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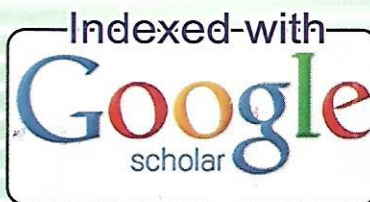


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A Journey from Conflict to Peace: Mapping India–Australia Relations from the Perspective of Peace and Conflict Studies



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Abstract

Peace and Conflict Studies is basically an interdisciplinary study that seeks to explore the sources or reasons of conflict and the way out of resolving those conflicts with an eye to reduce tension emanating from disagreements over the manner in which the conflicting units want to interpret an issue and establish peace. However, it must be borne in mind that peace cannot be taken for granted and establishment of peace is a protracted process which requires constant negotiation, persuasion and monitoring the entire process of peace settlement through confidence-building and, above all, active and willful participation of all stakeholders.

Now the paper seeks to deal with the question as to whether Indo-Australian relations can be construed from the perspective of Peace and Conflict Studies. To get the answer, this paper will carry two different parts. First part is concerned with the relations between India and Australia during cold war period, that means the situation of conflict and violence in the history of their relations and the second part will be focusing on their eagerness to reduce conflict and their willingness to create a positive ambience for cooperation, simultaneously this part will try to decode the factors behind this eagerness or willingness.

Keywords: Peace, Conflict, Defense White Paper, ASEAN, Strategy, Bilateral Relations, Stakeholders.

Introduction

Peace and Conflict Studies (PCS) is an interdisciplinary study to understand the source or reason of conflict and the process or intentions to overcome the conflicts in our day-to-day life as well as politics. PCS addresses inequality, violence, security, stability, instability, rights and all levels of other factors contributing to peace and conflict from the individual to global issues. PCS can help to develop one's idea regarding the conflict resolution and peace building theories, research and practice.

The fight for peace has engaged societies since the beginning of the history of civilization as well as violence and conflicts. As the cold war ended, Peace and Conflict Studies focused towards the complex issues related to political violence, human security, human rights, social justice along with International conflicts.

Here it's necessary to decode the general concepts of conflict and peace first, to explore the idea of this paper. Basically, conflict is a clash in between incompatibles. Scholars of this arena have identified five major causes of conflicts: 1) Incompatibility of ideas 2) Desire for Dominance 3) Inequality 4) Preservation of one's identity and 5) quest for Survival. Among these, in cold war period, India-Australia relations have been highly affected by the aforesaid first and fourth causes. On the other hand in PCS, according to Johan Galtung, peace is something where there may be an overt absence of war.¹ The aim of peace studies is to reduce conflict and create an ambient atmosphere for cooperation. The purpose is to open channels of communication between two adversaries for a better understanding of each other perspective.² In bilateral relations, establishment and maintaining of peace always demand some compromises. Third party intervention, multi track diplomacy, bilateral negotiations are more effective measures to reach this target.

So far the State is concerned, we have seen two different types of conflict, Intra-State and Inter-State. In the first case, issues like ethnicity,