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Policy integration and strategic framework for human security in India’s national security policy

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Abstract

India’s national security strategy can address multifaceted threats to stability. Focusing on economic security, environmental sustainability, healthcare, and community resilience, it provides a framework for policy integration that can respond to both internal and external security challenges in this global world. It emphasizes that a human-centred approach offers sustainable solutions to emerging threats and proposes actionable policy recommendations to integrate human security more comprehensively within India’s national policy.

Keywords: Botany, policy integration, Framework, human, human-centred

Introduction

The introduction frames human security as an approach that shifts focus from state-centric protection to addressing risks faced by individuals. It discusses how India’s national security challenges-ranging from internal conflicts to natural disasters-often stem from or are exacerbated by issues like

poverty, inequality, and lack of infrastructure. The need for an adaptive security framework that incorporates human security to better address these interconnected issues is highlighted. The introduction also sets up the paper’s objective of offering a strategic policy framework.



Fig 1: Stakeholder overview

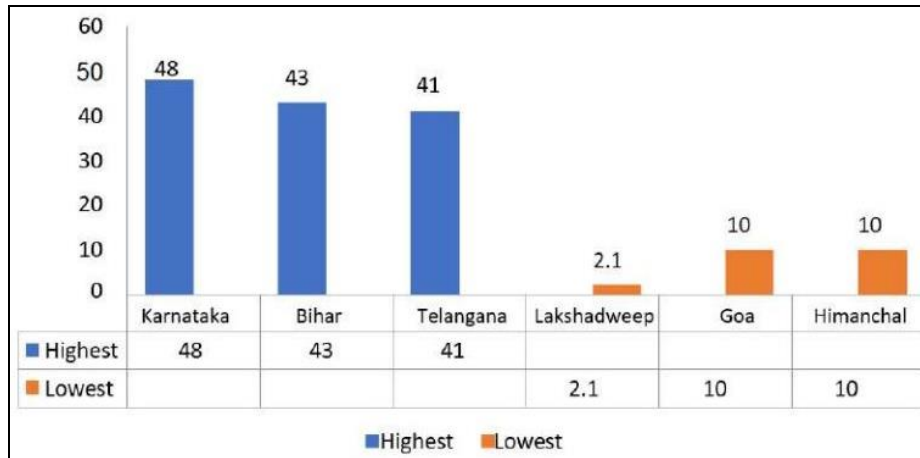


Fig 2: Marital violence in India (Three Highest and Lowest violence).

The significance of state authority via governance is crucial to the basic framework for human security. There is a connection and interdependence between national security and public safety. In this instance, the phrase "state security" is frequently used in place of "national security." A legitimate state is more likely to be seen favourably by its citizens, and a legitimate state will have an easier time handling domestic security concerns. However, safeguarding the welfare of individuals and communities may conflict with defending the political, economic, and territorial interests of the country.

The connection between ensuring "narrow" human security and "national" or "state" security in its domestic context is readily apparent. Along with the deterioration of the nation's boundaries, which might lead to connections between internal and external dangers, the state should be in control. States who are unable to safeguard their inhabitants should concentrate on state stability and state building as long-term remedies because of the connection between state security and human security. Establishing a state is a complex process that calls for more than merely assembling a collection of institutions founded on sound governmental foundations. The people and the government must have close relations. A state's citizens must feel safer thanks to its governance, which is accomplished.

State-building is a complex and multifaceted process, requiring more than the establishment of institutional frameworks based on high principles of governance. It involves fostering a deep connection between the state and its citizens, ensuring that individuals feel represented, protected, and secure under the governance structures in place. In states where there is a disconnect between the government and the population, citizens are more likely to lose trust in state institutions, which can lead to social unrest, protests, or even civil conflict. To build a stable and secure state, it is crucial to establish mechanisms for participation, accountability, and transparency, so that citizens have confidence in the state's ability to address their needs and protect their rights.

Human security, in this context, can serve as a valuable framework for understanding the challenges of state-building. While state security focuses on defending borders and maintaining territorial integrity, threats such as violence, hunger, disease, and environmental hazards. This broader perspective highlights the importance of addressing

the root causes of insecurity, such as poverty, inequality, and political exclusion, which often contribute to state fragility. By focusing on human security, state-building efforts can be more holistic and sustainable, addressing not only the immediate threats to national security but also the underlying conditions that contribute to long-term instability.

A key aspect of state-building is the creation of strong linkages between the state and society. In many fragile states, there is a lack of trust between the government and the population, often due to a history of corruption, human rights abuses, or ineffectiveness in delivering basic services. Rebuilding this trust is essential for ensuring both state and human security. This requires not only the establishment of formal institutions, such as courts, police, and military, but also the creation of informal networks and mechanisms that allow citizens to engage with the state and hold it accountable.

Aims and Objectives

The main aim is to propose a strategic framework for incorporating human security into India's national security. Objectives include:

1. Analysing gaps in India's current national security policy that human security measures can address.
2. Identifying human security dimensions critical to India, such as food security, healthcare, and environmental protection.
3. Developing specific policy recommendations and an integration framework for applying human security principles within national security.

Review of Literature

This review covers foundational theories on human security and strategic policy integration. It includes case studies from countries like Japan and Canada that have formally integrated human security into national policies. The literature on India's approach to security policy is also examined, with attention to recent policy shifts that show an increased focus on economic development and healthcare. Academic papers, government publications, and reports on India's existing social welfare programs are reviewed to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Sabur and Khan argue that a region-specific HSI can encapsulate these dimensions of human security, drawing

from the unique socio-economic and political landscape of South Asia. This region, marked by high poverty rates, recurring natural disasters, political conflicts, and social inequalities, demands a nuanced understanding of security that extends beyond military threats to include health, education, and livelihood indicators. The authors note that several global efforts have been made to construct Human Security Indexes, yet these tend to overlook specific regional dynamics, such as the deeply intertwined issues of ethnic tensions, economic instability, and environmental challenges prevalent in South Asia.

In their exploration, Sabur and Khan outline a methodology for crafting an HSI that reflects these regional nuances. They emphasize the need for a composite index that includes indicators related to economic security, food security, health, personal safety, and environmental sustainability. This approach allows policymakers to assess where interventions are needed most urgently. For instance, in regions where health and food insecurity are prevalent, policies might prioritize healthcare infrastructure and food distribution systems over other issues.

The work also underscores the methodological challenges of constructing a human security index. Sabur and Khan explore the complexities involved in selecting indicators, normalizing data across diverse areas, and ensuring the index is adaptable to rapidly changing conditions. They advocate for a participatory approach that involves local communities, regional policymakers, and subject-matter experts to ensure the index accurately reflects the lived experiences and pressing needs of South Asian populations. Sabur and Khan's study is significant because it provides a framework that regional governments and organizations can use to tackle multidimensional insecurities holistically. They suggest that by implementing an HSI, South Asian countries can identify the specific needs of their populations, prioritize resources effectively, and ultimately create more resilient societies. This index can also serve as a benchmarking tool, allowing countries to measure progress over time and hold governments accountable for improving human security outcomes.

Critical Perspectives on Human Security: Rethinking Emancipation and Power in International Relations, edited by David Chandler and Nik Hynek, offers a diverse set of analyses on the implications, strengths, and limitations of the human security framework. This collection provides a nuanced exploration of how human security has shifted the traditional boundaries of security studies and international relations, bringing attention to issues of human welfare, economic stability, and social justice that were previously peripheral to mainstream security policies. This reconceptualization of security has led to what some describe as a transformative shift, broadening the scope of security concerns and influencing the ways international policies are crafted and implemented. As a concept, human security has significantly impacted academics, policymakers, and practitioners, reshaping how security issues are prioritized and addressed in the modern global landscape.

Despite these transformations, the editors and contributing authors bring critical perspectives that challenge the adaptability and clarity of the human security concept. One of the main critique's centres on the amorphous nature of

human security as a political concept. While many view human security as a progressive step forward, allowing security policies to address fundamental human needs and rights, others argue it has been co-opted by neoliberal interests and used to justify interventions, such as those in Iraq and Afghanistan. This perceived alignment with Western hegemonic agendas has sparked debates on whether human security genuinely fosters emancipatory change or simply reaffirms existing power structures under a new guise.

Within the collection, some authors argue for the radical potential of human security to act as a framework for emancipation and human-centred governance. They highlight its focus on individual security over state-centric approaches, which enables a more humane and inclusive understanding of security, especially for marginalized populations. From this perspective, human security holds the potential to empower communities, address structural inequities, and establish a more just global order. By prioritizing economic and social welfare, human security can, in theory, pave the way for policies that actively uplift vulnerable populations and combat systemic inequalities.

However, other contributors to the volume adopt a deconstructive approach, questioning whether human security serves as an emancipatory framework or if it has been repurposed as a tool for global regulation. These scholars argue that human security may serve hegemonic powers by reinforcing neoliberal principles and justifying interventions that impose Western values and systems on non-Western societies. They examine how the discourse around human security can sometimes mask intentions that align with maintaining global power hierarchies. For instance, interventions purportedly aimed at "securing human rights" in foreign nations may also be motivated by strategic interests that have little to do with the welfare of local populations.

De Divitiis points out that the globalized nature of terrorism has necessitated cooperation across national borders and among international organizations. Given that the threats posed by terrorism are transnational, responses cannot be confined to any one nation or region; they require a coordinated approach that spans diplomatic, intelligence, and social initiatives. This has led to efforts by multilateral organizations to create frameworks for collaboration, addressing terrorism from a human security perspective. By focusing on human rights and social welfare as essential components of security, these frameworks aim to foster resilience in communities, making them less susceptible to the influences of violent extremism.

A central aspect of de Divitiis's study is the role that human rights and broader human security objectives play in combating radicalization. By prioritizing human rights and social welfare, counterterrorism policies can address vulnerabilities that often lead individuals to extremism. This approach encourages social cohesion and provides individuals, particularly those in marginalized communities, with alternatives to joining extremist groups. De Divitiis highlights the role of education, economic opportunity, and social inclusion as essential components of this strategy, arguing that these factors reduce the appeal of extremist ideologies by offering individuals a stake in society.

The study also explores specific initiatives aimed at

preventing prisons from becoming breeding grounds for radical ideologies. Prisons have often been identified as environments where extremist ideologies can take hold, as individuals may be more susceptible to recruitment under conditions of isolation and deprivation. De Divitiis argues for the implementation of programs within prison systems that prioritize rehabilitation, psychological support, and educational opportunities, rather than merely punitive measures. Such programs aim to disrupt the potential for prisons to become incubators of radicalization by fostering an environment that emphasizes personal growth and social reintegration.

De Divitiis's work thus presents human security as not only a protective mechanism but also a proactive strategy to diminish the conditions that allow terrorism to flourish.

This study presents a nuanced understanding of the role of religion and religious non-state actors within the broader framework of human security, challenging commonly held assumptions that often associate religion with threats to security or conflict. In a departure from the traditional narrative, which has long depicted religious groups and ideologies as sources of violence or reactionary resistance to modernity, this work seeks to demonstrate that religious entities can play constructive roles in both domestic and international politics. By delving into the multifaceted relationships between religious actors and political, economic, and social frameworks, the study provides a more balanced perspective that recognizes the potential contributions of religion to peace and stability.

The work examines the relationship between religious non-state actors and human security, emphasizing that religion is not inherently in opposition to human security goals. Rather than viewing these groups as monolithic or inherently antagonistic to progress, the study argues that religious organizations and actors can be instrumental in advancing human rights, providing social services, and contributing to community resilience. By highlighting these positive contributions, the study contrasts sharply with portrayals of religion as an impediment to development or security, demonstrating that many religious groups prioritize humanitarian values, community welfare, and peaceful coexistence.

One of the study's key contributions is its exploration of the diversity among religious non-state actors, recognizing that they represent a wide spectrum of beliefs, practices, and motivations. By categorizing these actors according to their goals, actions, and interactions with the state, the study offers a detailed picture that reveals both cooperative and adversarial dynamics. Religious non-state actors often play significant roles in peacebuilding efforts, interfaith dialogues, and initiatives aimed at promoting social justice.

In doing so, it moves beyond simplistic depictions that categorize religious movements solely as forces of conservatism or disruption. Instead, it recognizes the adaptability of religious organizations to global challenges, as well as their ability to contribute constructively to societal transformation. By examining specific case studies, the study reveals instances where religious actors have played pivotal roles in promoting human security, particularly in regions where governmental structures are weak or under-resourced.

In addressing the complex roles of religion in local and

international politics, the study also explores how religious organizations often act as mediators and providers of social services in fragile states. In many cases, religious non-state actors fill gaps left by the state, offering healthcare, education, and relief services. This engagement can significantly contribute to human security by reducing poverty, improving access to essential services, and promoting social stability. The study further argues that religious groups often have deep-rooted connections within communities, enabling them to understand and address local needs effectively.

The research also challenges the assumption that religious ideologies inherently breed conflict. While acknowledging that certain extremist factions have used religion to justify violence, the study emphasizes that this is not representative of most religious actors. Many religious organizations actively promote peace, dialogue, and mutual understanding, often working alongside secular NGOs and international bodies to foster social cohesion. The study underscores that framing religion solely as a destabilizing force obscures the contributions of religious actors who support humanitarian goals and champion human rights.

Research Methodology

A qualitative research methodology is employed, analyzing policy documents, recent government initiatives, and reports from organizations like the World Bank and WHO. Comparative case studies provide insights into how other countries have successfully implemented human security frameworks. Interviews with policymakers, security experts, and social workers help to contextualize findings and validate policy recommendations.

Moreover, the national security approach must consider the dynamics of globalization, which have transformed the nature of security threats. In an increasingly interconnected world, challenges such as terrorism, human trafficking, and pandemics transcend national borders, necessitating collaborative responses. While the traditional national security framework often emphasizes self-reliance and unilateral action, the reality of contemporary threats calls for greater international cooperation. States are now recognizing that securing their interests often requires engaging with other nations, sharing intelligence, and participating in multilateral agreements to address common challenges.

This shift towards multilateralism reflects a broader recognition that the national security approach must evolve to remain relevant in a changing global landscape. These groups often operate outside the confines of state authority, challenging the ability of governments to protect their citizens effectively. As a result, national security strategies must adapt to account for these new dynamics, fostering collaborations between states and non-state actors in the pursuit of common security goals.

States that engage constructively with civil society can enhance their legitimacy and foster a more resilient and secure society. By recognizing the interconnectedness of national and human security, policymakers can develop strategies that promote sustainable peace and stability.

The national security approach also faces challenges related to the changing nature of warfare. The rise of hybrid threats, which combine conventional and unconventional tactics, has

blurred the lines between military and non-military challenges. Cyber warfare, for instance, represents a new frontier in security that requires innovative responses beyond traditional military solutions. States must invest in cybersecurity measures, intelligence-sharing mechanisms, and partnerships with the private sector to effectively counter these evolving threats.

In conclusion, the national security approach is a multifaceted framework that encompasses the protection of a nation-state's sovereignty, the management of vulnerabilities, and the promotion of stability and order. While it has traditionally emphasized military capabilities, contemporary security challenges necessitate a broader understanding that incorporates economic, social, and human dimensions. The need for international cooperation and collaboration has become increasingly evident, as globalization has reshaped the security landscape. By recognizing the interplay between national security and human security, states can develop more comprehensive and effective strategies that address both the immediate and underlying causes of insecurity. Ultimately, the evolution of the national security approach reflects the complexity of contemporary threats and the necessity for adaptive responses in an ever-changing world.

Scholars were divided on how to approach the reconceptualization of human security, with some advocating for reducing the notion to its most essential elements while others sought to maintain its broader scope. Some experts claimed that the sole common denominator for the human security agenda should be a focus on violent threats based on analytical rigour, practicality, and policy relevance.

Results and Interpretation

Results highlight that India's current national security policy has significant gaps in human security. The findings reveal that addressing these gaps could prevent issues like economic insecurity and health crises, which often lead to societal unrest and weaken national stability. The data suggest that human security efforts in areas like healthcare and environmental protection directly reduce vulnerabilities to external threats and reinforce resilience at the grassroots level.

The essence of Common Security thinking is built on four interconnected conceptual and normative components. This perspective recognizes that individual states cannot unilaterally guarantee the security of their citizens; instead, real security emerges from cooperation at various levels—individual, sub-national, national, regional, and global. By acknowledging that security is interlinked across different issues, including defence, economy, and the environment, the Common Security approach promotes a collaborative framework for addressing shared challenges.

The second component of Common Security highlights the interplay between anarchy and interdependence as a crucial framework for international security thinking. This acknowledgment of interconnectedness fosters an environment where cooperation is essential for achieving security. It also recognizes that states have a vested interest in maintaining stability not only within their borders but also in the broader international community.

The third component of Common Security advocates for the

development of a theory of international relations that draws on insights from various schools of thought, including realism, while also transcending its limitations. While realism provides important understandings of power dynamics and state behavior, it often overlooks the significance of non-state actors, global governance mechanisms, and the role of norms in shaping international interactions. By prioritizing cooperation over competition, states can work together to create a more secure and stable international environment, ultimately benefiting all parties involved.

In practice, the Common Security approach encourages states to engage in dialogue and diplomacy, fostering a culture of trust and understanding. This may involve the establishment of regional organizations, peacebuilding initiatives, and cooperative agreements aimed at addressing shared security concerns. For instance, regional security frameworks can facilitate confidence-building measures, promote arms control agreements, and enhance collaboration on transnational issues such as terrorism, climate change, and public health. By embracing Common Security principles, states can move beyond the adversarial mindset of alliance politics and work towards sustainable solutions that prioritize human welfare and global stability.

Discussion and Conclusion

The discussion argues that a holistic security framework encompassing human security is essential for long-term stability. It proposes specific policy recommendations, such as creating an inter-departmental committee on human security within the Ministry of Home Affairs and establishing a monitoring body to oversee the effectiveness of human security initiatives. The conclusion asserts that human security should be regarded as integral to national security, not merely an auxiliary aspect, and calls for formal integration within India's national security policy.

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