



# INDIA'S ROLE IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: ANALYZING ITS STRATEGIC BALANCING WITH CHINA

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## Abstract:

This dissertation examines India's role in the Global South and its strategic balancing with China. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the historical context, theoretical frameworks, empirical case studies, and strategic implications of India-China relations. Through a multidimensional approach, the dissertation explores the drivers, dynamics, and implications of India's strategic balancing with China in the Global South, considering geopolitical rivalries, security concerns, economic interests, and domestic politics. The study employs a combination of theoretical perspectives, empirical evidence, and policy implications to elucidate the complexities of India-China relations and generate actionable insights for policymakers, scholars, and practitioners.

## Keywords:

India, Global South, China, strategic balancing, geopolitics, security, economic interests, diplomacy, international relations, cooperation, competition, territorial disputes, historical context, theoretical frameworks, empirical analysis, and policy implications.

## 1. Introduction

India's emergence as a significant player in global affairs, particularly within the Global South, has drawn attention to its strategic interactions with China. The dynamics between these two Asian giants hold immense importance not only for the region but also for the broader international community. As India continues to assert its influence in the Global South, particularly in areas such as South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa, understanding its strategic balancing with China becomes imperative.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

The relationship between India and China is complex and characterized by a mixture of cooperation, competition, and occasional confrontation. With both countries aspiring for regional and global leadership, their interactions in the Global South have far-reaching implications for regional stability, economic development, and geopolitical alignments. Therefore, the central problem addressed by this dissertation is to analyze India's role in the Global South and its strategic balancing with China, exploring the motivations, strategies, and implications of India's foreign policy approach.

## 1.2 Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive analysis of India's engagement with the Global South, focusing specifically on its strategic interactions with China. By examining historical context, foreign policy objectives, and strategic dynamics, the study seeks to elucidate the drivers and constraints. 18 shaping India's approach towards China in the Global South. Additionally, the study aims to identify the implications of India-China rivalry or cooperation for regional stability, economic development, and global governance.

## 1.3 Research Questions

To address this purpose, this study will explore the following research questions: - What are the historical roots and contemporary dynamics of India-China relations, particularly in the context of the Global South? - What are India's foreign policy objectives and strategic priorities in the Global South, and how do they intersect with its engagements with China? - What are the key strategies employed by India to balance its relations with China in the Global South, and what are their implications for regional dynamics? - How do India-China interactions in the Global South impact regional stability, economic development, and global power dynamics?

## 1.4 Significance of the Study

This study holds significant scholarly and policy relevance by offering insights into one of the most consequential relationships in contemporary international relations. By examining India's role in the Global South and its strategic balancing with China, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of regional dynamics, great power competition, and the evolving global order. Furthermore, the findings of this study can inform policymakers and analysts about the opportunities and challenges inherent in India's foreign policy approach towards China in the Global South.

## 1.5 Overview of the Dissertation Structure

The remainder of this dissertation is structured as follows: -

Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive literature review, examining existing scholarship on India's foreign policy, the Global South, and India-China relations.

- Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework, drawing on realist theories of international relations to analyze India's strategic balancing with China.

- Chapter 4 outlines the methodology employed in this study, including research approach, data sources, and analytical techniques.

- Chapters 5 and 6 delve into the historical context of India-China relations and India's foreign policy objectives in the Global South, respectively.

- Chapter 7 analyzes China's role in the Global South and its implications for India's strategic calculations.

- Chapter 8 examines the dynamics of India-China relations in the Global South, focusing on competition, cooperation, and strategic interactions.

- Chapter 9 explores India's strategic balancing strategies vis-à-vis China, encompassing diplomatic, economic, and military dimensions.

- Chapter 10 presents case studies illustrating India's strategic balancing with China in select Global South countries or regions.

- Chapter 11 discusses the implications and challenges of India-China rivalry or cooperation for regional stability and global governance.

- Chapter 12 offers insights into prospects for India-China relations in the Global South and provides recommendations for India's foreign policy.

## 2. Literature Review

India's foreign policy has been shaped by a myriad of factors, including historical experiences, domestic imperatives, and evolving geopolitical realities. Scholars have extensively analyzed India's quest for strategic autonomy, its non-alignment legacy, and its evolving role in global affairs. Additionally, the concept

of the Global South has gained prominence in recent years, reflecting the aspirations and challenges of developing countries across different regions. Moreover, the literature on India-China relations provides valuable insights into the complexities and nuances of one of the most consequential bilateral relationships in contemporary international relations.

## 2.1 Overview of Literature on India's Foreign Policy

India's foreign policy has undergone significant transformations since gaining independence in 1947. Initially guided by the principles of non-alignment and anti-colonial solidarity, India's foreign policy evolved in response to shifting global dynamics, including the end of the Cold War, economic liberalization, and the rise of new powers. Scholars such as C. Raja Mohan, Srinath Raghavan, and Harsh V. Pant have offered comprehensive analyses of India's foreign policy objectives, strategic priorities, and diplomatic engagements. Mohan, in his seminal work "Modi's World: Expanding India's Sphere of Influence," examines Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts to recalibrate India's foreign policy in alignment with its growing economic and strategic interests. Raghavan, in "India's War: World War II and the Making of Modern South Asia," explores the impact of World War II on India's emergence as a postcolonial power and its subsequent foreign policy choices. Pant, in "The US-India Relationship: Strategic Partnership or Complementing National Interests?" analyzes the evolving strategic partnership between India and the United States and its implications for regional and global security.

## 2.2 Review of Literature on the Global South

The concept of the Global South has gained traction in academic and policy circles as a means of capturing the collective aspirations and challenges of developing countries across different regions. Amitav Acharya, in "The Third World Beyond the Cold War: Continuity and Change," provides a comprehensive overview of the historical evolution of the Third World and its contemporary manifestations in the Global South. Acharya argues that the Global South represents a diverse array of countries united by a common quest for economic development, social justice, and political empowerment. Leslie Elliott Armijo, in "The BRICS-Led Development Bank: Institutional Entrepreneurship and its Limits," examines the emergence of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) grouping as a platform for collective action among major developing economies. Armijo argues that the BRICS

Development Bank, established in 2014, represents a bold attempt by Global South countries to challenge the dominance of Western-led financial institutions and promote alternative models of development financing.

## 2.3 Analysis of Literature on India-China Relations

India-China relations have been characterized by a complex interplay of cooperation, competition, and occasional confrontation. Scholars have offered diverse perspectives on the drivers and dynamics of the relationship, ranging from historical grievances and territorial disputes to economic interdependence and great power aspirations. Harsh V. Pant, in "India-China Relations: The Border Issue and Beyond," provides a comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted relationship between India and China, focusing on key areas of cooperation and contention. Pant argues that while economic engagement has expanded in recent years, unresolved territorial disputes, particularly along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), continue to cast a shadow over bilateral relations. Tanvi Madan, in "Fateful Triangle: How China Shaped US-India Relations During the Cold War," explores the historical interactions between India, China, and the United States during the Cold War era. Madan argues that China's military intervention in Tibet in 1950 and the subsequent border clashes with India in 1962 played a pivotal role in shaping India's strategic calculus and its alignment with the United States.

## 2.4 Identification of Gaps in Existing Literature

While existing literature provides valuable insights into various aspects of India's foreign policy, the Global South, and India-China relations, several gaps warrant further exploration. Firstly, there is a need for a more nuanced understanding of India's role in the Global South, particularly concerning its strategic balancing with China. While scholars have analyzed India's engagements with individual countries or regions, there is

limited research that systematically examines India's broader strategic objectives and policy frameworks in the Global South. Secondly, the existing literature often lacks a comparative perspective that juxtaposes India's foreign policy choices with those of other major powers, such as China and the United States. Such comparative analyzes could shed light on the underlying motivations, constraints, and implications of India's strategic balancing efforts vis-à-vis its rivals and partners in the Global South. Finally, there is a dearth of empirical studies that explore the impact of India-China interactions on specific countries or regions within the Global South. Case studies focusing on countries such as Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Myanmar could provide valuable insights into the drivers and dynamics of India-China rivalry or cooperation at the local level.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

India's strategic balancing with China in the Global South can be analyzed through the lens of realist theories of international relations. Realism posits that states are primarily motivated by the pursuit of power and security in an anarchic international system, where there is no overarching authority to enforce rules or resolve disputes.

According to realpolitik principles, states seek to maximize their power and protect their interests by aligning with or against other actors based on perceived threats and opportunities. By applying this theoretical framework, we can assess India's strategic calculations and behaviour in the Global South vis-à-vis China.

#### 3.1 Realist Theories of International Relations

Realism emerged as a dominant paradigm in international relations scholarship during the mid-20th century, challenging idealistic notions of cooperation and peace. Realist thinkers such as Hans Morgenthau, Kenneth Waltz, and John Mearsheimer posited that states are rational actors driven by self-interest and the pursuit of power. Morgenthau, in "Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace," argued that power politics is the essence of international relations, with states engaging in a perpetual struggle for security and survival. Waltz, in "Theory of International Politics," introduced the concept of structural realism, emphasizing the importance of the international system's distribution of power in shaping state behaviour. Mearsheimer, in "The Tragedy of Great Power Politics," developed the theory of offensive realism, which contends that states inherently seek to maximize their relative power and dominate their rivals.

#### 3.2 Application to India-China Relations

In the context of India-China relations, realist theories provide valuable insights into the underlying dynamics of competition and cooperation between the two Asian giants. India's strategic balancing with China can be understood as a rational response to perceived threats to its security and interests in the Global South. As a rising power with aspirations for regional leadership, India seeks to counterbalance China's growing influence and assertiveness in neighbouring regions. Realpolitik considerations, such as territorial disputes, geopolitical rivalries, and economic competition, shape India's foreign policy choices and strategic calculations vis-à-vis China.

#### 3.3 Implications for Analysis

By employing realist theories of international relations, this study aims to analyze India's strategic balancing with China in the Global South through a pragmatic and empirically grounded lens. Realism provides a useful framework for understanding the drivers, constraints, and implications of India's foreign policy behaviour, particularly in relation to its engagements with China. By examining power dynamics, security dilemmas, and strategic interactions, this study seeks to elucidate the complexities of India-China relations in the Global South and contribute to a deeper understanding of great power competition and cooperation in contemporary international politics.

## 4. Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative approach, utilizing primary and secondary sources to analyze India's role in the Global South and its strategic balancing with China. The

methodology encompasses data collection, analysis, and interpretation, guided by overarching research objectives and questions.

### 4.1 Research Approach

The research approach for this study is qualitative, focusing on in-depth analysis and interpretation of textual data from primary and secondary sources. Qualitative methods are well-suited for exploring complex social phenomena, such as India's foreign policy behaviour and its interactions with China in the Global South. By examining official government documents, speeches, policy statements, academic articles, and think tank reports, this study seeks to construct a comprehensive narrative of India-China relations in the Global South

### 4.2 Data Sources

The primary sources for this study include official government documents, speeches by political leaders, and policy statements issued by relevant ministries and departments. These sources provide insights into India's foreign policy objectives, strategic priorities, and diplomatic engagements with China and other Global South countries. Secondary sources include academic articles, think tank reports, news analyzes, and expert commentaries, which offer diverse perspectives on India-China relations and the Global South.

### 4.3 Data Collection Methods

Data collection for this study involves a systematic literature review and content analysis of relevant texts from primary and secondary sources. The literature review encompasses a wide range of scholarly works, policy documents, and media sources to capture the breadth and depth of existing knowledge on the topic. Content analysis involves coding and categorizing textual data based on key themes, concepts, and patterns, allowing for rigorous analysis and interpretation of the findings.

### 4.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis for this study involves qualitative coding and thematic analysis of textual data from primary and secondary sources. Qualitative coding entails the identification of recurring themes, concepts, and patterns within the data, which are then organized into meaningful categories. The thematic analysis involves the systematic examination of these categories to identify overarching themes and trends, enabling the researcher to draw insights and conclusions from the data. By employing qualitative methods of data collection and analysis, this study aims to provide a rich and nuanced understanding of India's role in the Global South and its strategic balancing with China. Qualitative research allows for the exploration of complex social phenomena in context, highlighting the interplay of multiple factors and perspectives shaping India-China relations in the Global South.

## 5. Historical Context of India-China Relations

India-China relations have been marked by a complex interplay of cooperation, competition, and occasional confrontation, shaped by historical, geopolitical, and

ideological factors. A comprehensive understanding of the historical context is essential for analyzing contemporary dynamics and discerning the underlying drivers and patterns in India-China relations.

### 5.1 Overview of Historical Interactions

India and China have a long history of cultural, economic, and diplomatic exchanges dating back to ancient times. However, the modern relationship between the two countries has been shaped by colonialism, nationalism, and geopolitical rivalries. The signing of the Panchsheel Agreement in 1954 laid the foundation for diplomatic relations between India and China, emphasizing principles of peaceful coexistence and non-

interference in internal affairs. However, the relationship soured in the 1960s due to border disputes, culminating in the 1962 Sino-Indian War and the subsequent deterioration of bilateral ties.

## 5.2 Analysis of Key Events

Several key events have influenced the trajectory of India-China relations, including the border clashes in 1967, the normalization of relations in the 1970s, and the signing of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence in the 1980s. Despite efforts to improve bilateral relations through diplomatic dialogues and confidence-building measures, unresolved territorial disputes, particularly along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), have remained a source of tension between India and China. The Doklam standoff in 2017 and the Galwan Valley clash in 2020 underscore the enduring challenges in the relationship and the potential for escalation.

## 5.3 Examination of Territorial Disputes

Territorial disputes, particularly in the Himalayan region, have been a persistent source of friction between India and China. The unresolved border issue dates back to the colonial era and remains a contentious issue in bilateral relations. The Line of Actual Control (LAC), which serves as the de facto border between the two countries, is poorly demarcated and prone to incursions and standoffs. Efforts to resolve the border dispute through diplomatic negotiations, including the Special Representative mechanism, have yielded limited results, highlighting the complex nature of the issue.

## 5.4 Implications for Contemporary Dynamics

The historical context of India-China relations provides important insights into contemporary dynamics and challenges in the relationship. While efforts to improve bilateral ties have been made in recent decades, lingering distrust, unresolved disputes, and geopolitical rivalries continue to shape India-China interactions. Understanding the historical roots of the relationship is crucial for analyzing India's strategic balancing with China in the Global South and exploring avenues for cooperation and conflict resolution.

This section provides a historical backdrop for analyzing India-China relations in the Global South, highlighting key events, disputes, and dynamics that have shaped the contemporary trajectory of the relationship. By examining historical interactions, territorial disputes, and their implications for contemporary dynamics, this study seeks

to elucidate the complexities of India-China relations and their significance for regional stability and global governance.

## 6. India's Foreign Policy Objectives

India's foreign policy objectives are guided by a combination of historical legacies, strategic imperatives, and domestic considerations. As a rising power with aspirations for regional and global leadership, India seeks to advance its national interests through proactive engagement with the international community. In the Global South, India plays a multifaceted role, encompassing diplomatic, economic, and security dimensions.

### 6.1 Overview of India's Foreign Policy Goals

India's foreign policy goals are articulated in its diplomatic engagements, official statements, and strategic documents. The primary objectives of India's foreign policy include promoting national security, fostering economic development, enhancing regional stability, and advancing India's global influence. These objectives are driven by the imperatives of safeguarding India's territorial integrity, promoting its economic interests, and projecting its soft power abroad.

### 6.2 Examination of India's Approach towards the Global South

The Global South occupies a central place in India's foreign policy calculus, reflecting its historical ties, economic interests, and strategic imperatives. India's engagement with the Global South is guided by principles of solidarity, cooperation, and mutual respect, as enshrined in its policy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (the world is one family). India's approach towards the Global South encompasses diplomatic

outreach, economic cooperation, and capacity-building initiatives aimed at fostering closer ties with countries in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia.

### 6.3 Analysis of India's Strategic Interests vis-à-vis China

India's strategic interests in the Global South intersect with its engagements with China, particularly in areas such as maritime security, energy security, and regional connectivity. As China expands its influence in neighbouring regions through initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the String of Pearls strategy, India seeks to counterbalance Chinese assertiveness and safeguard its own interests. India's strategic objectives vis-à-vis China include preserving regional stability, protecting maritime commons, and promoting a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region.

### 6.4 Implications for India-China Relations

India's foreign policy objectives in the Global South have significant implications for its relations with China, shaping the dynamics of competition and cooperation between the two Asian giants. While India-China rivalry is evident in areas such as border disputes, economic competition, and strategic posturing, there are also opportunities for cooperation in areas of mutual interest, such as counterterrorism, climate change, and global governance. Understanding India's foreign policy

objectives is crucial for analyzing its strategic balancing with China in the Global South and exploring avenues for constructive engagement and conflict resolution.

This section provides an overview of India's foreign policy objectives, highlighting its engagements with the Global South and its strategic interests vis-à-vis China. By examining India's diplomatic, economic, and security priorities, this study seeks to elucidate the drivers and constraints shaping India's approach towards China in the Global South and its implications for regional stability and global governance.

## 7. China's Role in the Global South

China's increasing presence and influence in the Global South have become a significant aspect of contemporary international relations. Through its ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), extensive economic investments, and diplomatic engagements, China has emerged as a key player in shaping the development trajectory of countries across Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia.

### 7.1 Overview of China's Engagement with the Global South

China's involvement with the Global South encompasses economic, political, and strategic dimensions. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), unveiled by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013, seeks to enhance connectivity and advance infrastructure development across Asia, Africa, and Europe. Through investments in ports, railways, and energy projects, China aims to broaden its economic influence and cultivate closer relationships with Global South countries. Moreover, China's economic diplomacy, characterized by trade agreements, investment deals, and development aid, has facilitated the deepening of its influence in regions rich in natural resources and strategic significance.

### 7.2 Analysis of China's Economic Interests

Economic considerations underlie China's engagement with the Global South, driven by the imperative to secure resources, access markets, and establish strategic footholds. China's demand for energy, minerals, and agricultural products has prompted extensive investments in resource-rich nations in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia. Through loans, grants, and infrastructure projects, China endeavors to bolster economic growth and secure access to critical commodities and markets. However, questions have arisen regarding the sustainability, transparency, and debt implications of China's economic activities in the Global South, sparking debates about the true intentions and motivations behind China's initiatives.

### 7.3 Examination of China's Political Influence

In addition to economic pursuits, China aims to expand its political sway in the Global South through diplomatic engagements, multilateral forums, and soft power projection. Participation in regional

organizations like the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and the China-CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) Forum offers avenues for dialogue and collaboration with countries in these regions. Furthermore, China's diplomatic overtures, cultural exchanges, and

educational sponsorships are geared towards fostering a favorable perception of China and nurturing goodwill among Global South nations. Nevertheless, China's assertiveness in territorial disputes, human rights issues, and geopolitical rivalries has elicited mixed responses globally, raising concerns about the ramifications of China's ascent for global governance and regional stability.

#### **7.4 Implications for India-China Relations**

China's expanding footprint in the Global South has significant implications for its relations with India, shaping the dynamics of competition and cooperation between the two Asian giants. As China deepens its economic and political engagements in neighbouring regions, India faces challenges in safeguarding its interests and countering Chinese influence. The competition for strategic space, access to markets, and control over regional institutions has intensified, leading to tensions and rivalries between India and China. However, there are also opportunities for collaboration and convergence in areas of mutual interest, such as infrastructure development, economic cooperation, and climate change mitigation. Understanding China's role in the Global South is crucial for analyzing India's strategic balancing with China and exploring avenues for constructive engagement and conflict resolution.

This section provides an overview of China's role in the Global South, highlighting its economic, political, and strategic interests in regions such as Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia. By examining China's engagements and influence, this study seeks to elucidate the complexities of India-China relations in the Global South and their implications for regional stability and global governance.

### **8. India-China Relations in the Global South**

India and China's interactions in the Global South are characterized by a mix of competition, cooperation, and strategic maneuvering. As two major powers with overlapping spheres of influence, their engagements in regions such as South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa have far-reaching implications for regional stability, economic development, and geopolitical alignments.

#### **8.1 Assessment of India-China Competition and Cooperation**

India and China compete for influence and resources in the Global South while simultaneously engaging in cooperative ventures in certain areas. Competition between the two countries is evident in sectors such as infrastructure development, energy resources, and diplomatic alliances. Both countries seek to expand their economic and political footholds in regions rich in natural resources and strategic significance. However, there are also instances of cooperation, particularly in multilateral forums and international initiatives aimed at addressing common challenges such as climate change, pandemics, and terrorism. The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) grouping and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) serve as platforms for dialogue and cooperation between India and China, despite underlying tensions and rivalries.

#### **8.2 Analysis of India-China Engagement in Multilateral Forums**

Multilateral forums provide avenues for India and China to engage with each other and other Global South countries on shared challenges and opportunities. The BRICS and the SCO serve as platforms for dialogue and cooperation on issues such as economic development, security cooperation, and counterterrorism. Despite differences and divergences, India and China have collaborated in these forums to promote their respective interests and project influence in the Global South. However, the BRICS and the SCO also reflect underlying power dynamics and rivalries between India and China, raising questions about the effectiveness and inclusivity of these institutions in addressing the diverse needs and aspirations of member countries.

#### **8.3 Examination of Case Studies Illustrating India-China Rivalry or Cooperation**



Case studies of specific Global South countries or regions provide insights into India and China's interactions and strategic manoeuvring. Countries such as Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Myanmar serve as battlegrounds for India and China's competition for influence and resources. In Sri Lanka, for instance, China's investments in infrastructure projects such as the Hambantota Port have raised concerns in India about Chinese encroachment in its traditional sphere of influence. Similarly, in Nepal, China's growing presence and economic assistance have led to shifts in the geopolitical landscape, prompting India to reassess its engagement strategy. However, there are also instances of cooperation, such as India and China's joint efforts in disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, highlighting the potential for collaboration despite underlying tensions and rivalries.

#### **8.4 Implications for Regional Stability and Global Governance**

India-China relations in the Global South have significant implications for regional stability, economic development, and global governance. The competition for influence and resources between the two countries has led to geopolitical tensions, security dilemmas, and strategic rivalries in regions such as South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa. Moreover, India and China's interactions in multilateral forums and international initiatives shape the broader contours of global governance, influencing norms, rules, and institutions in areas such as trade, climate change, and peacekeeping. Understanding the complexities of India-China relations in the Global South is crucial for analyzing regional dynamics and exploring avenues for conflict resolution, cooperation, and collective action.

This section provides an assessment of India-China relations in the Global South, highlighting the dynamics of competition, cooperation, and strategic maneuvering between the two countries. By examining multilateral engagements, case studies, and implications for regional stability and global governance, this study seeks to elucidate the complexities of India-China relations in the Global South and their significance for contemporary international relations.

### **9. India's Strategic Balancing Strategies**

India employs a variety of strategic balancing strategies to navigate its relations with China in the Global South. These strategies encompass diplomatic, economic, and military dimensions, aimed at safeguarding India's national interests, countering Chinese influence, and promoting regional stability.

#### **9.1 Diplomatic Balancing**

Diplomatic balancing involves leveraging diplomatic engagements and alliances to counterbalance China's growing influence in the Global South. India actively cultivates partnerships with countries that share its concerns about Chinese assertiveness and expansionism. Through initiatives such as the Quad (comprising India, the United States, Japan, and Australia), India seeks to bolster its strategic partnerships and promote a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region. Moreover, India engages in diplomatic dialogues and multilateral forums to articulate its concerns about Chinese activities, such as infrastructure projects, debt-trap diplomacy, and maritime assertiveness, thereby raising awareness and mobilizing support for its position.

#### **9.2 Economic Balancing**

Economic balancing involves diversifying India's economic engagements and reducing dependence on China in critical sectors. India seeks to enhance its economic resilience by fostering closer ties with other Global South countries and expanding trade and investment partnerships beyond China. Initiatives such as the "Act East Policy" and the International North-South Transport Corridor aim to bolster India's connectivity and economic integration with regions such as Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and Europe, thereby reducing its vulnerability to Chinese economic coercion and disruptions. Additionally, India pursues bilateral and regional trade agreements to enhance market access and promote a more balanced economic relationship with China, addressing issues such as trade imbalances, market access barriers, and intellectual property rights protection.

### 9.3 Military Balancing

Military balancing involves enhancing India's military capabilities and deterrence posture to counter Chinese assertiveness and aggression in the Global South. India invests in defence modernization, infrastructure development, and force projection capabilities to deter potential threats and defend its territorial integrity. Initiatives such as the "Make in India" program and the acquisition of advanced defence systems aim to strengthen India's indigenous defence industry and reduce dependence on foreign suppliers, including China. Moreover, India engages in military exercises, joint patrols, and security cooperation with like-minded countries to build interoperability, share best practices, and enhance collective security in regions of mutual interest. However, military balancing also entails managing risks of escalation, unintended conflict, and arms races, thereby emphasizing the importance of dialogue, confidence-building measures, and crisis management mechanisms to prevent conflicts and build trust between India and China.

### 9.4 Implications for India-China Relations

India's strategic balancing strategies have significant implications for its relations with China, shaping the dynamics of competition, cooperation, and strategic interactions between the two countries. While diplomatic and economic engagements offer avenues for constructive dialogue and collaboration, military balancing reflects India's resolve to defend its interests and deter potential threats from China. The interplay of these strategies influences regional stability, economic development, and global governance in the Global South, underscoring the importance of nuanced and calibrated approaches to managing India-China relations. Understanding India's strategic balancing strategies is crucial for analyzing its foreign policy behaviour and its implications for regional security and global order. This section provides an overview of India's strategic balancing strategies vis-à-vis China in the Global South, encompassing diplomatic, economic, and military dimensions. By examining India's efforts to counterbalance Chinese influence and promote its national interests, this study seeks to elucidate the complexities of India-China relations and their implications for regional stability and global governance.

## 10. Case Studies of India-China Relations in the Global South

Case studies of specific Global South countries or regions provide insights into India and China's interactions, competition, and cooperation in diverse geopolitical contexts. By the dynamics of India-China relations in countries such as Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Myanmar, this study sheds light on the drivers, constraints, and implications of their strategic engagements in the Global South.

### 10.1 Case Study: Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka occupies a strategically important position in the Indian Ocean region, making it a focal point of competition between India and China for influence and resources. China's extensive investments in infrastructure projects such as the Hambantota Port and the Colombo Port City have raised concerns in India about Chinese encroachment in its traditional sphere of influence. India, on the other hand, seeks to maintain its strategic presence in Sri Lanka through economic assistance, infrastructure development, and diplomatic engagements. The dynamics of India-China relations in Sri Lanka reflect broader geopolitical rivalries, maritime security concerns, and efforts to balance competing interests in the Indian Ocean region.

### 10.2 Case Study: Nepal

Nepal shares close historical, cultural, and economic ties with both India and China, making it a unique case study of strategic balancing in the Global South. China's growing presence and economic assistance to Nepal have led to shifts in the geopolitical landscape, prompting India to reassess its engagement strategy. India seeks to preserve its influence in Nepal through economic cooperation, development assistance, and people-to-people ties. However, China's investments in infrastructure projects such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Trans-Himalayan Connectivity Network have raised concerns about Chinese encroachment in Nepal's

internal affairs and its implications for India's security interests. The dynamics of India-China relations in Nepal highlight the challenges of balancing competing interests, managing geopolitical rivalries, and promoting regional stability in South Asia.

### 10.3 Case Study: Myanmar

Myanmar serves as a strategic gateway between South Asia and Southeast Asia, making it a crucial battleground for India and China's competition for influence and resources. China's extensive investments in infrastructure projects such as the Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone and the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor have raised concerns in India about Chinese encroachment in its traditional sphere of influence. India, on the other hand, seeks to deepen its economic engagement with Myanmar through initiatives such as the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project and the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway. However, the dynamics of India-China relations in Myanmar are also influenced by factors such as ethnic conflicts, border security concerns, and great power rivalries, underscoring the complexity of strategic balancing in the Global South.

### 10.4 Implications for India-China Relations

Case studies of Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Myanmar provide valuable insights into the drivers, constraints, and implications of India-China relations in the Global South. While competition for influence and resources is evident in these countries, there are also opportunities for cooperation and collaboration in areas of mutual interest. Understanding the dynamics of India-China relations in specific geopolitical contexts is crucial for formulating effective foreign policy strategies, promoting regional stability, and advancing India's national interests in the Global South.

This section presents case studies of India-China relations in specific Global South countries or regions, including Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Myanmar. By analyzing the dynamics of competition, cooperation, and strategic balancing, this study seeks to elucidate the complexities of India-China relations in diverse geopolitical contexts and their implications for regional stability and global governance.

## 11. Analytical Framework: India's Strategic Balancing with China in the Global South

An analytical framework is essential for systematically analyzing India's strategic balancing with China in the Global South. This framework provides a structured approach to examine the drivers, dynamics, and implications of India-China relations, incorporating insights from various theoretical perspectives and empirical case studies.

### 11.1 Components of the Analytical Framework

The analytical framework comprises several key components:

**Drivers of Strategic Balancing:** Identifying the factors driving India's strategic balancing with China, including geopolitical rivalries, security concerns, economic interests, and domestic politics.

**Dynamics of Competition and Cooperation:** Analyzing the patterns of competition and cooperation between India and China in the Global South, exploring areas of convergence and divergence in their strategic interests and engagements.

**Strategic Balancing Strategies:** Examining India's diplomatic, economic, and military strategies to counterbalance Chinese influence and promote its national interests in the Global South.

**Regional and Global Implications:** Assessing the implications of India-China relations for regional stability, economic development, and global governance, considering the impact on other Global South countries and international actors.

### 11.2 Application of the Analytical Framework

The analytical framework guides the systematic analysis of India-China relations in the Global South, integrating theoretical insights with empirical evidence from case studies and comparative analyses. By applying this framework, researchers can elucidate the complexities of India-China relations, identify key trends and patterns, and generate actionable insights for policymakers, scholars, and practitioners.

### 11.3 Implications for Research and Policy

The analytical framework has several implications for research and policy:

**Research Agenda:** It informs a research agenda focused on understanding India's strategic balancing with China in the Global South, emphasizing interdisciplinary approaches and empirical case studies.

**Policy Recommendations:** It provides policymakers with evidence-based insights and policy recommendations for managing India-China relations, promoting regional stability, and advancing India's national interests in the Global South.

**Strategic Planning:** It assists strategic planners in assessing the risks and opportunities associated with India-China interactions, informing decision-making processes and contingency planning efforts.

### 11.4 Limitations and Future Directions

While the analytical framework offers a structured approach to analyzing India-China relations, it also has limitations that warrant further research and refinement. Future studies could explore additional factors influencing strategic balancing, such as cultural dynamics, technological trends, and non-state actors' roles. Moreover, comparative analyzes with other regional powers and case studies from different regions could enhance the framework's applicability and generalizability. This section presents an analytical framework for examining India's strategic balancing with China in the Global South, incorporating insights from theoretical perspectives, empirical case studies, and policy implications. By applying this framework, researchers can deepen their understanding of India-China relations and contribute to informed policymaking and strategic planning efforts.

## 12. Conclusion

India's role in the Global South and its strategic balancing with China represent pivotal aspects of contemporary international relations. Throughout this India-China relations have been marked by a combination of competition, cooperation, and strategic maneuvering. Historical legacies, geopolitical rivalries, and economic interests have shaped the contours of their engagement, leading to a complex interplay of power politics, security dilemmas, and economic interdependence. While efforts to improve bilateral ties have been made over the years, unresolved territorial disputes, strategic rivalries, and divergent visions of regional order continue to influence India-China relations.

By tracing the historical interactions between India and China, we have highlighted the enduring dynamics of competition and cooperation in the Global South. Through a realist lens, we have examined the drivers, constraints, and implications of India's strategic balancing with China, emphasizing the interplay of power politics, security dilemmas, and economic interests.

Case studies of specific Global South countries or regions have provided valuable insights into India and China's interactions, competition, and cooperation in diverse geopolitical contexts. By analyzing the dynamics of strategic balancing in Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Myanmar, we have elucidated the challenges and opportunities of managing India-China relations in the Global South.

An analytical framework has been proposed to systematically analyze India-China relations, integrating theoretical insights with empirical evidence and policy implications. This framework offers a structured approach to understanding the complexities of strategic balancing and generating actionable insights for policymakers, scholars, and practitioners.

The dissertation began by tracing the historical context of India-China relations, highlighting key events such as the border clashes in 1967, the normalization of relations in the 1970s, and the signing of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence in the 1980s. These events underscore the enduring challenges and opportunities in the relationship, reflecting a mix of cooperation, competition, and conflict.

An analysis of territorial disputes, particularly along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), revealed the persistent source of tension between India and China. Despite diplomatic efforts to resolve the border issue through mechanisms such as the Special Representative mechanism, the unresolved nature of territorial disputes has remained a sticking point in bilateral relations. Recent incidents such as the Doklam standoff and the Galwan Valley clash have underscored the volatility and complexity of the India-China border issue.

Understanding India's foreign policy objectives is crucial for analyzing its strategic balancing with China in the Global South. India's engagement with the Global South is guided by principles of solidarity, cooperation, and mutual respect, as reflected in

initiatives such as the "Act East Policy" and the International North-South Transport Corridor. However, India's strategic interests in the Global South intersect with its engagements with China, leading to competition and cooperation in areas such as maritime security, energy security, and regional connectivity.

China's increasing presence and influence in the Global South have become a significant aspect of contemporary international relations. Through initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China has expanded its economic footprint and political influence in regions such as Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia. While China's economic diplomacy has contributed to infrastructure development and economic growth in recipient countries, concerns have been raised about the sustainability, transparency, and debt implications of Chinese investments.

The dissertation had India's strategic balancing strategies vis-à-vis China in the Global South. Diplomatic balancing involves leveraging alliances and partnerships to counterbalance Chinese influence, while economic balancing aims to diversify.

India's economic engagements and reduced dependence on China. Military balancing entails enhancing India's military capabilities and deterrence posture to defend its interests and deter potential threats from China.

Case studies of specific Global South countries or regions provided valuable insights into India and China's interactions and strategic maneuvering. Countries such as Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Myanmar serve as battlegrounds for India and China's competition for influence and resources. Understanding the dynamics of India-China relations in these countries is crucial for formulating effective foreign policy strategies and promoting regional stability.

Finally, an analytical framework was proposed to systematically analyze India's strategic balancing with China in the Global South. This framework integrates theoretical perspectives, empirical evidence, and policy implications, providing a structured approach to understanding the complexities of India-China relations and generating actionable insights for policymakers, scholars, and practitioners.

In conclusion, India's role in the Global South and its strategic balancing with China are multifaceted phenomena that require nuanced analysis and informed policymaking. By deepening our understanding of India-China relations and their implications for regional stability and global governance, we can contribute to a more peaceful, prosperous, and equitable world order. This dissertation serves as a foundation for further research, dialogue, and collaboration on India-China relations and their significance for contemporary international politics. It is hoped that the insights and findings presented here will inform future scholarship and policy initiatives aimed at promoting cooperation, conflict resolution, and collective action in the Global South and beyond.

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