

Turkey and Pakistan's Foreign Policy Congruence: A Co-orientation Analysis of Political Messaging

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WRITTEN BY

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PUBLISHER

TRT WORLD RESEARCH CENTRE

November 2020

TRT WORLD İSTANBUL

AHMET ADNAN SAYGUN STREET NO:83 34347

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Introduction

Turkey and Pakistan have a longstanding relationship, dating back to even before 1947 when Turkey was the second country to recognise Pakistan's sovereign status, to when Muslims of the Indian Subcontinent supported the Ottoman Empire as part of the Khilafat Movement¹. Today, the two countries continue to present a united front on multiple international platforms. This paper intends to analyse the relationship from a communications perspective. Specifically, it aims to examine congruence between the two countries' political communication at the highest levels. Applying the co-orientation model of communication to state communications when it comes to foreign policy can help us understand how the state identifies itself vis-à-vis others. By comparing how a country identifies itself through its foreign policy and state communications with how another country identifies itself through the same can serve as a tool to evaluate incidences of co-orientation between them.

To do this, framing analyses of political speeches on selected global conflicts by the Turkish and Pakistani leadership, namely President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Prime Minister Imran Khan respectively, will be conducted to determine how each country identifies itself via positionality on global conflicts. Then, results will be compared to evaluate the extent, if any, of co-orientation between the two. This approach will allow for a deeper understanding of the relationship, particularly in terms of the alignment of foreign policy and strategic interests.

The paper will first introduce the co-orientation model of communication and outline its evolution that eventually explained how to measure an individual's or group's congruence with another on a particular issue. Then, it will explain its applicability in evaluating the relationship between states and operationalise it by defining the research methodology based on framing theory. Following that, a brief historical overview of Turkish-Pakistani relations will provide the context in terms of the co-orientation model of communication by examining the internal balance between the two states' foreign policies towards each other. Then the Pakistan-Turkey relationship will be analysed in the context of the congruence of frames used respectively by the Turkish and Pakistani political leadership to communicate foreign policy positions with regards to global conflicts. Once that is done, a discussion will follow that will evaluate the incidences of congruence between the two countries' political leaders' communications and contextualise it based on how regional as well global dynamics and alignments impact their stances.

¹ The Khilafat movement (1919–24) was a pan-Islamist political protest campaign launched by Muslims in British India to restore the caliph of the Ottoman Caliphate, considered the leader of Sunni Muslims, as an effective political authority (Niemeijer, 1972). It was a protest against the sanctions placed on the caliph and the Ottoman Empire after the First World War by the Treaty of Sèvres (Niemeijer, 1972).

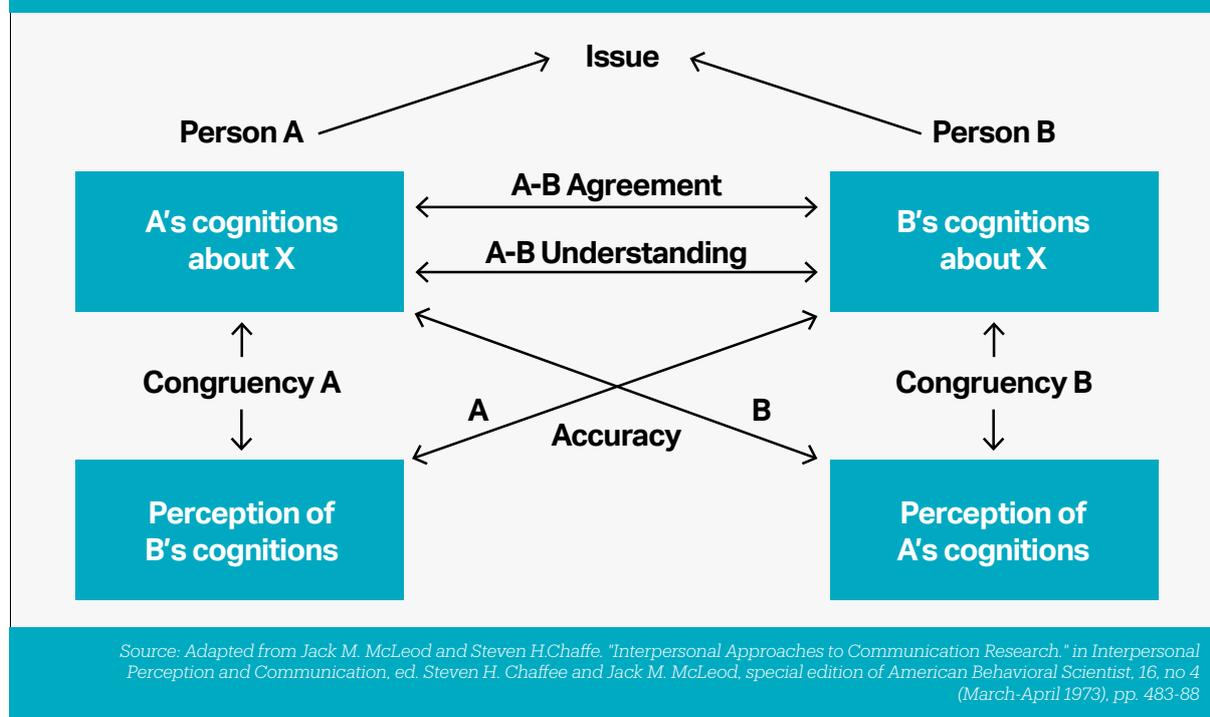
Co-Orientation Model of Communication

The co-orientation model of communication is based on relations between two human or social entities and their attitudes towards an object or an issue. In the case of two countries, with media and communication playing an increasingly important role in public diplomacy, communication serves as a reflection of their relationship, not just with one another, but also with other countries around the world. The origins of this proposition are linked with Newcomb's (1953) paper that looked at the objectives of communication between two individuals: to establish a common orientation between one another and to, simultaneously, link them to a shared object or person of concern. These objectives recognised that each individual adapts to another. Such adaptation is motivated by a shared interest in the state of the world to which they belong. This model was originally developed to explain how people change their attitudes to other people (Heider, 1958), given the assumption that people want to achieve 'psychological

balance'² when it comes to communicating with people, i.e. that they strive to have mutually consistent attitudes. If they are unable to, communication can break down and threaten the relationship itself.

McLeod and Chaffee (1973) expanded on the co-orientation model of communication by developing a measurable approach, highlighting the importance of accuracy in perceiving the other's point of view (see Figure 1) when it comes to communication. This model was tested between family members, in small group settings, between individuals and small groups as well as between individuals and social collectives such as corporations. The co-orientation model has been applied to international public relations also, postulating that people prefer harmony to conflict and that they can also use communication for that purpose in international relations.

Figure 1: Co-Orientation Model of Communication (McLeod and Chaffee, 1973)



² Building on this is the work of Leon Festinger (1957). He discovered 'cognitive dissonance' that is the psychological discomfort experienced by an individual when they participate in an action that is contrary to their beliefs, ideas, or values. With people seeking cognitive consistency as mentioned above, Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory suggests that individuals strive to resolve cognitive dissonance by changing their beliefs or attitudes, acquiring new information that outweighs dissonant beliefs or reducing the importance of held beliefs or attitudes.

Taylor and Kent (2006) used it as a guide for nation-building and asserted that "co-orientation involves a commitment among individuals and groups to try to understand others' perceptions of reality and events, despite whether that definition is shared" (p. 353). Vercic, Vercic & Laco (2006) used it to study relations between Croatia and Slovenia when they suggested that the co-orientation model could be used to examine the degree of agreement between the Slovenian and Croatian publics by measuring levels of agreement on specific issues and how well each side could predict the views of the other side. The underlying logic of the co-orientation model of communication as applied to international public relations is that countries strive to promote harmonious relations through communication.

While the co-orientation model of communication is primarily considered a model to evaluate congruence between two entities, it can be applied to evaluate congruence between more. For example, it can be used to evaluate not just the attitudes of the EU and US publics towards each other but also towards, in the case of US-EU-Russia relations, the Russian public as well and vice versa. As per Vercic, Vercic and Laco (2006), this is called 'second-order co-orientation' when "subjects are concerned not only with their mutual orientation; they are equally concerned with the mutual orientations of the other two" (Vercic & Vercic, 2007, p. 408). This ap-

proach helps to further understand relations between the two countries. For example, US-EU relations are not only affected by their own evaluations of Russia but also by each other's evaluations of the country, along with how Russia evaluates both the US and the EU separately.

Though the co-orientation model of communication has been developed to understand congruence between individuals and groups, this paper proposes that it can be used to examine congruence between state identities. In his book *Writing Security*, David Campbell highlighted "the discursive link between foreign policy and the constitution of state as an actor with an identity" (Campbell, 1992 in Aydin-Düzgüt & Rumelili, 2018, p. 287). This is specifically the development of state identity through the practice of foreign policy in terms of both external behaviour and the representation of the self in state documents with a state constructing and responding to the 'other'. By practising foreign policy, a state identifies with itself and others, via external communications as well as representation and documentation of the state. This paper applies the McLeod and Chaffee (1973) co-orientation model of communication to a state's practice of foreign policy to help understand how the state identifies itself vis-à-vis others. By comparing how a state identifies itself through how it communicates its foreign policy with how another country does the same can be an effective tool to evaluate the incidences of co-orientation between them.

Research Methodology

With that said, the purpose of this paper is to outline the mechanism by which inter-country congruence can be detected by comparing how states identify themselves through their foreign policy as well as how they communicate those ideals. To do this, this study analyses the political communication of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan based on framing theory. Specifically, for the purpose of this paper, samples will be based on political communication regarding their respective positions on global conflicts. This methodology will help delineate not just their own positions but also the extent, if any, of co-orientation between the two.

According to Chong and Druckman (2007), the "major premise of framing theory is that an issue can be viewed from a variety of perspectives" (p. 104). As information processing is never without context, and

that context is subjective, Entman (1993) emphasises that framing is "selecting aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (p. 52). Frames are defined as "interpretation patterns" (Scheufele, 2003 in Schmidt, 2014, p. 98) as products of the activity of framing. They are "words, images, phrases, and presentation styles that a speaker (e.g., a politician) uses when relaying information about an issue or event to an audience" (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987, 1989 in Chong & Druckman, 2007, p.100). A comparative analysis of how the same issue is being framed in the two leaders' political communications about global conflicts is likely to be an excellent barometer for the incidences of co-orientation between the two.

Incidences of Co-Orientation

Before conducting the framing analysis, an overview of the Turkey - Pakistan relationship can help delineate past and present levels of agreement and understanding between the two countries with respect to several key issues.

As noted above, the two countries enjoy historical ties dating back to when the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent supported the Ottoman Empire (Pay, 2015). During the Cold War, both were part of the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO), a US-led military alliance. Their relations have been marked by mutual support on key national issues including, among other concerns, Pakistan supporting Turkey on the Cyprus issue and against FETÖ, which was listed as a terrorist organisation by the Turkish government following the attempted coup of July 15, 2016. Turkey, on the other hand, has supported Pakistan's stance on the disputed territory of Kashmir. Turkey has recently sought to widen its web of relations when it comes to trade and investment. For example, Turkey's engagement with China as part of both the Middle Corridor Initiative and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), both of which Pakistan is a significant contributor to. Concerning trade and investment, the Turkish defence industry secured its most substantial arms deal (Bekdil, 2018) with Pakistan in 2018. As noted, Turkey and Pakistan have historically enjoyed strong political relations. In 2019-2020, both countries

have undertaken measures to further people-to-people contact. For example, Pakistani Prime Minister Khan asked state-run Pakistan Television to screen the dubbed version of the Turkish drama '*Diriliş Ertuğrul*', recommending the show for promoting 'true Islamic values' (Mohyidin, 2020).

Given the purpose of this paper is to outline the mechanism by which inter-country congruence can be detected by comparing how states identify themselves through their foreign policy as well as how they communicate those ideals, the political speeches of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Prime Minister Imran Khan on the following issues or conflicts were included: the Kashmir dispute, the Israel-Palestine dispute, the Syrian Civil War, the Houthi Insurgency in Yemen, the United States' (US) war in Afghanistan, the 2020 Armenian-Azerbaijani Conflict and the Libyan Civil War. The examination of Turkish and Pakistani positions on international conflicts will shed light on their respective relations with a diverse group of regional countries as well as global powers including India, Israel, Palestine, Syria, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the US, Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan and the European Union (EU) allowing a thorough perusal of Turkey-Pakistan relations in the context of both their internal as well as "second-order co-orientation" (Vercic & Vercic, 2007, abstract).

The Kashmir Dispute

The Kashmir dispute has been one of the most protracted conflicts in history. This dispute is a remnant left over from when the British Raj ended, ultimately leading to the birth of India and Pakistan in 1947. Support for their particular stances on the Kashmir dispute has become a key condition for both countries when it comes to international relations. As mentioned above, Turkey has historically supported Pakistan's stance on the dispute. In 2017, much to India's irritation, Turkish President Erdogan called for efforts to reduce the suffering of Kashmiris in a 2017 visit to New Delhi (Krishnan, 2017)². President Erdogan calling for multilateral dialogue to resolve the conflict that has cost thou-

sands of Kashmiris' lives dovetails with Turkey's foreign policy objectives (Kalin, 2012).

In 2019, when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led Indian government revoked Article 370 of the Indian Constitution that stripped Kashmiris' of their autonomy and special rights, President Erdoğan raised the issue at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). He said that "in order for the Kashmiri people to look at a safe future together with their Pakistani and Indian neighbours, it is imperative to solve the problem through dialogue, based on justice and equity, not through clashes" (Düz, 2019). He highlighted that Kashmir was "virtually un-

² International humanitarian and development assistance has become a central part of Turkish foreign policy. Moreover, 'humanitarian diplomacy' has been highly visible, given the fact that the country hosted almost four million Syrian refugees in 2018 (Hasimi, 2014).

der blockade with 8 million people, unfortunately, unable to step outside of Kashmir" (Düz, 2019), referring to a communication blackout that persists till the time of writing. In 2020, President Erdoğan reiterated his support at the UNGA. He referred to the revocation of Article 370: "Steps taken following the abolition of the special status of [Indian-administered] Jammu-Kashmir further complicated the problem...we [Turkey] are in favour of solving this issue through dialogue, within the framework of the United Nations resolutions, in line with the expectations of the people of Kashmir" (Düz, 2019). Prime Minister Imran Khan thanked President Erdoğan for his support: "deeply appreciate President [Recep Tayyip] Erdogan once again raising his voice in support of the rights of the Kashmiri people during

his address to UNGA", praising Turkey as a source of strength for the Kashmiris in their legitimate struggle for self-determination, mirroring phrases used by the Turkish President (Düz, 2019).

In terms of framing analysis, both President Erdoğan and Prime Minister Imran Khan have highlighted the legitimate struggle of the Kashmiris and their right to self-determination, along with raising concerns about the humanitarian situation. They have not referred to any security or terrorism-related concerns (raised by Indian officials). Utilizing the unity frame, both refer to Kashmiris in Indian administered Kashmir as brotherly and fraternal.

Israel-Palestine

On August 13, 2020, Israel and the UAE signed a US-mediated agreement that would establish full diplomatic relations between the two countries. The UAE became the third Arab state after Egypt and Jordan to fully recognise Israel. Almost a month later, Bahrain also formally recognised Israel. Subsequently, President Erdoğan stated at the 2020 UNGA that "Turkey will not support any plan that the Palestinian people do not give consent to...countries that have declared their intention to open embassies in Jerusalem, in violation of the United Nations resolutions and international law, only serve to make the conflict more complicated with their actions" (Bir, Kazanca & Aydin, 2020).

A similar stance was upheld by the Pakistani Prime Minister who stated that the Israel-Palestine issue would not be resolved unless there is a "just settlement" (Al

Jazeera, 2020) for the Palestinians, even if more countries decide to recognise Israel. In an interview, Prime Minister Imran Khan stated that Israel must recognise that "if they do not allow the Palestinians to have a just settlement, a viable state, this issue will not die down... even if other countries recognise it, it will not die down, the issue will continue to fester. It is in Israel's interest that there should be a just settlement".

In terms of framing analysis, both President Erdoğan and Prime Minister Imran Khan utilised the justice and international law frame, highlighting the unacceptance of any solution to Turkey and Pakistan respectively that does not include Palestinians' will or demands. They have both emphasised the short-sightedness of some Arab countries' recognition of Israel, as well as that it is an unsustainable solution.

The Syrian Civil War

The Syrian Civil War that started in 2011 has left more than 500,000 people dead and millions displaced. Almost 4 million Syrian refugees live in Turkey. Northern Syria presents security concerns for Turkey, where PKK/YPG terrorists have found a base from which to launch operations against Turkey. Turkey believes that both Daesh and other sources of instability are side-effects of President Bashar al-Assad's hold on power. In October 2019, after US President Donald Trump withdrew US forces from northern Syria, President Erdoğan

said that he was not worried about Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's regime entering Manbij in northern Syria because "it's their lands after all. But what is important to me is that the terrorist organisation does not remain there [referring to the PKK/YPG terrorist organisation] ... I told this to Mr Putin as well. If you are clearing Manbij of terrorist organisations, then go ahead, you or the regime can provide all the logistics. But if you are not going to do this, the people there are telling us to save them" (Gumrukcu, 2019).

After the loss of 33 Turkish soldiers in Idlib in early 2020, Prime Minister Imran Khan “conveyed heartfelt sympathies and condolences on the loss of lives of several soldiers in the attack in Idlib”, and “reaffirmed support for Turkey’s legitimate security and humanitarian concerns in the region and also lauded Turkey’s humanitarian assistance, including through hosting millions of Syrian refugees” (Alhas, 2020). However, Prime Minister Khan had urged western and Arab governments to reopen their embassies in Damascus. Pakistan has been one of the few countries which had kept its embassy open throughout the conflict even when governments closed their embassies in the early months of the war and called on President Bashar al-Assad to resign. According to him, the Syrians have suffered enough: “Look at the suffering of the people. So yes, the answer is there should be peace there. Syria does not need more military action for regime change” (Steele & Osborne, 2018).

In July 2020, President Erdoğan also reiterated his support for the Syrian people: “Until the Syrian people are free, peaceful and safe, we will remain in this country” (TRT World, 2020). President Erdoğan referred to Turkish soldiers in northern Syria who are there for two objectives. Firstly, to push PKK/YPG terrorists at least 30 kilometres away from its border to secure Turkey, and secondly to establish a safe zone to which Syrian refugees can voluntarily return to. It appears that given the trajectory of the Syrian Civil War and how it has transpired, both Pakistan and Turkey are oriented towards security concerns and welfare of Syrian refugees.

In terms of framing analysis, President Erdoğan and Prime Minister Khan have both utilised the humanitarian frame while emphasizing the plight of the Syrian civilians and refugees. They have also utilised the security frame by underlining the necessity of measures to secure Turkey’s borders.

The Houthi Insurgency

In 2015, Turkish President Erdoğan stated Turkey’s support for Saudi-led military operations against Houthi rebels in Yemen and that Ankara may consider providing “logistical support” (Anadolu Agency, 2015) to the mission. He called on the Houthis and terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda to withdraw from Yemen. However, President Erdoğan appeared to recognise the Saudi-led coalition airstrikes in Yemen as holding a great potential of leading to a grave humanitarian crisis. In 2019, President Erdoğan, speaking on the attack on Saudi oil facilities, said that “whoever dropped the first bomb in Yemen is the one responsible for the attack... the Yemeni people are exercising their legitimate right of defence ... the attacks were a reciprocal response to aggression against Yemen for years” (Middle East Monitor, 2019). This was understood to be Saudi Arabia.

Prime Minister Khan came to power in July 2018, but he had been a vocal opponent of Pakistan becoming involved in Saudi-led military operations in 2015 (Malik, 2015). At the time, he had said that Pakistan must not become a part of a conflict that threatened to divide the Muslim world and should instead work on a peaceful resolution. Soon after winning elections in 2018, Prime Minister Khan announced that Pakistan was mediating between Iran and Saudi Arabia to end the conflict in Yemen (Tanzeem, 2018). In 2019, Prime Minister Khan

said that “Pakistan welcomes the conclusion of the landmark Riyadh Agreement, as a result of the initiative taken by the Saudi leadership and support by UAE [United Arab Emirates] Government...We believe it is a crucial and important step forward toward a political solution and durable peace and security in Yemen” (Shabir & Ishtiaq, 2019). In 2020, Prime Minister Khan dubbed the situation in Yemen a humanitarian catastrophe (Debiefer, 2020), noting that Pakistan played an important role in diffusing Saudi-Iranian tensions.

In terms of framing analysis, President Erdoğan and Prime Minister Imran Khan have both utilised the humanitarian frame when speaking about the Yemeni people’s suffering. Though Turkey initially considered providing logistical support to Saudi Arabia and Pakistan initially did not support the Saudi-led coalition airstrikes, changing regional dynamics have led to differences in the ways in which President Erdoğan and Prime Minister Khan currently frame the role of Saudi Arabia and the UAE in the conflict, with Prime Minister Khan framing them as part of a durable political solution and President Erdoğan framing them as aggressors.

The US War in Afghanistan

During Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's December 2015 visit to Turkey, Erdogan reiterated that "Afghanistan's problems are our problems, and their success is our success" (Kaura, 2017) while assuring that Turkish troops would stay there as long as Kabul desired. In 2019, President Erdoğan reiterated that "Afghanistan and Turkey have had time-tested relations throughout history and peace and stability in Afghanistan is highly crucial for Turkey" (TOLO News, 2019). Erdogan said his country welcomed the inauguration of the new phase of the parliament in Afghanistan and saw it as another step towards strengthening democracy in the country. He went on to say that "Turkey supports the ongoing efforts for peace in Afghanistan and is in favour of a durable, just and implementable peace in Afghanistan and stresses the need for all parties' commitment in this regard"(TOLO News, 2019), supporting free and fair elections.

Before coming to power in July 2018, Prime Minister Imran Khan believed that Afghanistan had no military solution. In 2020, he said that "for more than 40 years, Afghans have suffered from continued conflict and

bloodshed. Pakistan has endured the fall-out, reflected in the incidence of terrorism, loss of precious lives, and huge economic cost [...] I have underlined for a long time that there is no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan and that the only way forward is a negotiated political settlement" (Iran Press, 2020). Prime Minister Imran Khan also reiterated that "Pakistan has played a pivotal role in facilitating the Afghan peace process" and wanted "Afghan leaders to seize this historic opportunity, work together constructively, and secure an inclusive, broad-based, and comprehensive political settlement...the successful culmination of an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process is indispensable for Afghanistan and regional peace, stability, and prosperity" (Iran Press, 2020).

In terms of framing analysis, President Erdoğan and Prime Minister Imran Khan have, once again, utilised the humanitarian frame when describing the plight of the Afghan people having lived through decades of war. They both emphasised the importance of an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process for endurable peace and stability in Afghanistan.

The 2020 Armenian-Azerbaijani Conflict

As tensions run high amid a recent flare-up in the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, President Erdoğan reiterated Turkey's full support for Azerbaijan during a speech in October 2020 (Turkten, 2020). He vowed to continue the struggle for Azerbaijan's territory of Upper Karabakh until it is freed from a "despicable" Armenian occupation (Turkten, 2020). President Erdoğan said that "the brotherly state of Azerbaijan has started a great operation both to defend its territories and to liberate the occupied Karabakh" (Turkten, 2020). On the other hand, Prime Minister Imran Khan stated that "Pakistan stands with the people of the brotherly country of Azerbaijan and supports its self-defence law during these challenging times in the face of Armenian aggression" (Azerbaijan 24, 2020). He also reiterated Pakistan's support for Azerbaijan's position under the UN Security Council resolutions on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It must be noted that Turkey and Pakistan were the first two countries to recognise Azerbaijan as a sovereign state in 1991. Pakistan is still the only

country in the world that does not recognise Armenia, while Turkey has not established diplomatic relations until today.

In terms of framing analysis, President Erdoğan and Prime Minister Imran Khan have utilised the unity frame, communicating solidarity with Azerbaijan. Both have also used the security frame, highlighting Azerbaijan's national security and territorial integrity as the basis of their support.

Analysis

There appears to be a high degree of co-orientation between the foreign policies of Turkey and Pakistan as displayed by the mostly congruent political communications of President Erdoğan and Prime Minister Imran Khan related to ongoing conflicts and disputes. While there appears to be understanding and agreement as depicted by mirrored stances towards the conflicts described above, particularly the Kashmir dispute, the US war in Afghanistan, the Israel-Palestine conflict and the Azerbaijan-Armenia escalation, the strength of the Pakistan-Turkey relationship can be measured by examining how the two countries have navigated complications presented by their own national interests as well as those of other countries. The Houthi Insurgency in Yemen and the Syrian Civil War being two prominent examples.

As noted above, President Erdoğan and Prime Minister Imran Khan differed when it came to Saudi Arabia's and the UAE's role in fighting against the Houthi Insurgency in Yemen, with Prime Minister Khan framing the intervention as part of a durable political solution while President Erdoğan framed them as aggressors. This difference can be explained by looking at the history of Pakistan's and Turkey's involvement in the Yemeni conflict.

When it comes to Pakistan, the country did not become a part of the 2015 Saudi coalition by refusing to send military support due to internal political pressure and chose to remain neutral instead (BBC News, 2015). In March 2019 however, despite having earlier declared neutrality in the Yemen conflict, Pakistani politicians from both the government and opposition condemned Houthi attacks (TRT World, 2019) on Saudi Arabia for the first time. This change in stance occurred after Saudi Arabia provided financial help to a cash-strapped Pakistan in December 2018. This is even more likely when one considers other times when Saudi Arabia appeared to expect support from Pakistan in exchange for continued financial support, such as when Prime Minister Imran Khan cancelled his scheduled attendance at the December 2019 Kuala Lumpur (KL) Summit, widely considered an attempt to form an alternative to the Saudi-led Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), following a visit to Saudi Arabia right before the summit (Jamal, 2019). President Erdoğan even pointed out that he was 'unsurprised about reports that Saudi Arabia pressured Pakistan not to attend a summit for

Muslim leaders in Malaysia' while adding that 'it was not the first time that Riyadh had threatened Islamabad' (Middle East Eye, 2019). This apparent Saudi pressure on Pakistan may be why, in November 2019, Prime Minister Khan expressed that he believed Saudi Arabia and the UAE to be part of a durable peace in Yemen. Prime Minister Khan's conciliatory stance took into account Pakistan's reliance on Saudi financial assistance. Nevertheless, in August 2020, Prime Minister Imran Khan dubbed the situation in Yemen as a 'humanitarian catastrophe' (Debriefier, 2020). Such a statement may be connected to Saudi Arabia's recent policy shift, as Riyadh did not forcefully condemn India for continuing human rights violations against Kashmiri Muslims in Indian administered Kashmir post revocation of Article 370 in August 2019, which led to a rift in the Saudi-Pakistan relationship (Hashim, 2020). Turkey was one of the few countries to publicly call out the Indian leadership for their blatant disregard for Kashmiris' human rights.

Turkey, had initially voice support to the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen in 2015, albeit only in terms of logistics, due to two main reasons: First, from Turkey's perspective, the Houthis' refusal to withdraw from governmental institutions in Sanaa, which they had overtaken in 2014, meant that the Iran-allied rebels were now effectively responsible for Yemen's deteriorating situation. This was important for Turkey given Ankara's geostrategic interests in the Red Sea, along with being historically connected to Yemen since the Ottoman era (Bakeer & Cafiero, 2018). Secondly, Riyadh had, at the time, apparently become less concerned with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, which was supported by Turkey (Bakeer & Cafiero, 2018) as Saudi resistance to the Muslim Brotherhood "created a rift in the Sunni bloc, allowing Iran to further increase its influence in the Arab countries including Yemen" (Bakeer & Cafiero, 2018). Thus, Turkey supported the Saudi led coalition airstrikes in Yemen as part of a wider effort to "restore the country's legitimate state authority back in power" (Bakeer & Cafiero, 2018). However, Turkey and Saudi Arabia (along with the UAE) have experienced a deterioration in their ties since 2015.

The still ongoing Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) boycott of Qatar, an ally of Turkey that was resisting Houthis in Yemen and thus countering Iranian influence (Bakeer & Cafiero, 2018), along with other factors such as the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in

Istanbul in 2018, as well as a devastating humanitarian toll from the conflict (Bakeer & Cafiero, 2018), have led to a change in the Turkish stance. Focused on the urgency of Yemen's humanitarian crisis (Bakeer & Cafiero, 2018), President Erdoğan, in a 2019 speech, said that Turkey sees the problems of Yemeni people as its own problems because Turkey works "to contribute to the stability, peace and tranquillity in our region and in places that are dear to our hearts" (Presidency of the Republic of Turkey Directorate of Communications, 2019). As noted above, perhaps due to the fact that Riyadh did not forcefully condemn India for continuing human rights violations against Kashmiri Muslims in Indian administered Kashmir while Turkey was one of the few countries to publicly call out the Indian leadership for their blatant disregard for Kashmiris' human rights, Prime Minister Imran Khan also dubbed the situation in Yemen as a 'humanitarian catastrophe' (Debiefer, 2020).

With regards to the Syrian Civil War, the preservation of Syria's territorial integrity has been among Turkey's primary objectives in Syria (Kiniklioğlu, 2016). Both Daesh and other terrorist groups are an existential threat not just to Syria but to the entire region. This may be one of the factors behind Prime Minister Khan staunchly supporting Turkey's actions to secure itself from PKK/YPG terrorists in northern Syria, especially given Paki-

stan has continued to face security risks due to the US War in Afghanistan. Moreover, decades of conflict in Afghanistan has left more than 3 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan, with many of them having been born in the country. Like Turkey, Pakistan also did not receive much international assistance as a refugee-hosting country. Security risks and lack of international support to manage significant refugee populations, Pakistan can empathise with Turkey's Syria-related concerns. Relatedly, both President Erdoğan and Prime Minister Imran Khan have been vocal about the plight of the Syrian people.

However, as noted above, Prime Minister Khan has been vocal about avoiding military action for any kind of regime change in Syria, while Turkey has not. Prime Minister Khan has also urged western and Arab governments to reopen their embassies in Damascus, with Pakistan being one of the few countries that kept its embassy open throughout the conflict even when governments closed their embassies in the early months of the war and called on President Bashar al-Assad to resign. This stance is very much consistent with Prime Minister Khan's stated efforts to mediate between conflicting Muslim countries to avoid divisions in the Islamic world, such as his mediation between Iran and Saudi Arabia in Yemen (Al Jazeera, 2020).

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to demonstrate the framing of political communication by the political leadership of countries as a key tool to establish congruence between two countries' foreign policy. The basis of this investigative mechanism is the co-orientation model of communication that measures and evaluates the extent of congruence based on accurately perceiving and mirroring others' stances, as evidenced by the use of identical frames in political communications regarding global conflicts. The identical frames can be said to convey agreement and understanding on key issues, signalling unity.

Given the findings and analysis above, it is reasonable to argue that the political communications of Turkish President Erdoğan and Pakistani Prime Minister Khan (and thus foreign policies of Turkey and Pakistan, respectively) have a high degree of congruence. The two countries, navigating complex foreign policy environments, have demonstrated an all-weather relationship that is mature and appreciative of the inherent value of maintaining long-term alliances despite the occasional differences.

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