eng/how-bollywood-is-fuelling-islamophobia-in-india/>

Keralite woman named Shalini, who is wearing a burqa, explains how she was allegedly forced to convert to Islam, changing her identity to Fatima Ba. The narrative portrays her as being employed by ISIS as a terrorist, along with 32,000 other girls. This film strongly emphasizes the idea that Muslims are terrorists and is unmistakably an instrument of anti-Muslim propaganda.

Indian media misrepresents Pakistan's image in its films and uses speech and visuals to promote conflict towards Pakistan<sup>97</sup>. The Indian media presents news stories with a focus on Pakistan, while Pakistani media often responds with denials. Today, media plays a role in instigating conflict between the two nations by amplifying various statements, exacerbating tensions rather than helping to resolve problems. This media war involves mutual mockery and taunting between the two sides.

Indian media produces films critical of Pakistan, portraying the country in a negative light. These films often depict Pakistanis as terrorists, creating an impression abroad that Pakistanis are associated with terrorism and the killing of innocent people. The longstanding discussion on crime and media has blurred the once-distinct line between audience and object in terms of production and consumption. Audiences now interact with the crime depictions that the media creates and disseminates.

Modern warfare, aided by digital media technology like the Internet, has transformed the visual portrayal of conflict. In the contemporary era, war is waged virtually rather than physically, with participants from both sides utilizing platforms like YouTube, Twitter, and other networking websites as weapons, replacing traditional bombs and bullets.

In the action-packed movie "The Phantom Centre," the focus is on an Indian agent and his facilitator who are assigned the task of eliminating every individual responsible for the 2008 Mumbai attacks<sup>98</sup>. This movie takes a stance against Lashkar-e-Taiba, a Pakistan-based

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<sup>97</sup> Faiza Bajwa et al., "Analysis of Indian Films Propaganda against Muslims and Pakistan," *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, Vol. 2, No. 1, (June 2018): 380, <https://pssr.org.pk/issues/v2/1/analysis-of-indian-films-propaganda-against-muslims-and-pakistan.pdf>

<sup>98</sup> Kashan Atif and Zubair Shafiq, "Discourse on Terrorism: Image of Pakistan in Bollywood film phantom," *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol. XL, No. 1, (November 2019): 180, <https://tehqeeqat.org/downloadpdf/28545>

organization, portraying it as the perpetrator behind the Mumbai attacks. India asserts that Lashkar-e-Taiba is a terrorist organization involved in various acts of terrorism.

<b>Phantom Movie</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Lashkar-e-Taiba attack on Hindustan soil	It blames Pakistan based organization for attacks on Mumbai.
The man whose name was Moosa Ahmed he is from Pakistan his mother died when he was eight years old and his father was killed in Afghanistan.	In addition to that the detained individual is from Pakistan it also depicts the direct Pakistan's relationship with the suspected terrorist. The statement of Moosa father being "killed" in Afghanistan is another significant interpretation as it implies that he may possibly be engaged in these kinds of actions. These two examples tells people that Pakistanis are not only participating in terrorist attacks in India but also in those in Afghanistan.
During investigation Moosa said that Lashkar-e-Taiba was planning another attack on India.	India claimed that this organization is so called Terrorist organization.

Currently, New Delhi is potentially putting Pakistan's national security at risk by employing secret tactics, including information warfare, surprise, deception, and significant use of proxy forces<sup>99</sup>. In a list of nations with the lowest data security, Pakistan ranked eighth. It is susceptible to informational threats such as information warfare, data espionage, digital terrorism, and data/information theft. Given that both India and Pakistan possess nuclear weapons and understand that a full-scale conventional war would lead to a nuclear disaster, there are serious consequences

<sup>99</sup> Muhammad Ashraf Nadeem et al., "Fifth- Generation warfare and its challenges to Pakistan," *Pak. Journal of Int'L Affairs*, Vol 4, Issue 1, (March 2021) : 230, <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v4i1.118>

for Pakistan. Nevertheless, as states continue to engage in hybrid warfare, the possibility of conflict remains.

In 2018, Pakistan's former military chief, General Qamar Javed Bajwa, clearly stated that the nation had entered a phase of fifth-generation warfare conflict and needed to be prepared for it<sup>100</sup>. As a result, analysts, policymakers, and members of Pakistan's strategic elite are better informed. Pakistan has now realized that nuclear attacks are a last-resort option, especially after observing India's hesitation to launch conventional strikes in 2019. Currently, India is making efforts to employ non-linear, unconventional, and psychological warfare against Pakistan according to reports. Pakistan's response will be reciprocated in kind. Consequently, nuclear-armed states will consider this a significant area of concern in South Asia and beyond. Powerful nations are utilizing various forms of warfare against weaker ones, and India, being a major regional power, might also employ these tactics. Presently, Pakistan is confronted with two distinct challenges.

In contrast to non-kinetic, intangible "soft power," which is utilized, "hard power" primarily consists of military force and kinetic action. Only kinetic approaches involve offensive strategies, exploitation of racial and religious differences, and even terrorism. Pakistan views conventional military strikes as a transition from tactical to operational and further to technical level activities. Finally, there is nuclear power, which serves a variety of purposes. Pakistan has excelled in the hard power sector and Pakistan want to become a significant player in hard power because Pakistan want to promote stability, security and peace.

In February 2019 the report come in Dawn news paper where, the Pakistani army claimed to have bested the Indian air force, dispelling a long-held belief that India maintained a conventional advantage. Additionally, upon the arrival of their naval forces, a Pakistani submarine was promptly detected. When a submarine is discovered, it becomes an easy target. Consequently, the Indians removed their Brahmos rockets due to the potential for severe reprisal from Pakistan. This event shattered an age-old myth. People are unaware that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi began using provocative language as soon as India's claims were debunked.

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<sup>100</sup> Muhammad Ashraf Nadeem et al., "Fifth- Generation warfare and its challenges to Pakistan," *Pak. Journal of Int'L Affairs*, Vol 4, Issue 1, (March 2021) : 230, <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v4i1.118>

Traditionally, nuclear-armed states that possess greater wealth or strategic advantage over their adversaries refrain from resorting to nuclear rhetoric in their communications. While Pakistan previously engaged in nuclear-related rhetoric in 2002 the report claimed, that time was different. India employed phrases such as the "night of massacre" and "we have not kept nuclear weaponry for Diwali." Pakistan possesses the military might necessary to defend itself, and its media-based soft power is formidable. However, Pakistan has never been able to comprehend why certain news is favorable while other news is detrimental to its interests.

The media cannot be solely blamed, as it operates within these dynamics, but there is a need for improved education. This predicament plagues Pakistan because its citizens do not align with the political elite who seem to be influenced by the adversary. India seizes upon every minor misstep or oversight that people make.

India is suspected of playing the Balochistan card against Pakistan, granting media access to anti-Pakistan organizations, as long as Pakistan continues to raise the Kashmir issue. The nationalist government in India, which is investing heavily in fifth-generation warfare compared to previous administrations, poses a significant threat to Pakistan's future development goals. Moreover, Balochistan has been a focal point of Indian "hybrid warfare" for several years. In March 2016, an Indian Navy officer named Lt. Comd. Kulbhushan was arrested in Mashkel, Balochistan during a counterintelligence operation. Jadhav allegedly supported militants and separatists from the Baloch region, fueling sectarianism across the nation. India persists in targeting Balochistan while exploiting the vulnerabilities of both anti-Pakistan organizations and the Baloch people<sup>101</sup>. The primary objective of India seems to be undermining Pakistan. The challenge of managing online sources and social media is also prevalent in Pakistan. The youth, well-versed in media, frequently watch anti-propaganda films produced in India. Figures like Major Gaurav Arya shape public perceptions among the youth, portraying Pakistan as their adversary and thereby creating problems for Pakistan that will impact on the perceptions of the public.

In the twenty-first century, both governmental and non-governmental operations will be required to protect against the threat of information warfare. Due to the nation's heavy dependence on

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<sup>101</sup> Dawn News Paper, "Transcript of Raw agent Kulbhushans confessional statement", Dawn paper, last updated March 30, 2016, [http:// www. Dawn.com/news/1248786](http://www.Dawn.com/news/1248786)



information and information-based technology, potential enemies now possess a practical weapon in the form of information warfare. Today, information-based conflicts can emerge anywhere in the world. The security of Pakistan's national interests depends on its capacity to identify and counter this new form of warfare, which is information warfare. While the concept of "fifth-generation warfare" has begun to find acceptance in Pakistani security policy discourse, proper safeguarding against fifth-generation warfare is still necessary.

Therefore, the government will establish the Hybrid Warfare Stratagem Centre. To assist Pakistani decision-makers in fully comprehending the concept of hybrid warfare, this Centre will collaborate with the Pakistan and International Relations. Together, they will develop metrics to effectively track incidents, thoroughly identify security vulnerabilities, and consider how hybrid threats might evolve in the future.

That Centre is also investigating public-private partnerships to enhance its capacity in countering hybrid warfare threats. Additionally, the hybrid Centre will develop a comprehensive system for exchanging information across all branches of government, intelligence organizations, and armed forces. To meet modern needs, the coordination system used by civilian law enforcement agencies needs reorganization. The collaboration and information sharing between various departments, including the police and intelligence agencies, are very poor. These departments should receive the necessary training and tools to utilize AI (Artificial Intelligence), etc. Furthermore, the government must foster a culture of information sharing and equally plan solutions between various provincial and federal law enforcement agencies. The strategy of acting alone must be rejected as it is not a good idea. Consequently, the information gathering and decision-making processes are structured in a pyramid shape from bottom to top. Many government and military organizations have made hierarchical structure for effective decision making.

The mindset that Pakistan must adopt towards this new threat needs a drastic shift, and the following policy proposals can be utilized to counter Indian information warfare. In 2019 Balakot incidence is the notable example where both countries engage in information warfare. To achieve this, it is crucial that the youth comprehends the true Pakistani ideology. This process will prevent forces opposed to Pakistan from influencing opinions about its authentic ideology. The media must become more adept at discerning the difference between what benefits the nation and what doesn't, as it currently exhibits weaknesses in this aspect. Pakistan has thus far struggled to articulate why

certain news is positive while other news is detrimental to its cause, successful development projects portray positive news while misinformation shows negative news.

To counter false information, deception, and fake news, the government should ensure the effective enforcement of regulations on media outlets by the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority. The media should be leveraged to craft narratives that enhance the nation's image. Strengthening the capabilities of civilian law enforcement organizations is vital to address and successfully combat sub-conventional threats, both domestically and externally.

It is of paramount importance for Pakistan to use media as a tool to convey its own messages and prevent the dissemination of anti-Pakistan information to the youth, who are a foundational pillar of society. Instead of broadcasting films, television shows, and cartoons from foreign nations, Pakistan should produce its own content. Currently, Pakistan only produces around 50 films annually, in stark contrast to India's production of over 700 films. To bridge this gap, support for Pakistan's film industry is essential. This industry can then be harnessed to create films that depict significant historical figures and events, such as Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Allama Iqbal, and other prominent personalities.

The development of a robust media infrastructure will always confer advantages to the nation. Therefore, Pakistan should work on enhancing its reputation and providing guidance to journalists and young individuals.

In recent years, the routine utilization of fifth-generation warfare policies to undermine Pakistan's national security by India and other compatible nations has emerged. Alongside employing terrorism, they have also propagated false information on social media, stoking public anger. They adeptly exploit social divisions and harness the power of digital technology. India has engaged the Pakistani armed forces while fostering societal isolation and driving a wedge between state institutions, achieved by fomenting military tensions along the border and frequently disregarding international border standards by firing across the Line of Control. India has also intervened in Balochistan and is backing the opposition there by deploying spies in the region. Moreover, India has harnessed misinformation and Hollywood to tarnish Pakistan's image and disrupt relations between its people and government.

Pakistan, a responsible nuclear state, deemed it imperative to become a nuclear power following India's acquisition of nuclear capabilities due to the severe threat posed to Pakistan<sup>102</sup>. In 1998, Pakistan achieved the status of a nuclear state. Upon witnessing Pakistan's nuclear prowess, the United States and India perceived a threat, leading them to disseminate propaganda against Pakistan, labeling it an unstable and unsafe country. Meanwhile, the international media criticized Pakistan and disseminated unfavorable news about the country. International media, alongside think tanks and nuclear experts, propagated biased narratives about Pakistan. In 2004, the European Union Parliament criticized Pakistan for nuclear weapons proliferation. During this period, Pakistan endeavored to safeguard its nuclear installations.

"When it comes to the Pakistan Army, it has engaged in three wars with India. India has consistently criticized the Pakistan Army, often spreading negative information. However, the Pakistan Army is widely considered the most disciplined and well-managed institution in Pakistan. India's actions are often seen as attempts to divert international attention from the issue of Indian-occupied Kashmir. This leads to India spreading false information about the Pakistan Army.

India claims to seek improved relations with Pakistan, yet it portrays the Pakistan Army as a major obstacle hindering bilateral progress. However, these allegations against the Pakistan Army are largely baseless and can be viewed as part of India's propaganda efforts. India's current policies, including the employment of hybrid warfare or fifth-generation warfare tactics, indicate its desire to maintain a strained relationship with Pakistan.

This atmosphere of mistrust poses significant challenges for Pakistan. India's approach seems aimed at gaining a strategic advantage in conventional warfare, enabling it to conduct limited military operations against Pakistan without crossing the threshold of nuclear escalation. It's important to recognize that such limited operations could easily escalate and result in dire consequences. The potential for nuclear conflict looms as long as India and Pakistan remain in a state of conflict.

Given this situation, Pakistan's leadership must thoroughly reevaluate its national security strategy. In the face of potential fifth-generation warfare attacks targeting society and the state, a

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<sup>102</sup> Muhammad Ashraf Nadeem et al., "Fifth- Generation warfare and its challenges to Pakistan," *Pak. Journal of Int'L Affairs*, Vol 4, Issue 1, (March 2021) : 230, <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v4i1.118>

comprehensive strategy to counter such tactics becomes essential. Preventing a national disaster necessitates careful planning and preparation to effectively combat fifth-generation warfare."

The recent legislation issued by the Pakistani government is being criticized by some for granting the government more control over how its citizens use social media. Social media platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, and Google are mandated by the "Citizens Protection Rules, 2020" to remove or delete material that the government considers undesirable<sup>103</sup>. Additionally, these companies are required to furnish data and information to the government. According to officials, the rules will empower them to monitor and reduce internet content related to "terrorism, extremism, hate speech, fake news, incitement to violence, and national security.

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<sup>103</sup> Seerat Chabba, "The Pakistani government has passed a new set of laws it says targets "terrorism and fake news" on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. Critics say the rules open the door to mass censorship", DW news.com, February 24, 2020, <https://www.dw.com/en/pakistans-new-internet-laws-tighten-control-over-social-media/a-52375508>

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PAKISTAN TO MANAGE WAR OF NARRATIVES

#### Findings:

- Both India and Pakistan employ propaganda and mis-information campaigns to shape narratives in their favour. These campaigns include false information, doctored images and videos and mis-lead narratives to gain public support.
- Twitter serves as a battleground for hashtag wars between India and Pakistan. Supporters from both countries use different hashtags to express their opinions, amplify their viewpoints, and build online communities. These hashtag wars between India and Pakistan have become increasingly intense, evolving into online confrontations.
- Trolling and online harassment are very prominent; supporters from both sides engage in abusive language, personal attacks, and online harassment against groups and individuals. This behavior further creates animosity.
- Both countries utilize fake accounts to amplify opinions and manipulate online conversations. These accounts generate propaganda and push specific agendas. These types of networks further manipulate public opinion.
- Social media platforms are used to amplify existing divisive issues between India and Pakistan, which include territorial disputes, historical disagreements, and cultural differences. Supporters from both India and Pakistan exploit these sensitive topics, further fueling hatred between the two nations.
- Political leaders and government officials from both sides use Twitter platforms to exchange views, issue statements, and shape international perceptions. On the other hand, India's major focus is on Pakistan, aiming to isolate Pakistan from international platforms. As a result, India generates various online contents on Twitter and YouTube that fuel hatred between the two nations.
- The hashtags #Pulwamattack and #Indiastrikesback, originating in India, generated content that was pro-India according to research journal. The hashtags #Pulwamadrama and #Pakistanzindabad, originating in Pakistan, produced mostly content in favor of Pakistan.

However, compared to the #Pakistanzindabad hashtag, which primarily produced pro-Pakistan content, the #Pulwamadrama hashtag created a higher proportion of neutral content (13%). This might be due to the Pulwama attack, which claimed the lives of 45 troops, taking place in India. Consequently, there were initially objective tweets about the incident, including 9% of coverage that favored India. This limited positive coverage also encompasses tweets from Indian-based Twitter accounts. Public opinion polls in India and Pakistan reflect a strong mutual dislike. A 2017 survey revealed that up to 95% of Pakistanis considered India their most significant enemy. Similarly, more than 75% of Indians view Pakistan as an enemy, with 63% considering Pakistan their primary adversary (Pew Research, 2018). In the Pulwama attack, Pakistan faced numerous challenges, including backlash from countries like the United States, Russia, and China. The American Prime Minister stated that Pakistan was the most dangerous place to live. Other countries, including India, accused Pakistan of supporting terrorists worldwide. Consequently, India seizes every opportunity to isolate Pakistan from the global community.

- The Indian media often misrepresents Pakistan in Indian films, employing both speech and visuals to exacerbate conflict. There are concerns that India may be funding certain channels to propagate hate towards Pakistan. Presently, media plays a role in fueling the tensions between the two nations. This media-driven conflict has modern dimensions, wherein media highlights and sensationalizes specific aspects of the discord. For instance, Indian media produces films that criticize Pakistan and depict the country in an unfavorable light. These Indian films frequently portray Pakistanis as terrorists, inadvertently creating a perception in other nations that Pakistanis are synonymous with terrorism<sup>104</sup>. It's evident that numerous websites and YouTube channels share anti-Pakistan content. Among these, channels like WION, Hindustan Times, The Hindu, and others, boasting millions of subscribers, contribute to the dissemination of a negative image of Pakistan worldwide. Many films, including titles like "Shershaah," "Haider," and "Sarbjit," contain elements of anti-Muslim sentiment and also cast the Pakistan army in a negative light. Given that Bollywood is a globally recognized industry with international appeal, when such portrayals of Pakistan make their way into these

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<sup>104</sup> Faiza Bajwa et al., "Analysis of Indian Films Propaganda against Muslims and Pakistan," *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, Vol. 2, No. 1, ( June 2018): 380, <https://pssr.org.pk/issues/v2/1/analysis-of-indian-films-propaganda-against-muslims-and-pakistan.pdf>

movies, it not only impacts Pakistan's domestic reputation but also tarnishes its image on the international stage. There are the studies shows that critical thinking in school curricula can improve student ability to evaluate information sources and reduce their susceptibility to fake news.

- Major Gaurav's tweets about the Pakistan Army and claim that Pakistan is the most corrupt country. He asserts that the Pakistan Army sends innocent and impoverished individuals for jihad, while sending their own sons abroad for higher education that tweets were on his tweeter account. These statements are highly contentious. By making such tweets, he spreads hatred among people towards the Pakistan Army. The main intention appears to be fueling discord within Pakistan and its leadership, which could lead to significant issues. This approach could potentially isolate Pakistan not just domestically, but also on a global scale. The tweets depict how India portrays the image of the Pakistan Army. India fake allegation towards Pakistan that Pakistan Army neglects its soldiers, failing to provide even basic amenities. Moreover, Indian official blame the Pakistan Army of utilizing terrorists to harm India both internally and externally that is totally wrong. The tweets received 425 retweets and garnered 769 likes. Indian government seems to be pursuing a strategy aimed at discrediting the Pakistan Army and sowing seeds of animosity among the people of Pakistan.
- Major Gaurav Arya states that Imran Khan and his wife are safe, as his co-workers have surrounded his wife and are working hard to ensure the safety of both Imran Khan and his wife. He further mentioned that Mr. Khan's sons are safe in London, while the rest of Pakistan is suffering from this situation. Imran Khan doesn't seem to care about Pakistan; he appears to be selfish and only concerned about himself and his family. The hardships faced by Pakistan are seemingly none of Imran Khan's business.
- Semi Grewal Indian actress mentioned that before Imran Khan came into power, she claimed that a Pir Sahib had prophesized his future as a prime minister. This prediction, coupled with his eventual assassination, adds a somber aspect to Imran Khan's journey. Numerous Bollywood celebrities have disseminated hate-filled tweets about Imran Khan's government, alleging corruption and asserting that both he and his wife exploit their people without contributing positively to their country. These tweets reflect the notion that India portrays

Pakistan's politicians as self-serving manipulators of their populace, prioritizing personal gain. However, reality presents a contrasting perspective. The situation is more nuanced. India's reactions might stem from an inability to tolerate Pakistan's advancement on the international stage. Pakistan's strong friendship with China and their collaborative efforts on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), focusing on infrastructure development and other initiatives, appear to provoke India's discontent.



**Recommendations:**

The relationship between Pakistan and India has always been difficult since their division, with many unresolved concerns. This chapter highlights ideas for Pakistan to handle the war of narratives against India. Despite both nations making efforts to find common ground and desiring to benefit from peace through bilateral talks and agreements, a state of cold war has consistently existed between the two. There are several vital tips for Pakistan to manage the war of narratives effectively.

- Pakistan has been significantly impacted by the West-Indian nexus, leading to the current challenges faced by the nation. However, Pakistan is fully equipped and capable of overcoming the difficulties posed by hybrid warfare or fifth-generation warfare. To achieve this, Pakistan needs a comprehensive counter-strategy to enhance the effectiveness of its defense. Presently, Pakistan is engaged in a conflict where adversaries employ hybrid warfare and fifth-generation tactics to target the nation. India, in particular, aims to divide Pakistani society along ethnic and religious lines. It is imperative for Pakistan to take decisive action to thwart these plots, preventing further societal fragmentation and addressing sectarian and ethnic conflicts. The Pakistani government should be proactive in this regard.
- The numerous domestic challenges currently faced by Pakistan can be attributed, in part, to the absence of "Good Governance" on social media. It is imperative for Pakistan to swiftly address the valid concerns of its public by fostering effective governance. Strengthening regulations pertaining to social media and countering propagandist efforts launched by external forces should be a priority. Another crucial aspect is education, which is widely recognized as a tool for societal transformation and global progress. Pakistan should initiate technical education programs aimed at cultivating and enhancing its talents. The adoption of a standardized national curriculum is crucial and requires immediate action to ensure this. Such measures will offer equal opportunities for upward social mobility to all citizens. To tackle concerns related to fifth-generation warfare, the Pakistani nation needs an all-encompassing strategy. The media plays a vital role in representing a state on the international stage. Currently, Pakistan lacks a policy-driven dialogue between the government and the media, and there is a shortage of English-language news outlets to project Pakistan's positive international image. It is essential

for the media, civil society, and academics to collaborate in addressing fifth-generation warfare within Pakistan, thereby safeguarding national unity and integrity.

- Declaring that the elected leadership in both India and Pakistan still bear the primary responsibility for setting the direction in this regard, Pakistani lawmakers and journalists have emphasized the importance of the media. They state that the media is playing a crucial role in positively influencing relations between India and Pakistan. The media must constantly attempt to assess the benefits of a peaceful resolution over war<sup>105</sup>. It must always carry out its core duty of informing people with reason, rather than engaging in the game of finger-pointing and war rhetoric during an issue. The media must never support the violent political ambitions of its nation that might lead to killing and violence.
- Both positive and negative beliefs are deeply rooted in the collective minds of regional populations. It falls upon the media to determine which spectrum deserves more attention. "Myths are not illusions; they are a blend of real and legendary occurrences that, once assimilated, become truer than reality itself. This implies that attempts to compel individuals to confront the truth would equate to an attack on the group's sense of self. Portraying India as a demon would render the peace narrative challenging for Pakistan, thus leading to hostility. The traditional projection of the "other" paradigm must give way to an inclusive story, emphasizing similarities rather than disparities.
- There is an urgent need to collaboratively revise curricula and media training. Given the deeply ingrained communal mindset of hostility and racism, the continuous lack of focus on human and economic development issues, and the potential destructive powers of the two military apparatuses, fostering in-house tolerance is of paramount importance. The study of peace should be made a requirement at all levels of education, from elementary to college. The main goal is to break down all religious, ethnic, gender, and socially unique identity groups. An accepting paradigm holds more significance than the tolerance paradigm. In order to create a diverse and diversified society and citizenship, all forms of bullying need to be depicted as negative qualities starting at the primary school level.

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<sup>105</sup> Dr. Farasat Rasool et al., "Media, War, and Peace: A Post Pulwama Comparative Study of India and Pakistan," *Journal of Peace, Development and Communication (JPDC)*, Volume 05, Issue 1, (March 2021): 368, <https://doi.org/10.36968/JPDC-V05-I01-30>

- The general inclination has been to exaggerate the war, and calls for peace have been seen as signs of weakness. The subcontinent has a long-standing custom of admiring the virtues of its warrior forebears and their "glory past." The mark of bravery and excellence is determined by how many 'infidels' a certain person has killed. The media narrative instructs, frames, and reinforces these notions of superiority while stigmatizing the opposing community as inferior. Peace is often regarded as a cowardly notion, as war rhetoric is more appealing to the public than peace initiatives, which are generally considered less attractive. There needs to be a reduction in the commercialization of the war narrative. Mass communication department courses should include a section on peace studies. It is important to teach students how to report on conflict news in a way that prevents escalation and stigmatization of the other side.
- The newspaper association should organize training sessions for editors on how to play their part in crafting a peaceful narrative and preventing hyper-nationalist and pro-war materials from appearing in their opinion sections and articles. Additionally, peace must be emphasized in the news articles while minimizing negative subtext. The ability to handle a conflict scenario by performing unbiased analysis of events endangering or promoting peace must be instilled in young journalists through a change in mass communication curriculum and awareness programs.
- Government media policies must be developed with a focus on peace. To assist journalists in understanding their role as stakeholders in the peace process and conflict management, organizations like the All Pakistan Newspapers Society, the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists, and the Pakistan Journalists Association need to organize workshops and seminars. The organizations representing print media journalists in Pakistan should maintain an official check on the use of violent language directed towards a specific community or state. To coordinate peace efforts and prevent the perception of peace builders as unpatriotic or "agents" of foreign organizations, there should be an academic and professional exchange of journalists and peace builders across international boundaries. Such exchanges can prove highly beneficial<sup>106</sup>.

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<sup>106</sup> Asma Qadir Hasan, "India-Pakistan Conflict Management: Role of Pakistani Print Media in Building Peace Narrative," *Higher Education Commission*, (January 2021): 236, <http://pr.hec.gov.pk/jspui/bitstream/123456789/18994/1/Asma%20Qadir%20Hasan%20political%20sci%202021%20uop%20lhr.pdf>

- For the promotion of peace, it is imperative to enhance inter-human contact. To achieve this, academics, writers, artists, and members of the media should be granted special visa regulations. These channels can provide an effective, consistent, and persistent means of advancing the narrative of peace, especially during times when political and military ties are strained due to extreme nationalism. If supporters of a pluralistic attitude from both countries unite, the credibility of the peace movement could be significantly bolstered. In such a scenario, people-to-people contact becomes even more crucial. Currently, the atmosphere is characterized by oppressive warmth and a sense of despondency.
- "The media can serve as inspiration for a calm investigation of Pakistani objectives and preferences. The call for peace should not be interpreted as a weak or unpatriotic act. To stop terrorist organizations or sympathetic groups within their own borders, it is necessary for the media to offer an objective appraisal of the shortcomings of their own government. More than a conversation with India, we need a conversation with ourselves. We should stop interfering with history and instead rewrite it from the standpoint of creating an inclusive, progressive, and multicultural state, as stated by Mr. Ayaz Mir. An objective examination of Pakistani goals and preferences can be motivated by the media. It is important to remember that calling for peace is not a sign of weakness. The media must provide an unbiased assessment of the flaws of their own administration in order to halt terrorist organizations or sympathetic groups within their own borders. We need to engage in a dialogue with ourselves more than with India, as suggested by the expert, Mr. Ayaz. Instead of altering the past, we should reinvent it so that an inclusive, progressive, and multicultural state can be created."
- Statistics have demonstrated that political criticism can sometimes be dismantled when a government or political leader makes a peace gesture. In particular, opposition parties join in to claim that a certain peace gesture is equivalent to an unofficial surrender to India, or that a government's structure is inherently weak. Political blame games are given prominence in the media because they are considered "spicy" and sell more than scholarly lectures on the concept of peace. Beyond political divides, the media might appreciate a gesture of peace that helps Pakistan project a gentle and peaceful image.
- The media can assist us in remembering our shared past without worrying about being branded as "irreligious" or obedient to others' cultures. The practice of celebrating each other's holidays as they were before the split could be reintroduced. There are numerous shared heroes who can

be honored for their contributions to the history and culture of the subcontinent. These heroes range from freedom fighters like the Rani of Jhansi and Bhagat Singh, to Sufi figures such as Bulleh Shah and Nizamuddin Auliya, as well as literary personalities like Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Gulzar. Additionally, peace activists like Arundhati Roy and Asma Jahangir can also be highlighted to support the peace narrative. It's important to emphasize what these individuals contributed to the cause of peace.

- Students' initiatives for peace-building are an efficient technique to break the cycle of enmity and March towards a common future of regional development and progress. Particularly, children studying overseas can serve as unofficial peace ambassadors. Governments should support partnerships between Pakistani and Indian students attending international universities. This cutting-edge strategy could create a constituency for peace on both sides of the border. Newspaper editors should develop a student opinion section focusing on intergenerational experiences and peace-related subjects.
- The subcontinent has a cultural and traditional norm that favors neighborliness. It is unquestionably better to live next to a friend than an enemy. The role of print media in crafting a narrative of peace may seem as small in quantitative terms as the sparrow caught in the conflict between Nimrod and Prophet Abraham, but it is iconic and significant in qualitative dimensions. Because they stand for peace, even tiny droplets of water on a raging furnace of hatred can make a difference. If the peace narrative is unsuccessful, an all-out war will break out in the environment.
- The development of numerous communication channels in the present twenty-first century has transformed the nature of combat from traditional to unconventional. Fifth-generation warfare, which involves conflicts centered around perception and information, has emerged in an era of diverse mass communication channels. Fifth-generation warfare is characterized by battles of misinformation and the dissemination of propaganda to disrupt the minds of the enemy lines. Pakistan, particularly Balochistan, stands out as one of the most significant regions globally due to its geopolitical location. Global powers have consistently attempted to exert influence on domestic politics in one way or another.
- Conflicts, terrorism, wars, insurgencies, and ethnic issues have all occurred in Pakistan. As weapons of war have progressed, Pakistan's enemies have switched to fifth-generation warfare strategies, supporting racial and religious tensions, funding fake media operations, and

spreading false information to defame Pakistan abroad/internationally. The principal culprit behind a fabricated anti-Pakistan propaganda campaign is India. India is attempting to portray Pakistan as a shelter for terrorists, a dangerous place for minorities, not safe for women, and a religiously intolerant nation through its fake media campaigns. India is conducting its propaganda campaign utilizing media, including print, digital, and social platforms, and it has succeeded in impacting Pakistan on these platforms.

- A significant network of false news sources, aimed at tarnishing Pakistan's reputation on the global stage, was uncovered by the EU Disinfo<sup>107</sup>. The Indian Chronicles project revealed the existence of fabricated media outlets and NGOs that were disseminating misleading information about Pakistan to the European Union and the UN. One of the regions most affected by India's fifth-generation warfare is Balochistan. Within the province, India is providing support to insurgent groups and crossing ethnic boundaries. Indian media agencies have consistently covered Baloch separatist movements, exploiting the ethnic issues within the area.
- India also conducts covert operations by deploying spies in Balochistan. The capture of Kulbhushan Jadhav revealed Indian support for terrorist organizations in Balochistan. Additionally, India is attempting to undermine the CPEC project by spreading false information. Pakistan needs to address its domestic issues and establish a credible position in the international community to effectively counter Indian fifth-generation warfare. Pakistan should utilize both national and international platforms to expose the offensive behavior of the Indian media. To enhance national integration, Pakistan can counter Indian propaganda and unveil Indian activities to the world and the UN.
- India has assumed a proactive role in exploiting fault lines within Pakistan. Ajit Doval's vision for India's intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), entailed utilizing covert operations involving terrorist groups against Pakistan. This perspective finds ample support in a plethora of evidence. It is widely recognized that India has played a role in funding the insurgency in Balochistan. There has been no shift in India's strategy of intervening in the internal affairs of other states since former Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani handed over a

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<sup>107</sup> Abdul Rehman, "Media and Fifth-generation Warfare: A Case Study of Indian Disinformation Campaign Against Balochistan," *Journal of Mass Communication*, Vol. 26, ( November 2022): 115, <https://jmcd-uok.com/index.php/jmcd/article/view/221/104>

dossier to the Indian Prime Minister in 2009, containing evidence of RAW's involvement in Balochistan. India's links to the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) are well-documented. In a similar vein, *The Hindu*, one of India's most esteemed newspapers, affirmed India's support for the BLA by stating that "it is established that BLA commanders, in the past, had sought medical treatment in Indian hospitals, often under aliases or with forged identities."

- Members of the proscribed Baloch Republican Party, as well as other exiled anti-Pakistan Baloch figures, have been extended citizenship offers by the Modi administration. To counter India's covert efforts against Pakistan, certain measures must be taken. In this regard, the National Action Plan and NACTA (National Counter Terrorism Authority) play crucial roles.
- Pakistan should adopt a mediation strategy and collaborate with international forums and organizations. It should join hands with them to counter hate speech and misinformation targeting the Pakistan Army and government. The spread of such hate-driven content by certain channels is unacceptable, and India should recognize its boundaries. This kind of activity aims to tarnish a country's image and undermine it both internally and externally. Therefore, it is essential for Pakistan to engage third parties and seek legal recourse through prominent international platforms to address this issue effectively.
- Indian media-sponsored YouTube channels and fake Twitter accounts are being used to generate views with the intention of portraying Pakistan negatively. Pakistan should undertake effective initiatives to improve civil-military relationships, especially in Balochistan. This includes establishing think tanks and dedicated laboratories to counter Indian black propaganda against Pakistan<sup>108</sup>. It is crucial to create positive academic literature that can help bridge the gap in Balochistan.
- Every state's face is in the media; the media promptly updates its audience on whatever and whenever events happen within a state, covering every significant development or event occurring in the international community. The media serves as an educator, aiming to build a lively and cohesive society. It also acts as a watchdog and an exposé when evil becomes more powerful. The media maintains a check on institutions to ensure that everyone is accountable, thus helping to maintain balance in society. The media can play the most important role of any

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<sup>108</sup> Mehmood Ali Rakhshani, "Fifth-generation Warfare and its Challenges to Pakistan," *The Pakistan armed forces magazine*, (June 2022 ): 4, <https://hilal.gov.pk/eng-article/detail/NjI1Mg==.html>

institution in creating a new nation. Additionally, the media emerges as the state's most active and accountable pillar during periods of significant national and international change in the system.

- Pakistan, in particular, has been demonized by Islamophobia since the war on terror. The terrorist threat has been purposefully linked to Islam, a faith that promotes the idea of universal peace and stability. With Pakistan being ranked fifth among participating nations in peacekeeping missions around the world, it's important to note its commitment to global peace. The involvement of the Indian media in promoting a hate-oriented and biased perspective about Pakistan is a crucial factor. Pakistan finds itself engaged in a conflict on two fronts: internally, fighting radicalized forces, and externally, dispelling the stereotypes that label it as a dangerous haven for terrorists. However, Pakistan has not succumbed to this conflict; rather, it has emerged victorious, earning titles such as "Pakistan is a strong nation" and "Pakistan the bravest nation." According to Syed Sibtain Hussain Shah<sup>109</sup>, Pakistan should manage this propaganda war by focusing on internal instabilities. This involves controlling corruption and addressing other pertinent issues. The foreign office should make decisions independently, without relying solely on other prominent authorities. Both the National Action Plan and the National Terrorism Authority should play their respective roles effectively. Implementing good governance on social media platforms can help control the situation. Additionally, academia has a significant role to play, and news anchors should execute their tasks with a sense of responsibility.
- The Pakistan of today is markedly different from its past, as it stands on the cusp of assuming a significant role in world affairs. The country is currently undergoing both internal and external transitions as it readies itself for a more prominent position in the emerging global order. However, the path forward is fraught with challenges and obstacles, making this journey lengthy and arduous. Despite facing a media onslaught launched against it after the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan has managed to endure. Nevertheless, the road ahead is even more treacherous and uncertain, particularly in the era of fifth-generation warfare. Now, as the nation commits to leading developing countries as an active and influential participant, a vibrant

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<sup>109</sup> Syed Sibtain Hussain Shah, Assistant Professor



media landscape becomes indispensable in the battle against forces intent on undermining the nation's peace and stability.

- "In the present, states engage in psychological warfare to lower their opponents' morale without actually engaging in combat. In order to dominate the information world, every powerful state or group seeks to impose its vision, values, and way of thinking on weaker nations or groups. According to Plato's 'Allegory of the Cave' analogy, perception management is the best method for accomplishing this, and it is more effective at achieving these results by playing a role in both still and moving images<sup>110</sup>. Social media currently provides the finest possibility to achieve these goals."
- Unfortunately, Pakistan has long been a target of fifth-generation warfare, and the threats are now more obvious and real. Whether it be through the use of destabilizing agents, the incitement of hatred, or the exploitation of previous fault lines, enemies and adversaries are employing all of their resources to wage this war on Pakistan. Is Pakistani media prepared to defend its nation in a conflict where the media serves as both the first and last line of defense? Unfortunately, the answer, which vacillates between possibly and possibly not, is not particularly clear. According to Salma Malik<sup>111</sup>, "Pakistan should manage this war by fostering tolerance and focusing on curbing corruption. The foreign office should make decisions by themselves instead of listening to other prominent figures. The national action plan should function properly. Proper seminars and conferences should be arranged. Raise awareness among people about what is right and what is wrong."
- "Due to a lack of understanding about the effects of social media, particularly when it is used as a weapon against a state to undermine its ideals, induce confusion, and take advantage of already-existing ideological, political, and social fault lines, 2018 saw a rise in the importance of social media in shaping public opinion and creating narratives. Unfortunately, there are several reasons why Pakistan lags behind in this area. The moment has come for Pakistan to expand in this field and rebuild the nation's soft power in front of the international media, which has been severely weakened. It is the responsibility of educated youth to present the country's soft image to the world."

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<sup>110</sup> Awais Zahid Abbasi, "Social media and fifth-generation warfare," *Daily Times*: (December 2018), <https://dailytimes.com.pk/332154/social-media-and-5th-generation-warfare/>

<sup>111</sup> Salma Malik, Associate Professor

- An urgent requirement exists for understanding and addressing the intricate threat posed by hybrid warfare. The national security paradigm needs revision due to the heightened likelihood of succumbing to these stratagems. It is imperative to develop capacities, allocate resources, and formulate a strategy. Involving the public in the solution is crucial, making it a government-wide effort. Engaging in silos and territorial disputes will only exacerbate the threat.
- It is necessary to raise awareness among our highest-ranking policy and decision-makers about the necessity of registering and recognizing fifth-generation warfare as the modern currency of war, and developing an effective response to it through creative countermeasures. Designating one of the ministries as the lead agency would not be harmful, although there should be an integrated and comprehensive approach that leverages all available resources<sup>112</sup>. This designated ministry could be formally mandated to create a national narrative aimed at refuting unfounded reports that could lead to discord or even national disintegration. It is essential to generate innovative themes that foster a positive atmosphere and enhance the national spirit. The individual responsible for leading this initiative should report to the prime minister and provide regular updates to Parliament when necessary. Furthermore, this individual should be provided with sufficient material, financial, and human resources to effectively organize and engage in a significant effort to resist fifth-generation threats.
- To achieve this, a well-defined strategy incorporating both civil and military institutions is required in order to develop a sustainable model. The government can achieve this by engaging all stakeholders in the creation of an entirely new security paradigm for society. According to this perspective, the nation's national security doctrine must include practical and effective ways to reduce vulnerabilities in the information age. In order to address all aspects of the fifth-generation threats, the military might need to adjust its threat hypothesis. The dimensions of these new dangers can be formulated with input from renowned economists, academics, cyberwar experts, scientists, and law enforcement personnel.
- It is necessary to establish agreements with friendly nations at the foreign policy level in order to strengthen information defenses. With the assistance of partner nations and organizations, it

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<sup>112</sup> Dr. Tughral Yamin, “Hybrid warfare challenges for Pakistan,” *Strategic thought*, issue-1,( August 2019) : 139, <file:///C:/Users/Downloads/09-hybrid-warfare-dr-tughral-yamin.pdf>

is necessary to promote international best practices to achieve the highest level of hybrid security. Universities should be encouraged to develop technologies and regulations that will protect our mental and information borders. It is a must to invest in human resources, particularly in young college students and recent graduates with the aptitude to combat fifth-generation warfare, not only in the fields of science and technology but also in hard-core information warfare. To combat different aspects of hybrid threats, it is necessary to teach them to collaborate in small teams.

- It is essential to make substantial preparations to produce our own hardware and software. Currently, all servers, laptops, smartphones, and computers are imported. None of our databases are powered by in-house equipment, nor are our operating systems developed internally; they are created by firms like Microsoft. We lack a private digital search engine and our institutions use similarity indexing tools like Turnitin to verify all academic output. This perpetuates the West's intellectual monopoly. Our ideas and studies are not original; we consistently follow the West. Lastly, Pakistan must enhance its defense information infrastructure on both state and social media to disseminate opposing viewpoints against dire predictions. This requires a great deal of creativity and insight to establish themes that boost national spirit and morale and counteract negative broadcasts effectively.
- Wars have traditionally been fought using all of a nation's resources, which include financial, political, and diplomatic resources, in order to further a political agenda. A weaker foe can always take advantage of a weaker nation. This is not limited to simply having a top military with the newest weapons of war but also being a strong, resilient nation willing to go through all kinds of hardships to gain something. In essence, this means that the country should live in harmony with itself. It should have faith in its ability to lead and in the ability of the state institutions to serve its interests. Access to shelter and two square meals every day are necessities for the common man. The kids must be in school, not begging on the streets. Justice must be swift and justly administered. Hospitals for the sick, running water at the faucets, gas in the pipelines, and lighting should all be available. After sunset, lights must be on. The government ought to care for its people and be able to help those in need. The army should be able to defend the borders, and the police should be able to keep the populace safe from criminals.

- "Fifth-generation warfare threats would be useless in a situation of contentment and satisfaction. Such threats can only thrive if the populace is dissatisfied or believes that the government is unable, or worse, unwilling, to care for their needs – a certain group of people demanding their fair share as responsible citizens of the nation. When people's most basic needs are met, they won't be as susceptible to evil propaganda. In addition to developing a positive narrative, all national policies should be based on the fundamental beliefs of being people-friendly and welfare-oriented. This approach is necessary to avoid any worst-case scenario. People should know what is right and what is wrong and act accordingly. By doing this, the enemy cannot achieve prosperity. While physical boundaries can be defended, a mental breakdown could result in a surrender without putting up a fight. Whatever it takes, this outcome must be avoided, and the national will and spirit must be safeguarded at all costs."
- To heal ethno-political rifts and achieve economic domestic cohesion, it is essential to address certain factors. The collapse from within, which is a goal of the enemy's fifth-generation warfare assault, becomes possible through tactics such as dharna politics, destruction of state property, defamation of institutions, highway blockades, infringement on minority rights, promotion of sectarianism, and propagation of intolerant religious beliefs<sup>113</sup>. Before pursuing a robust foreign policy, it is crucial to focus on consolidating the home front across social, economic, ideological, and political spheres. In the realm of fifth-generation warfare, conflicts span a wide spectrum, leading to intricate issues that can be managed to some extent but not always completely resolved. An example of this complexity is the conflict between competing narratives. Therefore, operating within the established system is necessary, involving recognition and understanding of the fundamental challenges in order to effectively counter fifth-generation warfare threats.
- In a fifth-generation warfare scenario, the environmental context determines the available options, as dogmatism is suicidal in today's society. A hybrid threat cannot be dispersed all at once; instead, it must be disrupted by focusing on the coordination of multiple levels accountable for the hybrid attacks that enemies launch against Pakistan. Pakistan must

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<sup>113</sup> Imtiaz Hussain Naz, "Foreign policy in Hybrid warfare Environment, Way forward for Pakistan," Margalla papers -2021 , issue –I, ( October 2021): 11, <file:///C:/Users/Downloads/114.pdf>

recognize these turning points where concentrated effort is needed. The reality of shifting traditional power centers, changing political principles, and former adversaries transforming into partners is evident in the ongoing geopolitical power struggle. In this present era of information warfare, maintaining exclusive relationships with a select few is not a viable option. Pakistan must liberate itself from the constraints of the past and concentrate on the new realities. Through a review, refinement, and rearrangement of national aims and interests, the inertia and status quo can be challenged. Pakistan needs to look beyond the established centers of power and peer into the future through its own backyard opportunities.

- Pakistan needs to improve its ties with both the international community and its neighbors. Calling for joint action against terrorism while sharing personal experiences can yield generous dividends. Pakistan possesses evidence suggesting that India has played a role in fanning violent extremism and fostering terrorism within Pakistan. These concerns should be raised not only at the UN but also at all other regional and international forums to expose India's violations of legal standards. The insights provided by the EU DisinfoLab report are eye-opening. To counter such fifth-generation threats, Pakistan has developed a coherent and systematic foreign policy. To address the challenges posed by international law in a fifth-generation warfare environment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should establish a Lawfare Department. Understanding the threat matrix requires a thorough grasp of how the international system operates, and issues such as the EU DisinfoLab, FATF, Kulbhushan Jadhav, and Kashmir will persist unless addressed. Pakistan will be unable to capitalize on opportunities presented by studies like the EU DisinfoLab if it fails to comprehend lawfare.
- If Pakistan aims to develop an extensive and interconnected digital infrastructure, it must prioritize hybrid security. Achieving self-sufficiency in hybrid security at both national and international levels would greatly contribute to the accomplishment of long-term strategic objectives. Furthermore, this approach would enable the nation to initiate a robust hybrid security endeavor to counter threats posed by adversaries, particularly India. Pakistan could also utilize digital platforms to counter India's negative propaganda and dissemination of fake news, thereby making international statements on various issues, including the unlawful Indian occupation of Jammu and Kashmir and involvement in terrorism. As suggested by Hassan

Zafar<sup>114</sup>, "Pakistan should formulate effective strategies and engage in proper planning. A well-functioning system should be established, and online platforms should operate responsibly. Organizations need to play a constructive role in all of these efforts."

- The success of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a game-changer for Pakistan's economy, with its socioeconomic and infrastructure growth depending on its success. To effectively participate in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its main initiatives, Pakistan and China must engage with both regional and extra-regional states. The economic involvement of neighboring states would help alleviate security concerns associated with CPEC, while also enhancing Pakistan's international reputation. Promoting foreign direct investment and strengthening ties with countries such as Russia, Afghanistan, Iran, and Central Asia will aid in mitigating the challenges posed by a fifth-generation warfare environment, ultimately fostering better inter-group relations. Furthermore, these efforts will contribute to a more positive public perception and narrative development. Pakistani think tanks could play a crucial role in this regard. Collaboration between international and regional think tanks can greatly benefit Pakistan's endeavors. It's imperative for Pakistan to enhance its international reputation. Undoubtedly, when compared to physical power, soft power proves to be more effective in advancing national interests.
- "Fifth-generation warfare is a complex and dynamic reality that necessitates an all-encompassing response to threats across all domains, particularly at the external level. Even though it feels that the realization of this war threat is late, it is still not too late. Pakistan should shed the outmoded mentality and the extra baggage of the past. When faced with a fifth-generation warfare environment, experience-based foreign policy will be ineffective until decision-makers comprehend the threats of fifth-generation warfare and receive the requisite training. Dealing with the challenges of today's complicated world will go more smoothly if opportunities and issues are balanced with careful consideration and comprehensive planning."
- "Transparency is the best defense Pakistan has against India's disinformation campaign and propaganda. The greatest strategy is to spread reliable information and avoid information gaps. By creating integrated organizational structures, it is important to establish a comprehensive

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<sup>114</sup> Hassan Zafar ,Assistant Professor

understanding of the fifth-generation war that was unleashed against Pakistan and to foster a coordinated and synergistic reaction<sup>115</sup>. Additionally, the country's immune system, the social compact between its inhabitants and the state, must be made robust and resilient. There is a need to have a shared concept of threat and response across the board in politics. It is essential that the true nature of India is constantly communicated to the rest of the world through innovative informational and diplomatic strategies, through collaboration. Increase the capacity of Pakistani media by giving it ample resources to combat the false information being spread by India. In order for society to have reliable sources of information, trustworthy clusters must be developed. To expose Indian actions as revealed by EU DisinfoLab, more counterintelligence operations must be carried out by Pakistan."

- It has also become important for Pakistan to modernize its weapon systems and armed forces due to the evolving complex and unpredictable strategic environment in the South Asian region, particularly India's fifth-generation warfare against Pakistan. Undeniably, the information sector has grown significantly in importance for projecting Pakistan's narrative on the national and international fronts. A well-considered national response, supported by a clearly defined foreign strategy, is required to address the double-edged sword that fifth-generation warfare threats pose.

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<sup>115</sup> Strategic vision Institute, "India's fifth generation warfare against Pakistan," SVI , <https://thesvi.org/indias-fifth-generation-warfare-against-pakistan/>

## Conclusion

Social media is influencing how India and Pakistan relate to each other. While social media portrays the public's response, mainstream media exaggerates the news and interprets how current events are reflected. On social media, there is a lot of discussion about topics such as the Mumbai attacks, the Afghan revolt, the Line of Control tension, the Indian Parliament attacks, the water dispute, Kashmir, the Balochistan insurgency, and many other issues. The government keeps track of public opinion and uses it to inform its choices and policies. Senior military and political leadership have acknowledged that media pressure impacts their actions and current events, particularly along the Line of Control. Overall, social media is perpetuating damaging social constructivism and playing a negative, war-mongering role. The India-Pakistan conflict and its reflections and reactions on social media, despite the opinion of many researchers that social media goes beyond the agenda-setting theory and does not currently apply, are real examples of negative agenda setting.

In addition to encouraging aggressive actions by the government that undermined regional diplomacy, the Indian media frequently supported the idea of using strict and violent measures against Pakistan in its reporting. India consistently criticized Pakistan in its news and reports, often engaging in a blame game against Pakistan and perpetuating bias. It is crucial to note that Kashmir was never even mentioned in the Indian media, which maintained a tone of denial throughout its coverage. However, during the Pulwama incident and the subsequent post-Pulwama period, the Pakistani media emphasized care, peace-making efforts, and negotiations. When appropriate, it also criticized the administration and emphasized the significance of finding a resolution to the Kashmir conflict. The Pakistani media refrained from covering war jingoism and aggressive speech, and it did not provoke its audience against any particular group or nation.

India has adopted a two-pronged approach towards Pakistan in order to achieve its major objectives. Firstly, it has initiated efforts to employ the terrorism blame game to diplomatically isolate Pakistan, which is India's primary objective. Secondly, it supports and sponsors terrorists while interfering in Pakistan's internal affairs. India has consistently utilized a diverse strategy to diminish Pakistan's standing in the international community, aiming to achieve its foreign policy goals. India is putting forth every effort to diplomatically isolate Pakistan from the rest of the



world. Conspiracies against Pakistan are allegedly committed by the Indian-Western axis to undermine Pakistan's international standing.

In the early years of the twenty-first century, India and Pakistan took significant steps towards achieving remarkable press freedoms. Both countries strengthened protections against government meddling and institutionalized media reforms. Broadcast news organizations have served as watchdogs over the government, spurred on by these reforms. However, this hasn't occurred without them pursuing their own agendas. Since the liberalization of the news media, government and press involvement have played pivotal roles in shaping and advancing national narratives, often driven by ratings and the "bottom line."

Mainstream media in neither country, whether print or electronic, may be able to effectively normalize relations between India and Pakistan through peace journalism by publishing fair views on war and conflict, as opposed to biased accounts of conflict. Social media, notably Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, are feasible means of communication for civil society activists and other stakeholders of peace. However, for activism to be effective and influential, activists need to establish internet contacts for the general public on both sides, especially young people. Through this contact, people on both sides of the border may become less biased and more willing to work towards a peaceful resolution.

The ability to critically analyze the content that social media users encounter through their online profiles may be lacking. They either intentionally or unintentionally distribute unpleasant comments or information in their groups and pages because they are unaware of the context and accuracy of online material. Such behavior on open forums online, like Twitter and YouTube, may raise hostility among people towards groups they view as rivals in terms of race, religion, or ethnicity. Social media technology businesses, like Twitter and YouTube, should put more effort into enhancing the literacy of their users so that they can learn about morals, laws, as well as understand messages about any incidents or breaking news. By working with local governments in conflict zones to coordinate online literacy programs, the tech industry can contribute to global peace by teaching social media users, especially young people, to screen messages on social media and to report any hateful content to the tech industry or the appropriate government agencies.

The international community's perception of Pakistan has been tarnished by false propaganda strategies. Adversaries have propagated myths about Pakistan, portraying it as a dangerous and

religiously intolerant nation, a supposed "safe haven" for terrorists, and suggesting that terrorists could potentially gain access to Pakistan's nuclear weapons. In reality, Pakistan has played a significant role in the global war on terror and has made numerous sacrifices to combat terrorism. However, its contributions have not received the proper acknowledgment, and it continues to face calls to "do more." Pakistan needs a robust counter-strategy to effectively address the challenges posed by fifth-generation warfare. Conventional modes of engagement must be transformed into unconventional approaches. To overcome the difficulties presented by fifth-generation warfare, the National Action Plan (NAP) and NACTA (National Counter Terrorism Authority) play pivotal roles.

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