



Analysis of the Dependency Theory Concerning India's Rise in Global Politics and Pakistan's Underdevelopment



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Abstract: *The 1947 partition of British India gave rise to India and Pakistan, both grappling with similar socio-economic and political challenges. Despite shared beginnings, India has outpaced Pakistan in development, emerging as a significant global player. India's success is attributed to its commitment to democracy and secularism, economic progress, strategic positioning, and military prowess. Its diverse population, stable democracy, and expanding middle-class position India as a responsible global actor and a trusted ally for democratic nations. Meanwhile, Pakistan faces hurdles such as mass displacement, ongoing tensions with India, political instability, and societal unrest. Factors like military rule, corruption, inefficiency, and lagging development impede democratic and civil growth. Sectarian tensions, violence, and ties with the United States contribute to Pakistan's slower progress. Dependency theory elucidates Pakistan's underdevelopment and India's ascent, highlighting India's pursuit of economic autonomy and a robust domestic industrial base.*

Key Words: Dependency, India's rise, Pakistan's underdevelopment, Global Politics.

Introduction

The division of India in 1947, which resulted in the creation of India and Pakistan, had a significant impact on the rise of India in global politics. Pakistan and India born out of the partition of British India in 1947, started with similar economic, social, and political challenges, but over time, India has been able to achieve relatively greater success in its development than Pakistan (Tudor, [2017](#)). Initially, the partition led to significant challenges for both India and Pakistan, including the displacement of millions of people, communal violence, and economic disruption. However, over time, India was able to overcome these challenges and emerge as a

major player in global politics. One factor that contributed to India's rise was its commitment to democracy and secularism. Despite the country's diverse population, India has remained a stable democracy since its independence, with regular elections and a free press (Lijphart, [1996](#)). This has helped to build India's reputation as a responsible global actor and a reliable partner for other democratic nations. Another factor that contributed to India's rise was its economic development. Despite facing significant challenges in the early years after independence, India has since become one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, with a large and growing middle class. This economic growth has allowed India to play an

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increasingly influential role in global trade and investment, as well as in international organizations such as the G20 and the BRICS (Patnaik & Bond, 2023). In addition, India's strategic location and its large and capable military have also contributed to its rise in global politics. India is located at the crossroads of South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East, and has strong historical ties with countries throughout the region. Its military, which is one of the largest and most capable in the world, has allowed India to project power and influence beyond its borders.

Overall, while the division of India in 1947 initially presented significant challenges, India's commitment to democracy, economic development, strategic location, and military capabilities have all contributed to its rise in global politics (Tudor, 2017). Today, India is a key player on the world stage, with a growing influence in areas ranging from trade and investment to climate change and regional security.

On the other hand, there are several factors that have contributed to Pakistan's relative lack of development and rise in global politics compared to India. Firstly, Pakistan faced significant challenges in its early years, including the displacement of millions of people during the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, as well as ongoing tensions with India over issues such as Kashmir (Balcerowicz & Kuszewska, 2022). These challenges have led to political instability, economic disruption, and social unrest, which have made it difficult for Pakistan to build a strong and stable foundation for development. Secondly, Pakistan has experienced periods of military rule, which have hindered the growth of democratic institutions and civil society. This has led to a concentration of power in the hands of the military and a lack of transparency and accountability in government, which has contributed to corruption, inefficiency, and a lack of development. Thirdly, Pakistan has struggled with sectarian and ethnic tensions, which have further hindered its development. These tensions have contributed to political instability, social unrest, and violence, which

have made it difficult for Pakistan to attract investment and build a strong economy. Finally, Pakistan has faced significant challenges in its relationship with the United States, which has been a key player in global politics since the end of World War II. While the US has been a close ally of Pakistan at times, it has also been critical of Pakistan's role in supporting terrorism and has imposed sanctions on the country (Ibañez, 2020). This has further limited Pakistan's ability to develop and build a strong presence in global politics.

Overall, while Pakistan has faced significant challenges in its development and rise in global politics, there are several factors that have contributed to this relative lack of progress, including political instability, military rule, sectarian and ethnic tensions, and challenges in its relationship with the United States.

Theoretical Framework

The debate on the rise of India and the underdevelopment of Pakistan can be analyzed through varying international relations theories. One theory that applies to the rise of India in global politics is liberal internationalism. Liberal internationalism emphasizes the importance of democracy, economic development, and international cooperation in promoting peace, prosperity, and stability in the international system (Peters, 2015). The analysis highlights how India's commitment to democracy, secularism, economic development, and participation in international organizations has contributed to its rise in global politics.

On the other hand, the analysis of Pakistan's lack of development and rise in global politics can be explained by various theories. Realism, for example, emphasizes the role of power and self-interest in international relations. The analysis highlights how Pakistan's political instability, military rule, sectarian and ethnic tensions, and its relationship with the United States have hindered its development and rise in global politics (McLeod, 2016). Realism suggests that Pakistan's struggles can be explained by a combination of factors, including regional

power dynamics and geopolitical interests (McLeod, 2016).

An insightful framework for exploring these matters is the dependency theory, which emerged during the 1950s and 1960s as a counterpoint to the modernization theory. The latter posited that economic development could be universally attained by nations through a linear trajectory of industrialization in alignment with modernization (Rahman, 1978). Dependency theorists, however, argued that this path was not equally available to all countries and that the global economic system was structured in a way that preserved underdevelopment in many parts of the world (Smith, 1979). According to dependency theory, underdeveloped countries are characterized by a relationship of dependency with developed countries. This relationship is rooted in the historical legacy of colonialism and imperialism, which created economic structures that favoured the interests of the colonizing powers at the expense of the colonized nations. In the post-colonial era, these structures have continued to persist, with developed countries exercising economic and political power over underdeveloped countries (Smith, 1979).

In the case of India, the country has been able to challenge the structural constraints of dependency through a range of policies, including import substitution industrialization, economic liberalization, and strategic alliances. By pursuing a policy of import substitution industrialization in the post-independence period, India was able to develop its domestic manufacturing sector and reduce its dependence on foreign imports. This policy was complemented by a range of measures to promote economic self-sufficiency, such as the nationalization of key industries and investment in infrastructure (Deo, 1990).

The policy of economic liberalization, initiated in the 1990s, further enhanced India's ability to challenge the structural constraints of dependency (Kotwal, Ramaswami & Wadhwa, 2011). By opening up the economy to foreign investment and trade, India was able to access new markets and technologies and become a

major player in the global economy. Additionally, India's strategic alliances with countries like the United States and Japan have enabled the country to access new sources of investment and technology and to leverage its geopolitical position to advance its economic interests.

In contrast, Pakistan has struggled to overcome the structural constraints of dependency, largely due to a range of internal and external factors. Internally, Pakistan has faced a range of political and economic challenges, including corruption, weak institutions, and sectarian violence. These factors have made it difficult for the country to attract foreign investment and to implement policies aimed at promoting economic growth and development (Nte, Lucas, & Arifin, 2021).

Externally, Pakistan's relationship with the United States has been a major impediment to its development. The country's role in the war on terror has resulted in significant aid flows from the United States, but these flows have often been tied to security objectives, rather than development goals. Additionally, Pakistan's relationship with India has been fraught with tension, with the two countries engaging in a long-standing conflict over the disputed region of Kashmir (Nte, Lucas, & Arifin, 2021). This conflict has hindered trade and investment between the two countries and has limited Pakistan's ability to leverage its geostrategic position to advance its economic interests.

Overall, the discussion on the rise of India and the challenges faced by Pakistan can be analyzed through the lens of dependency theory. While India has been able to challenge the structural constraints of dependency through a range of policies, Pakistan has struggled to overcome these constraints due to a range of internal and external factors. Addressing these challenges will require a concerted effort to promote economic self-sufficiency, to address issues of corruption and weak institutions, and to build strong strategic alliances with key partners in the global economy. By doing so, both India and Pakistan can unlock their full potential and contribute to the economic development of the wider region.

Contextual Background

India and Pakistan share a complex history, shaped by colonialism, partition, and conflict. Since their independence from British rule in 1947, the two nations have pursued distinct political and economic paths. India has emerged as a global economic power, with a fast-growing middle class, a robust technology sector, and a strong diplomatic presence. Meanwhile, Pakistan has struggled with political instability, corruption, and economic underdevelopment (Nte, Lucas, & Arifin, 2021). This topic of India's rise in global politics and Pakistan's underdevelopment has been explored through the lens of dependency theory, which argues that the global economic system perpetuates inequality and dependency among nations.

Moreover, dependency theory is also considered to be a critique of traditional economic theories, which see development as a linear process of modernization. The proponents of dependency theory argued that the global economic system was structured in a way that perpetuated the dominance of wealthy nations and corporations over poorer nations (Hays, 1964). This unequal relationship, they argued, was rooted in colonialism and reinforced by the post-colonial economic order. Under this system, poorer nations were forced to export raw materials and commodities at low prices, while importing finished goods at high prices. This left them dependent on foreign capital and technology, perpetuating their underdevelopment (Hays, 1964).

India's rise in global politics has been viewed through the lens of dependency theory, as a case study of a nation that has managed to challenge the dominant economic order. In the early years of independence, India pursued a policy of self-reliance, with the aim of reducing its dependence on foreign aid and capital (Kotwal, Ramaswami & Wadhwa, 2011). The country invested heavily in education, healthcare, and infrastructure, and developed a strong public sector. This policy of import substitution helped to spur the growth of domestic industries, such as textiles, steel, and

chemicals. However, by the 1980s, India's economy was struggling, with high inflation, a large budget deficit, and low foreign exchange reserves. In response, the authorities initiated a strategy of economic liberalization, facilitating increased foreign investment and trade. This shift in policy played a pivotal role in stimulating economic expansion, evident in India's GDP registering an average annual growth rate of 7% from 1991 to 2019 (Chaurasia, 2020). The factors propelling this growth encompass a burgeoning middle class, a robust technology sector, and a proficient workforce. Notwithstanding these economic achievements, India persists as a markedly unequal society, marked by elevated levels of poverty, malnutrition, and income disparity. Moreover, India's rise as a global economic power has been accompanied by a rise in nationalist and authoritarian politics, with the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi pursuing policies that have been criticized for undermining democratic institutions and minority rights (Kotwal, Ramaswami & Wadhwa, 2011).

Pakistan, on the other hand, has struggled with political instability and economic underdevelopment. The country has been plagued by military coups, political assassinations, and sectarian violence (Hussain, 2012). The military has played a dominant role in the country's politics, with the army frequently intervening in civilian affairs. This has contributed to a lack of political stability, which has in turn undermined economic growth and development. Pakistan's economy has been characterized by a heavy reliance on foreign aid and debt, with the country receiving billions of dollars in aid from the United States and other countries since the 1950s. This aid has often come with strings attached, such as demands for political and economic reforms, which have sometimes been resisted by the government. Pakistan has also been heavily dependent on exports of raw materials, such as cotton, and has struggled to develop domestic industries. Pakistan's underdevelopment has been further exacerbated by a range of factors, including a poorly functioning education system,

corruption, and a lack of investment in infrastructure. The country has struggled to attract foreign investment, due in part to concerns about political instability and security risks (Hussain, 2012).

Analysis:

India's Rise to Global Politics

India's ascendance in global politics has marked a notable trajectory in recent decades, a trend substantiated by empirical data and analysis. The country has exhibited a burgeoning influence across various domains, encompassing trade, investment, climate change, and regional security.

Economic Development

An area where India has made substantial strides in economic development. As per the World Bank, India's GDP witnessed remarkable growth, escalating from \$152 billion in 1991 to \$2.7 trillion in 2020 (Beena, Kallummal & Kumar, 2022). This economic expansion results from a confluence of factors, including liberalization measures, heightened investments, and the expansion of the middle class.

Top of Form

India has also become a key player in global trade and investment. In 2019, India was the ninth-largest exporter and fifth-largest importer of the world, with a total trade value of approximately \$818 billion. The country has also attracted significant foreign direct investment, mainly in the information technology, manufacturing, and renewable energy sectors. In the year 2020, India received around \$64 billion in foreign direct investment, making it the fifth-largest receiver of FDI globally. In addition, India has played an important role in international economic organizations such as the G20 and the BRICS (Beena, Kallummal & Kumar, 2022). These organizations have been instrumental in promoting global economic cooperation and sustainable development, and India has been an active participant in their activities.

India's rise in economic power has been driven by policies that have encouraged investment and liberalization. The country has a large and growing middle class, which has contributed to increased consumer expenditure and demand for goods and services. Additionally, India's diverse economy has allowed it to weather global economic crises, such as the 2008 financial crisis, better than many other countries (Puri & Misra, 2017).

Democracy and Secularism

Another area where India has demonstrated significant progress is in promoting democracy and secularism. India has remained a stable democracy since its independence, with regular elections and a free press. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, India is classified as a "flawed democracy," ranking 53rd out of 167 countries surveyed in 2020 (Koul, 2022). While there are certainly challenges to democracy in India, including issues related to religious tensions and corruption, the country's commitment to democratic values has helped to build its reputation as a responsible global actor and a reliable partner for other democratic nations. In addition, India has a secular constitution, which enshrines the principles of equality and religious freedom. While India has faced challenges related to communal violence and religious tensions, particularly in recent years, the country's commitment to secularism has helped to promote social cohesion and stability.

India's commitment to democracy and secularism has helped to build its reputation as a responsible global actor. The country's democratic institutions, including a free press and regular elections, have promoted transparency and accountability. India's commitment to secularism has also helped to promote social cohesion and stability, despite challenges related to religious tensions.

Regional Security

India has also become an important player in regional security issues. The country has a large

and capable military, which is one of the largest in the world. According to research by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the military expenditure by India was \$72.9 billion in 2020, making it the third-largest spender on defence globally (Ng, 2022). India has also played an important role in promoting regional security and stability, particularly in South Asia. The country has been involved in a number of peacekeeping operations, including in Sri Lanka and Afghanistan, and has worked to promote cooperation and dialogue with other countries in the region. India has also been involved in counterterrorism efforts, particularly in the context of its relationship with the United States (Ng, 2022). India's military capabilities and regional security efforts have contributed to its growing influence in South Asia and beyond. The country has been involved in peacekeeping operations and counterterrorism efforts and has worked to promote cooperation and dialogue with other countries in the region. India's growing military expenditure and capabilities have also allowed it to play a larger role in global security issues.

Climate Change

India has emerged as a pivotal participant in global initiatives addressing climate change. Despite being one of the world's major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, India has actively showcased its dedication to sustainable development and emission reduction. Notably, India played a crucial role in the 2015 negotiations that led to the formulation of the Paris Agreement, a global accord outlining targets for curbing greenhouse gas emissions. Subsequently, India has made noteworthy advancements in advocating for renewable energy and emission reduction. In 2020, India experienced a substantial increase of 11.3 gigawatts in its renewable energy capacity, as reported by the International Energy Agency, overcoming challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic (Yadav, Kumar & Singh, 2022). This progress is attributed to governmental initiatives like the

National Solar Mission and the National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy.

India's commitment to addressing climate change has positioned it as a leader in the global effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The country's initiatives to promote renewable energy and reduce emissions have set an example for other developing countries. India's participation in global climate change negotiations, including the Paris Agreement, has helped to promote international cooperation and a shared commitment to addressing this pressing global challenge (Yadav, Kumar & Singh, 2022).

Overall, India's rise in global politics has been driven by a combination of factors, including economic development, commitment to democracy and secularism, regional security efforts, and climate change initiatives. India's growing influence on the global stage has positioned it as an important player in global affairs, and its continued progress is likely to have a significant impact on the international system in the years to come.

Pakistan's Underdevelopment

Pakistan's inability to follow the same pattern of development as India can be attributed to a variety of factors, including political instability, economic mismanagement, and security challenges (Imran, Murtiza & Akbar, 2023). Political instability has been a persistent problem in Pakistan since its inception. The country has experienced numerous coups and periods of military rule, which have disrupted democratic processes and hindered long-term planning for economic development. The lack of continuity in governance has made it difficult to implement coherent policies that address long-term economic challenges (Imran, Murtaza & Akbar, 2023).

The data on Pakistan's economic performance compared to India's further supports the idea that Pakistan has been unable to follow the same development pattern. According to the World Bank, Pakistan's economy has grown at an average rate of 3.3% per year over the last decade, compared to India's average growth rate of 6.9% (Naeem,

Rahman & Shah, [2023](#)). Pakistan's per capita income is also significantly lower than India's, at \$1,543 compared to \$6,284 in 2020. Pakistan has also struggled with high levels of unemployment, particularly among young people, which has hindered economic growth and contributed to social unrest. Some of the main factors responsible for Pakistan's underdevelopment are analyzed below (Naeem, Rahman & Shah, 2023).

Economic Factors

The economy of a country plays a vital role in its development. Despite the fact that Pakistan and India share a similar colonial legacy and post-independence challenges, India's economy has grown significantly faster than Pakistan's over the past few decades. In 2019, India's gross domestic product (GDP) was \$2.9 trillion, while Pakistan's was \$278.2 billion (Sengupta & Puri, [2018](#)). Economic mismanagement has also played a significant role in Pakistan's inability to develop on the same trajectory as India. The country has struggled with high levels of inflation, low levels of investment, and a lack of economic diversification. Despite some early successes in the 1960s and 1970s, including the establishment of a large-scale manufacturing sector and investments in infrastructure, subsequent governments have been unable to build on these achievements (Sengupta & Puri, 2018). Corruption and inefficiencies in government have also hindered economic growth. Several factors have contributed to this difference in economic growth:

Lack of investment in education and skills development

Pakistan has lagged behind India in investing in education and skills development, which has resulted in a shortage of skilled labour and low productivity. It highlights a significant disparity between Pakistan and India in terms of investment in education and skills development. Pakistan has fallen behind India in allocating resources towards these crucial areas, leading to adverse consequences such as a scarcity of skilled workforce and diminished

productivity. The statistical contrast between the two nations is notable, with Pakistan dedicating only 2.8% of its GDP to education, while India allocates a slightly higher percentage at 3.1%. Consequently, this funding gap has contributed to a lower literacy rate in Pakistan, standing at 60%, as opposed to India's higher rate of 74%. Additionally, the Human Development Index (HDI) ranking, which reflects overall well-being, is also adversely affected by Pakistan, placing it at 154th compared to India's more favourable ranking of 131st (Parveen & Tran, [2020](#)). This discrepancy underscores the urgent need for Pakistan to prioritize and enhance its investments in education and skills development to bridge the developmental gap with its regional counterpart (Awan & Hussain, [2020](#)).

Dependence on agriculture and low value-added exports

Pakistan's economy is highly dependent on agriculture, which accounts for around 25% of its GDP and employs around 40% of its workforce. Pakistan's reliance on agriculture can be seen as a key factor in the country's economic struggles. Despite its significant contribution to the country's GDP, the agricultural sector has not been able to keep up with the needs of the population or provide sufficient returns to farmers. For example, the average yield of wheat in Pakistan is around 2.8 tons per hectare, which is significantly lower than the global average of 3.5 tons per hectare. This low yield is due to a range of factors, including limited access to high-quality seeds, fertilizers, and irrigation systems (Raza, Wu, & Lin, [2023](#)).

Additionally, Pakistan's agricultural sector has been hindered by inadequate infrastructure, such as roads, storage facilities, and cold chains, which are essential for transporting and preserving perishable goods. This has limited the country's ability to expand exports and access new markets. As a result, Pakistan's agricultural exports are dominated by low-value products, such as cotton yarn, leather goods, and textiles, which offer little

room for innovation or technology transfer. In contrast, India has been able to diversify its exports and move up the value chain, with the services sector now accounting for a significant share of its GDP. This has allowed India to

become a more significant player in the global economy, while Pakistan continues to struggle with low levels of foreign investment and exports (Raza, Wu, & Lin, 2023).

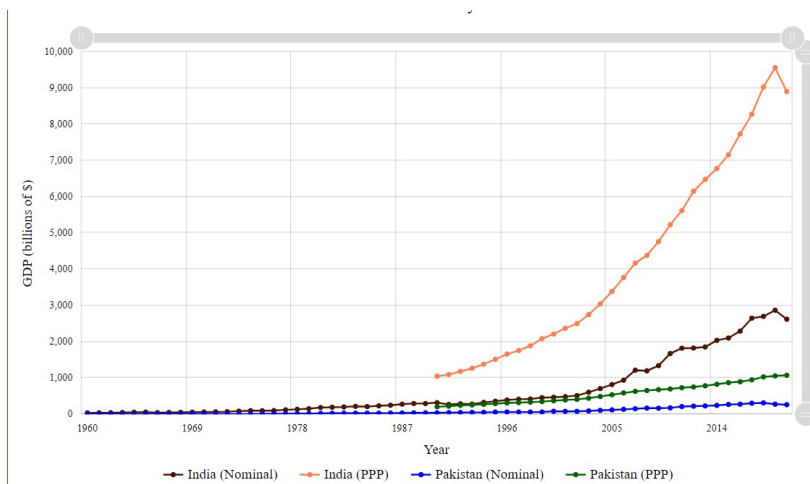


Figure 1: India and Pakistan's GDP

Weak governance and corruption

The weak governance and high levels of corruption in Pakistan have had severe consequences for the country's economic development and public service delivery. The lack of foreign investment and low levels of tax collection have been some of the major challenges in Pakistan's economic growth. According to the World Bank, Pakistan's foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows were only \$1.9 billion in 2020, which is significantly lower than India's FDI inflows of \$64 billion in the same year (Mathur, 2019). Corruption has been a major challenge for Pakistan's economy, and it has resulted in limited foreign investment and capital flight. In 2020, the Pakistani government estimated that the country loses around \$10 billion annually due to corruption, tax evasion, and other illegal activities. This has led to a lack of funds for public services and infrastructure development. In contrast, India has made significant progress in fighting corruption, resulting in higher foreign investment and

economic growth. For instance, India's Goods and Services Tax (GST) has reduced corruption in the country's tax system, resulting in higher tax collections and increased revenue for the government (Hassan & Zeb, 2021).

Pakistan's highly centralized political system has limited the autonomy of its provinces, resulting in poor resource allocation and service delivery. For example, the province of Balochistan, which is rich in natural resources such as gas and minerals, has lagged behind in terms of development. The central government's control over the province's resources and decision-making has limited the province's ability to utilize its resources effectively (Hassan & Zeb, 2021). In contrast, India's federal structure has allowed its states to have greater autonomy in resource allocation and decision-making, resulting in better service delivery in many regions.

Social Factors

Social factors, such as inequality, poverty, and health, can also affect a country's development.

Pakistan faces significant challenges in these areas, which have hindered its development and contributed to its underperformance compared to India. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2018, Pakistan's adult literacy rate was only 60%, compared to India's 77% (Sharafat & Nasreen, 2022). Moreover, Pakistan's education outcomes are also poor, with a high dropout rate, particularly among girls. The World Bank reports that only 60% of children complete primary school, and only 22% of Pakistani children complete secondary school (Awan & Hussain, 2020).

The poor investment in healthcare is another factor affecting Pakistan's development. In 2021, Pakistan was ranked 154th out of 195 countries in the World Health Organization's ranking of health systems. The country has high infant and maternal mortality rates and is grappling with a range of communicable diseases, such as tuberculosis and hepatitis.

Additionally, inequality is a significant issue in Pakistan, with a high level of income and wealth concentration among the elites. According to the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Index, Pakistan ranked 154th out of 189 countries in 2021, with a score that is lower than the South Asian average (Asadullah, Savoia & Sen, 2020). This ranking indicates that the country's social indicators, such as life expectancy, education, and income, are lower than what is typical for countries at similar income levels.

In contrast, India has made significant strides in human development indicators in recent years, with improved access to education, healthcare, and social protection. In 2021, India was ranked 135th out of 189 countries on the UNDP's Human Development Index. Although India still faces significant challenges in these areas, its progress indicates that investment in human capital is essential for a country's development (Asadullah, Savoia & Sen, 2020).

High levels of inequality and poverty:

Pakistan stands out as one of the most unequal

nations globally, evident in its Gini coefficient of 33.7, surpassing India's 32.6. This disparity is mirrored in a more elevated poverty rate in Pakistan, where 24.3% of the population falls below the poverty line, in contrast to India's 20%. Additionally, poverty is more prevalent in Pakistan's rural regions, where the availability of essential services like education, healthcare, and clean water is insufficient. The Gini coefficient, a widely utilized gauge of income inequality on a scale from 0 to 1, showcases perfect equality at 0 and perfect inequality at 1. As per the World Bank, Pakistan's Gini coefficient in 2019 was 0.336, slightly surpassing India's 0.326. This discrepancy indicates a higher level of income inequality in Pakistan compared to India (Islam, Newhouse & Yanez-Pagans, 2021).

The higher level of income inequality in Pakistan is also reflected in a higher poverty rate. According to the World Bank, in 2020, 24.3% of Pakistan's population was living below the poverty line, which is defined as an income of \$1.90 per day or less. In contrast, India's poverty rate was slightly lower at 20%. This difference in poverty rates can be attributed to several factors, including differences in economic growth, social policies, and population characteristics (Islam, Newhouse & Yanez-Pagans, 2021).

Poverty in Pakistan is concentrated in rural areas, where access to basic services such as healthcare, education, and clean water is limited. According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, in 2019, the poverty rate in rural areas was 30%, compared to 17% in urban areas. The lack of access to basic services in rural areas further exacerbates poverty, making it more difficult for people to improve their economic situation. Additionally, poverty in Pakistan is also linked to low levels of human capital and limited access to formal employment opportunities.

Poor health outcomes

Pakistan's healthcare system is grappling with a range of challenges, such as inadequate infrastructure, limited resources, and poor management, which have contributed to poor

health outcomes. Infant mortality rates are one of the most important indicators of a country's healthcare system, and Pakistan's rate is significantly higher than India's. Infant mortality rates in Pakistan vary significantly between urban and rural areas, with rates being higher in rural areas. According to the World Bank, only 64% of Pakistan's population has access to basic healthcare services. This limited access to healthcare has led to high rates of malnutrition, especially among children under five years old. Malnutrition affects physical and cognitive development, and children who suffer from malnutrition are more susceptible to diseases, which in turn results in high infant mortality rates. The Global Nutrition Report 2021 states that around 36% of children under five years old in Pakistan are underweight, compared to India's rate of 21%. The report also shows that stunting rates in Pakistan are also high, with 38% of children being affected. The inadequate healthcare system in Pakistan has significant implications for the country's development, hindering the growth of its human capital and the reduction of poverty (Khan & Hussain, [2020](#)).

Limited social protection

Pakistan has limited social protection programs, such as cash transfers, social insurance, and unemployment benefits, which can help mitigate the effects of poverty and inequality. This has resulted in a lack of social safety nets for vulnerable populations, including the elderly, disabled, and women. Pakistan has limited social protection programs compared to other countries in the region. For example, Pakistan's social protection expenditure is only 0.5% of its GDP, compared to India's expenditure of 1.4% of its GDP (Chakraborty, Panda & Aich, [2023](#)). Pakistan's Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) is one of the largest social protection programs in the country, but it only covers a small proportion of the population. In 2021, the program provided cash transfers to around 4.4 million families, which is less than 20% of the

country's poor population (Chakraborty, Panda & Aich, 2023).

The lack of social protection programs in Pakistan has left vulnerable populations at risk of falling into poverty. For instance, women in Pakistan face particular challenges due to cultural and societal norms, which limit their access to education, health care, and employment opportunities. The lack of social protection programs makes it difficult for women to access support in times of economic hardship, leaving them even more vulnerable.

Similarly, people with disabilities in Pakistan face significant barriers to social and economic inclusion. The World Health Organization estimates that 15% of Pakistan's population has a disability, but many people with disabilities struggle to access education, employment, and healthcare (Mumtaz & Saqulain, [2022](#)). The lack of social protection programs in Pakistan means that people with disabilities have little support to fall back on in times of need, making it even harder for them to escape poverty.

Political Factors

Political factors can also play a significant role in a country's development. In Pakistan's case, several factors related to governance and political instability have hindered its progress. Political instability in Pakistan has had a negative impact on its economic growth and social development. The country has had a history of frequent coups and military interventions, leading to weak governance and unstable political institutions. This has resulted in a lack of continuity in policymaking and a lack of investment in critical infrastructure such as roads, ports, and power supply (Qamruzzaman, [2022](#)). Moreover, the country has struggled with sectarian and ethnic conflicts, which have further hindered its development. The conflict in the northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, for example, has led to the displacement of millions of people and the destruction of critical infrastructure such as schools and hospitals.

Pakistan's political instability has also contributed to a lack of progress in improving social indicators such as education and healthcare. For instance, the country has one of the highest rates of out-of-school children in the world, with an estimated 22.8 million children not attending school. This has had a detrimental effect on the country's human capital development and ability to compete in a globalized economy (Qamruzzaman, 2022). Additionally, the country has faced challenges related to corruption and weak rule of law, which have further eroded public trust in government institutions and hindered its ability to attract foreign investment. The recent Panama Papers scandal, for instance, revealed that several high-profile politicians in Pakistan had offshore accounts, leading to public outrage and calls for greater transparency in governance.

Military intervention in politics

Pakistan has a history of military intervention in politics, which has resulted in political instability, weak democratic institutions, and limited civilian oversight of the military. The military has played a significant role in Pakistan's politics and has often used its power to oust democratically elected governments. This has limited the country's ability to build strong democratic institutions and ensure political stability. In contrast to Pakistan, India has a more stable political environment and a longer history of democratic rule. India has a strong democratic tradition, with regular elections and peaceful transitions of power. The country has a multi-party system with a diverse range of political ideologies represented in the parliament. India's democratic institutions, such as the judiciary and the election commission, are well-established and are seen as independent and impartial (Luqman & Antonakakis, 2021).

While India has also experienced some political instability, such as during the Emergency period in the 1970s, the country has largely maintained a democratic system of governance. In terms of military intervention, India has a long-standing tradition of civilian

control over the military. While the military has played a significant role in the country's history, including during wars and conflicts, it has always remained under the control of the civilian government. There have been few instances of military intervention in Indian politics, and these have been met with strong opposition and condemnation from the public and civil society organizations (Luqman & Antonakakis, 2021).

Overall, while both Pakistan and India have faced challenges related to political stability and democratic governance, India has a more stable political environment and a stronger democratic system of governance compared to Pakistan.

Weak democratic institutions

Pakistan's democratic institutions have been weak and ineffective, with limited transparency, accountability, and rule of law. The country has struggled to establish an independent judiciary, media, and civil society, which are critical to ensuring democratic governance. Moreover, corruption and patronage networks have often undermined the functioning of democratic institutions and contributed to political instability.

Regional conflicts and terrorism

Pakistan has been plagued by regional conflicts and terrorism, which have had significant economic and social costs. The country has faced long-standing conflicts with India over Kashmir and has also struggled with terrorism and insurgency in its northwestern regions. These conflicts have resulted in significant economic and social disruption, as well as political instability.

Security challenges have impeded Pakistan's development. The country has experienced decades of violence and instability, including a series of conflicts with India over the disputed region of Kashmir (Amir et al., 2020). These conflicts have diverted resources away from development and contributed to a climate of political uncertainty. Additionally, Pakistan has

struggled with terrorism and sectarian violence, which have further undermined stability and contributed to a negative image in the international community.

Conclusion

The partition of British India in 1947 created India and Pakistan, with both countries facing similar challenges in the early years. However, India's commitment to democracy and secularism, economic development, strategic location, and military capabilities have contributed to its rise in global politics. India's strong democratic institutions, growing economy, strategic location, and large military have helped the country play a vital role in global trade, investment, and international organizations such as the G20 and BRICS. In contrast, Pakistan's development and rise in global politics have been hindered by political instability, military rule, sectarian and ethnic tensions, and challenges in its relationship with the United States. The analysis of the rise of India and underdevelopment of Pakistan can be explained by different international relations theories such as liberal internationalism, realism, and dependency theory, which explain the role of democracy, power, and global economic structures in

promoting peace, prosperity, and stability in the international system.

When applying dependency theory to the case of Pakistan, it can be argued that the country has been unable to break free from its historical legacy of colonialism and imperialism. Pakistan was a British colony until 1947, and its economy was structured to serve the interests of the colonial powers. After independence, Pakistan was left with a weak and underdeveloped economy, which was heavily reliant on agriculture and natural resources. The country has since struggled to develop its own industries and achieve economic growth, as it has been trapped in a system that benefits developed countries. Overall, the rise of India and the underdevelopment of Pakistan can be analyzed through various international relations theories. While liberal internationalism can explain India's success in global politics, dependency theory can provide insight into the challenges faced by Pakistan in achieving economic growth and development. Understanding these theories can help us to develop policies and strategies that can support the development of underdeveloped countries and promote greater equality and justice in the international system.

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