



Research Article

Islamic Solidarity and India's Foreign Policy: The Palestine Question and India's Engagement with the Muslim World

Nakul Kumar^{1*}, Sanjay Kumar²¹Independent Research Scholar, Jammu & Kashmir, India²Guest Lecturer, GDC Doda, Jammu & Kashmir, India

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

**Keywords:**

India, Palestine, Islamic solidarity, foreign policy, Muslim world, Israel, strategic autonomy, Non-Aligned Movement.

Article History:

Received: 12-05-2026

Revised: 15-05-2026

Accepted: 15-07-2026

Published: 27-07-2026

The Palestine issue has been a major agenda of India's foreign policy since the country gained independence, as it has been intertwined with the ideals of anti-colonialism, strategic interests, and diplomatic relations with the Muslim world. The desire for Palestinian self-determination came from the ideologies of Indian national liberation movement, which included anti-colonialism, anti-racism, and anti-political domination. Therefore, India has always been proactively asserting the rights of Palestine in international fora and was among the first states to recognise the State of Palestine. At the same time, the Palestinian problem took on new significance in the Muslim world and became a symbol of Muslim unity, political unity, and resistance to the occupation. This paper aims at understanding the linkage between Islamic solidarity and India's foreign policy by analysing the Palestine question and India's relations with the countries with Muslim majority population. It examines India's historic support for Palestine, the importance of the Palestinian cause in the context of Islamic solidarity and how the issue has impacted India's diplomatic efforts with the Arab and wider Muslim world. The study also examines the shift in India's policy since 1992, when full diplomatic relations with Israel were established, and gauges how much strategic considerations have affected India's traditional commitment to Palestinian statehood. The paper suggests that the support for Palestine was both anti-colonial and normative, but also that it has been an important way of engaging with Muslim majority countries. India's support for a negotiated two-state solution and Palestinian self-determination remained largely unchanged despite the development of strategic ties with Israel. The Palestine question remains a central feature in Indian relations with the world of Islam and is playing a pivotal role in India's foreign policy at a larger level, the study concludes.

Cite this article:

Kumar, N., & Kumar, S. (2026). Islamic Solidarity and India's Foreign Policy: The Palestine Question and India's Engagement with the Muslim World. *International Journal of Contemporary Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2(2), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.55559/ijchss.v2i2.16>

Introduction

The Palestine question is still one of the most persistent and of the greatest political importance in international relations today. The conflict has evolved through a complex history of colonialism, nationalism, territorial disputes and geopolitical rivalries and has gone beyond its regional context to become a global emblem of national sovereignty, injustice and resistance. Palestine is not just a matter of territories, but of historical, political and religious significance for a large part of the Muslim world. Jerusalem, the holiest city in Islam, has played another vital role, leading the Palestinians' political issues to be embedded within the political mind of the Muslim people. Thus, Palestine support has become a key component of international diplomacy and a hallmark of Islamic solidarity (Esposito, 2018). The notion of Islamic solidarity has been fundamental in

maintaining international support for Palestine. Although the political and ideological bent and strategic interests differ, the Palestinian issue has been a common concern for Muslim-majority countries. This collective commitment was formalized with the founding of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in 1969, where Palestinian self-determination was at the top of its agenda. Researchers have claimed that Palestine has become a national liberation movement and a collective Muslim identity, a development that has gone over the ordinary politics of state (Ayooob, 2008). This symbolism has helped to keep Palestine's issues relevant to other Muslim countries and in international politics.

Historically, India's approach to the Palestine issue has been influenced by its anti-colonial legacy and adherence to the principles of self-determination. Indian nationalists during the struggle for independence saw what was happening in Palestine

***Corresponding Author:**Email: kumarnakul501@gmail.com (N. Kumar)

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Juria Publisher, India. This is an open access article published under the CC-BY license

 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>

in the larger context of opposition to colonial rule. Mahatma Gandhi supported the rights of Palestinian Arabs and condemned political solutions which ignored the interests of the indigenous peoples. These perspectives later shaped the foreign policy of the Republic of India after independence, and helped create a coherent pro-Palestinian stance (Gandhi, 1938/1999). After Independence in 1947, India took the line of anti-colonialism, peaceful co-existence and support to the national liberation movements as its policy. It was these principles that formed its attitude towards Palestine. The United Nations Partition Plan of 1947 was opposed by India, and later, the country backed the rights of the Palestinians in international forums. In 1974, it was the first non-Arab state to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and in 1988, it recognized the State of Palestine. These actions illustrated India's commitment to just international actions and strengthened its voice as a leading voice of the developing world (Muni & Mishra, 2019). The larger Indian involvement with the Arab and Muslim world also went hand-in-hand with support for Palestine. In the Cold War era India tried to develop good relations with the Arab countries in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). The people of many Muslim-majority countries had also shared colonial history and were worried about their sovereignty and development issues, leading to strong political bonds with India. Among countries that considered Palestine as a core foreign policy issue, the support for Palestine upgraded India's diplomatic credibility (Prashad, 2007).

But in India's policy on Palestine ideology has never been the sole basis. Strategic and economic factors have also played an important role in shaping relations with the Muslim world. The Middle East is of central significance for Indian foreign policy due to its critical role in energy security, trade, investment and welfare of millions of Indians living abroad in the region. Thus, India has been trying to keep a positive relationship with a wide array of actors while safeguarding its national interests (Pethiyagoda, 2017). India's full diplomatic relations with Israel came into being in 1992. The fall of the Cold War, economic liberalization and restructuring of geopolitical situation paved the way for New Delhi to increase cooperation with Israel in defense sector, agriculture, science and technology etc. With the end of the Cold War, economic liberalization and geopolitical changes, New Delhi started to increase cooperation with Israel in science, technology, agriculture and defense sectors, etc. With the passage of time, Israel became one of the most significant strategic partners of India. This development did not affect the traditional Indian support of Palestine. Instead, it had a policy of diplomatic balance in that it attempted to develop relations with Israel while maintaining its position of promoting the Palestinian state and a negotiated two-state solution (Kumaraswamy, 2010).

The balancing approach is in keeping with the overall thrust of a strategic autonomy which has now become hallmark of Indian foreign policy in the post-Cold War period. India has not sought to pursue a single-sided relationship with any of the actors but rather to develop a constructive relationship with Israel, Palestine and Muslim majority nations at the same time. This, in turn, allows New Delhi to achieve strategic and economic goals without relinquishing its traditional claims to "self-determination and international justice" (Mohan, 2022).

In this background, the present study aims at analysing the linkage between Islamic solidarity and India's foreign policy with reference to Palestine issue. Although much scholarship has been written on Indian policies towards Israel and Palestine, there has been little systematic scholarship specifically on the symbolic and political aspects of Islamic solidarity and their impact on Indian policies towards the Muslim world. The aim of this study is to fill that void by examining the evolution of

India's Palestine policy over time and its relevance to the Indian policy in relation to Muslim majority countries. The method of the study is qualitative and historical-analytical using official documents, diplomatic statements, history of the United Nations and scientific literature. It insists that India's policy of support for Palestine has always been a "normative commitment" and a "strategic device" to engage with the Muslim world. With the evolving geopolitical landscape, the "Palestine question" may not be a part of India's diplomatic agenda as it once was, but it still plays an important role in the country's diplomatic discourse and understanding of its evolution with Muslim majority nations.

Review of Literature

The Palestine question has been explored by numerous scholars in the areas of international relations, Middle East studies, postcolonial studies, and foreign policy analysis. Likewise, India's interaction with Palestine and the wider Muslim world has been the subject of much scholarly research, especially with respect to anti-colonial solidarity, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), strategic autonomy, and India's evolving ties with Israel. The available literature can be divided broadly into four categories – research on Palestinian national struggle, scholarship on Islamic solidarity and the Muslim world, historical studies of Indian support for Palestine, and contemporary studies of Indian foreign policy in the West Asia region. The most influential body of literature deals with the historical evolution of the Palestinian national movement and the overall political environment of the Palestine question. Khalidi (2020) states that the Palestinian struggle should not be seen as an isolated anti-colonial struggle against settler colonialism, but rather as an anti-colonial struggle against external domination. The conflict is not just about territory, it is about sovereignty, it is about identity and it is about historical justice, Khalidi said. His analysis reveals how Palestinian nationalism has developed in response to the colonial policies, the displacement and the military occupation. Likewise Said (1979) stresses the need for empathy towards the Palestinian experience, as seen by those who have been affected by dispossession and statelessness. He challenges dominant narratives in the international arena that frequently exclude Palestinian perspectives, and maintains that the Palestinian issue is one of the most important in today's world politics.

The importance of Palestine has also been discussed in the context of Islamic solidarity. Esposito (2018) argues that the Palestinian issue has a special place in the Muslim political agenda, not only on the religious level but also in terms of broader issues of justice and self-determination. The inclusion of Islam's third holiest site in Jerusalem has been a major source of emotional and political significance for the issue all across the Muslim world. Ayooob (2008) makes a similar case that despite differences in political systems, ideological orientations and strategic interests, support for Palestine has been one of the few unifying themes amongst the Muslim majority countries. The Palestinian cause is a symbol of collective Muslim identity and political solidarity, which further strengthens the importance of the issue in international diplomacy, he added.

Studies on Islamic solidarity have focused on the institutional aspect, including that of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). According to scholars, the OIC has always put the Palestinian issue at the forefront of its political agenda since its founding in 1969. The organization has repeatedly demanded the rights of the Palestinian people and advocated for its statehood. According to this literature, the Palestine issue has emerged as one of the most prominent ways in which ideas of Islamic solidarity are expressed and sustained in international politics (Ayooob, 2008; Esposito, 2018).

There is a significant amount of scholarship that concentrates on India's historical support of Palestine. Kumaraswamy (2010) states that the Palestine policy of India grew out of the concept of anti-colonial ideology of the national movement and was strongly anchored on the concepts of self-determination and resistance to racial discrimination. Indian leaders believed the Palestinian struggle was similar to other anti-colonial movements and thus felt that supporting the Palestinian cause was in line with their foreign policy goals, says Kumaraswamy. This view is echoed by Muni and Mishra (2019) who note the impact of Jawaharlal Nehru's internationalism and Third World solidarity on India's policy towards Palestine. The contributions made by the Non-Aligned Movement in the formulation of India's Palestine policy has been pointed out by several scholars. According to Prashad (2007), the Palestinian cause was the focal point of the political imagination of the postcolonial world. In newly independent states, Palestine was a call for anti-imperialism, sovereignty, and national liberation. India's participation in NAM activities in the field of Palestine helped solidify its developing world leadership and its diplomatic efforts with the countries of the Middle East and Muslim countries. The Palestinian issue is also a significant factor in India's foreign policy, as it highlights the diverse nature of Indian foreign policy and its impact on the region. The Palestinian issue is also a key component in Indian foreign policy, reflecting the country's complex relationship with the Arab world. Pethiyagoda (2017) suggests that Palestinian support helped India gain favor with the Arab states during the Cold War and thus helped in promoting various forms of cooperation including the political, the energy, and trade. Palestinian cause was considered a major issue in Arab politics and India's backing of Palestinian self-determination gave weight to the cause all across the region. However, it is important to note that there was much more to India's interaction with the Arab world than ideology. The interests of economics, energy security and geopolitical considerations were also influential in foreign policy decisions.

With the end of the Cold War and full diplomatic relations between India and Israel in 1992, a new line of course has emerged in scholarship that involves policy change and pragmatic strategic approaches. The turnaround in Indian relations with Israel is one of the key events as identified by Kumaraswamy (2010). India's new geopolitical realities, economic liberalization, and security concerns drove India to seek closer ties with Israel without giving up support for Palestine, he says. The same view was shared by Pant (2016), who pointed to the swift growth of cooperation in the areas of defence, technology, agriculture and intelligence sharing between the two countries.

Recent scholarship has focussed on Indian foreign policy in terms of strategic autonomy. Modern Indian diplomacy is not focussed on any single alignment, but rather seeks to hold a balance between competing relationships, as argued by Mohan (2022). This view sees India's multi-front diplomacy with Israel, Palestine and Muslim majority nations as a pragmatic move to make the best of the strategic opportunities while ensuring diplomatic flexibility. In official statements and in multilateral forums, scholars provide, India has continued to back Palestinian statehood despite its improving relations with Israel.

The literature of Palestine policy and interaction with the Muslim world has much in its favor in terms of understanding India's policy towards Palestine, but there is still much gaps in it. Most of the scholarship focuses on studying the relations between India and Palestine/Israel and India and Muslim majority nations separately. There has been a lack of scholarly work on the linkages between the notion of Islamic solidarity and India's overall foreign policy goals and its interaction with Muslim majority countries. Moreover, while the Indian policy

and strategic cooperation with Israel has been studied, few works have focused on the continued relevance of support for Palestine as a tool of foreign policy in India's relationship with the Muslim world.

In this context, the present study is aimed to bridge these gaps by focusing on the Palestine issue in the context of India's relationship with the Muslim majority countries. It is meant to fill the gap between the work done on India's Palestine policy and the more general work on India's relations with Muslim world. The study's emphasis on Islamic solidarity, strategic autonomy, and foreign policy helps to fill the lacuna in the literature regarding the development of India's policy towards West Asia and the rest of the world.

Research Methodology

This paper explores the link between Islamic solidarity and India's foreign policy in the context of Palestine question and India's interaction with the Muslim world. The study is qualitative because of the different levels of depth, the political and diplomatic nature of the subject. The study aims to examine the historical experiences, ideological orientations, strategic interests and geopolitical changes that have affected India's attitude towards Palestine and its relations with the Muslim majority countries. The qualitative approach seems to be suitable because the subject of the research is the process of interpretation of the policy development, diplomatic discourse, and international engagement, rather than to measure variables that can be quantified.

Historical Analytical method provides the study with the opportunity to follow the development of the India's Palestine policy from Independence till the present period. The research uses a chronological approach to examine the nature of continuity and change in the conduct of India's foreign policy as it followed various political processes, diplomatic decisions and international events. The approach also enables analysis of the impact of anti-colonial ideals, strategy and relating to the Muslim world on policy making at various points in history.

Research Objectives

- To analyse the changing approach of India towards Palestine.
- To discuss the importance of the Muslim unity for carrying out the Palestinian cause on the international plane.
- To examine the influence of Palestine issue on India's relations with the Muslim countries.
- The effect of India-Israel relations on India's traditional stance of supporting Palestine.
- To assess the significance of strategic autonomy in the modern Indian foreign policy towards Palestine and Muslim world.

Research Questions

- Explain the changing policy of the Indian government towards Palestine since independence.
- Is there a role for Islamic solidarity in determining the international response to Palestine?
- How can we see the impact of the Palestine movement on India's interaction with the Muslim world?
- How has the traditional Palestine policy of India changed due to its emerging ties with Israel?
- How does India reconcile its commitments of ideology and its interests pertaining to West Asia in the current context of its foreign policy?

Scope of the Study

The study concentrates on the period of independence in 1947 to the present day in India. It explores significant events in

India's Palestine policy, such as the opposition to partition of Palestine, recognition of the PLO, recognition of the State of Palestine, normalization of relations with Israel and present-day interaction with Muslim majority countries. Geographically, the study focuses on India's relations with Palestine and Israel, and with certain countries in the Arab and wider Muslim world. The Palestinian issue is discussed in particular with respect to its diplomatic importance in moulding India's relations with these countries. No interviews or field-based research has been conducted to supplement the study, it is only based on documentary and secondary-source analysis. The official documents may give important insight into policy stances, but may not necessarily be a complete representation of the policy decision-making processes. In addition, the book's emphasis is on the Palestine connection and the interaction of Palestine with the Muslim world in general, and not on the general history of the Israelites–Palestinians conflict. The methodological approach used in this study is the systematic approach to analyze the relationship between Islamic solidarity and the foreign policy of India in relation to Palestine question. The study utilizes an integrated analysis of history, qualitative content analysis, constructivism, postcolonialism and strategic autonomy to attempt to explain continuity and change in the Indian diplomatic approach to Palestine and the Muslim world. This helps in understanding all the normative and strategic influences which have given shape to one of the most indelible features of Indian foreign policy.

Historical Background of India's Palestine Policy (1947-1991)

The ideological principles of the anti-colonial struggles of the twentieth century, as well as the Indian national movement, were instrumental in laying the foundations of India's policy towards Palestine. Political leaders in India since independence have seen the world from the perspective of national sovereignty, racial equality, opposition to imperialism, and self-determination. These concepts had a profound impact on the Indian stance on the Palestine issue and were important in shaping the Indian foreign policy which was always pro-Palestinian. During this period, from 1947 to 1991, India became one of the most proactively vocal supporters of the Palestinian cause in the international arena and at the same time improved relations with the majority Arab and Muslim countries.

The genesis of India's Palestine policy may be found in the attitudes of the freedom movement leaders. Of these, Mahatma Gandhi developed a stance which was to shape India's diplomatic outlook. In 1938 Gandhi's statement on Palestine was that the country was the territory of the Arabs, like England is the territory of the English and France is the territory of the French. He showed sympathy to Jewish sufferings in Europe, but was determined that historical injustices did not warrant the displacement of another people (Gandhi, 1938/1999). Gandhi's vision was grounded in his principles of justice, non-violence, and self-determination. His opinions were indicative of colonial concerns and indigenous rights.

The Palestine issue also had a considerable impact on Indian nationalists as it was seen as part of a struggle against imperialism. The political situation in Palestine was seen by many Indian National Congress leaders as similar to the anti-colonial movements in other areas of Asia and Africa. British colonial rule in India fostered sympathy towards the people seeking national liberation, and this perspective had a significant impact on India's foreign policy orientation later on (Muni & Mishra, 2019). Thus, the struggle for Palestinian rights was inextricably linked to India's general efforts for decolonization and international justice.

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had a great influence on the Indian policy on Palestine after independence in 1947. The principle of anti-colonial solidarity, peaceful coexistence and

support for newly independent states was a central theme in Nehru's foreign policy. These principles gave direction to the Indian stance on the United Nations when it came to the issue of the future of Palestine. The United Nations Partition Plan of 1947 was rejected by India because it called for the establishment of two separate states - one for the Jews and one for the Arabs. Indians had contended that the political aspirations of the Arabs had not been met at the time of partition, and that it was likely to create future instability in the region (Ganguly 2010).

The opposition of the Indians in favour of partition was not only based on ideology but also on their own experience of partitioning. The partition of British India had led to widespread violence, displacement and communal conflict. The proposals for partition were therefore looked upon with skepticism and political solutions that called for coexistence were generally more favoured by Indian policymakers. This historical experience influenced the Indian foreign policy and reaffirmed the Indian belief in the potential for negotiated solutions in Palestine.

India, though not in support of partition, officially acknowledged the State of Israel in 1950. But recognition was not immediately followed by the establishment of full diplomatic relations. For decades, India had very little contact with Israel and continued to promote the rights of the Palestinians at the international forums. This policy was the product of a blend of ideology and strategy. Indian leaders thought that the support for Palestine was in keeping with their principle "Anti-colonialism" and "Self-determination" which shaped Indian foreign policy. Meanwhile, the need to maintain good relations with the Arab countries became more and more significant for diplomatic, economic and political considerations (Kumaraswamy, 2010).

India always voted for the resolutions in support of the rights of the Palestinian people in the United Nations throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Indian delegates regularly spoke of the necessity of a just and peaceful settlement which would be based on the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people. These roles helped strengthen India's position in the eyes of both Arab and Muslim nations, and solidified its reputation as a champion of decolonization and global justice. One of the key aspects of India's Palestine policy during this period was its active engagement in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). NAM was formed during the Cold War to offer a choice to the newly independent states between alignment with the U.S. or the Soviet Union. The movement adopted anti-colonialism, sovereignty, and national liberation as its tenets and the Palestinian issue was of great concern to many member states (Prashad, 2007). India was a major contributor to NAM and was always urging support for Palestinian rights in multilateral platforms.

The Palestinian struggle came to be seen by the developing world as one of the last of the anti-colonial causes. As many Asian and African nations gained independence, Palestine was a symbol of solidarity with peoples struggling for national liberation. India's actions on behalf of Palestinian rights, thus, were both ideological and part of its overall agenda of trying to exert leadership in the Global South.

An important development came in 1974 when India officially recognized the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestine people. It was the first time that any non-Arab nation did so, reflecting India's commitment to the cause of Palestinian self-determination (Kumaraswamy, 2010). The recognition of PLO enhanced India's ties with the Arab states, and further consolidated India's credibility in the Muslim world. It also stood for India's support for the political institutions of the Palestinian people to speak for them in international negotiations.

During the 1970s and 1980s, India's ties with the PLO progressed significantly. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat had close ties to Indian political leaders, and was often invited to New Delhi. The exchanges reflected the close political unity that prevailed between the Indian and the Palestinian national movement. They also furthered India's overall foreign policy of backing non-colonial and national liberation movements in developing countries.

In 1988, another significant achievement was made when India officially recognised the State of Palestine after the Palestinian Declaration of Independence was handed in in Algiers. The recognition of Palestine was a continuation of India's historical commitment to the cause of Palestinian statehood and self-determination. It also reflected the Indian commitment to the doctrines which had inspired its foreign policy since independence such as sovereignty, equality, and resistance to foreign domination (Muni & Mishra, 2019).

Towards the end of the Cold War India had emerged as one of the most powerful international advocates for the Palestinian cause. It was in its stance of opposing the partition of Palestine, recognition of the PLO, support to the Non-Aligned Movement, and recognition of Palestinian statehood that it showed a unified foreign policy based on anti-colonial ideology and international solidarity. Meanwhile, Palestine's support helped shape India's policy-making approach to Arab and Muslim nations, which foreshadowed the country's future political and economic ties with the region in forthcoming decades. The years from 1947 to 1991 saw the convergence of the Indian policy towards Palestine into a part of its foreign policy. Under the impact of anti-colonial thoughts, the concept of self-determination and solidarity with national liberation movements, India has consistently raised the issue of Palestinian rights in the international arena. This commitment was expressed in 1974 by the recognition of the PLO and in 1988 by the recognition of the State of Palestine. At the same time, there was a strengthening of the support for Palestine that added to India's relations with Arab and Muslim countries and strengthened its position in the non-aligned movement. These historical roots continued to influence India's stance on Palestine even after the end of the Cold War and normalization of relations with Israel in 1992.

Islamic Solidarity and the Palestinian Cause

The Palestinian cause is a special one in today's international politics because it transcends the issue of territorial claim to become an integral part of the political consciousness of the Muslim world. Palestine serves as a catalyst for the struggle for national liberation as well as the aspiration for justice, dignity and resistance against foreign occupation in many Muslim-dominated societies. Thus, the solidarity shown for Palestine has become one of the most persistent manifestations of Islamic solidarity in the modern international arena. Consequently, an appreciation of the connection between Islamic solidarity and the Palestinian cause is vital to grasping both regional realities and the diplomatic importance of Palestine in relation to other Muslims. Islamic solidarity is a feeling of unity, cooperation and joint responsibility among Muslims and Muslim states rooted in common religious, cultural and historical backgrounds. The Muslim world is a diverse region in terms of ethnicity, language, political views and ideology, but some topics have been of more universal appeal and received widespread consensus across national lines. The Palestinian issue has been one of the key issues among these, as it is linked to religious history, political identity and historical memory (Esposito, 2018).

In the 19th century, Pan-Islamic thought emerged as the basis of Islamic unity. Jamal al-Din al-Afghani was one of the thinkers who highlighted the need for unity among Muslims in the face of European colonialism and political domination. Pan-Islamism started as an idea to oppose imperialism but over time

took on a more comprehensive form of political and cultural cooperation among the Muslim communities (Ayooob, 2008). In the 20th century the Palestinian issue took centre stage as a rallying point for expressions of Islamic solidarity.

Thus, one of the reasons for the importance of Palestine in the Muslim world is its religious value. Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock are some of the holiest sites in Islam found in the city. Jerusalem is seen as the place of the Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey (Isra and Mi'raj) and is thus part of the religious consciousness of Muslims. Therefore, political changes in Jerusalem have a strong emotional and political reaction in Muslim societies. The symbolic role of Jerusalem has been observed to have been an important reason behind the ongoing prominence of the Palestinian issue in the political discourse of Muslims (Esposito, 2018).

The struggle for Palestine also came to be connected to the broader anti-colonial and national liberation movements. After the establishment of Israel in 1948 and the forced removal of millions of Palestinians, many Muslim-majority countries saw the conflict through the colonial dispossession and political injustice prism. Palestine was viewed as a fight against external domination because of the experiences of displacement, occupation and statelessness. This led to an increasing fusion of the aspirations for Palestinian self-determination with the struggle for sovereignty and political independence in the wider Muslim world (Khalidi, 2020).

Islamic solidarity was institutionalised when the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) was established in 1969. The establishment of the OIC came in the wake of the concerns over developments in Jerusalem and aimed at offering a forum for political cooperation among the Muslim majority states. The Palestinian issue is one of the main concerns of the organization since its establishment. The Islamic character of Jerusalem, Palestinian rights, and support for Palestinian statehood are issues that have been consistently stressed in OIC declarations, resolutions, and summit meetings (Ayooob, 2008). These programs were a way to bring the Palestinian issue into the institutional framework of Islamic diplomacy.

In spite of the fact that there is a great divergence of opinion on Palestine among the member states, the OIC has shown a great deal of consensus at many junctures. The countries that have different views on many of the geopolitical issues have nevertheless expressed their support for the rights of Palestinians in international forums. This relative uniformity is a testament to the symbolic significance of the Palestinian issue and its ability to unite on a national and ideological level. In this regard, the issue of Palestine serves as one of the few issues that have the potential for universal support among the various political spectrums in the Muslim world.

The Palestinian issue has also had a significant impact on public opinion in the Muslim majority countries. Support for Palestine has been a rallying cry for many popular demonstrations, civil society campaigns, charitable efforts, and political movements. Such mobilization is an indicator of the degree to which the issue has become part of the collective identities and public consciousness. The ongoing discourse around the Palestinian issue is seen by scholars as a way of maintaining its relevance as a symbol of shared historical experience and collective responsibility (Esposito, 2018).

The notion of Islamic solidarity must not be taken as a uniform or unproblematic one, however. Muslim majority countries have been seen to rhetorically support Palestine while having their policies dictated by national interest, security concerns and geopolitical considerations. Collective action in support of Palestinians has been hindered in some cases by divergent regional interests, domestic politics, and foreign policy agendas. The normalization of the relations of Israel with several Arab states under the Abraham Accords is a case in point of how

strategic issues can sway policy decisions despite Palestine's continued expressions of solidarity. The normalization of the relations of Israel with several Arab states under the Abraham Accords is an example of the influence of strategic considerations over policy decisions despite expressions of solidarity with Palestine.

Also, there are different political systems in Muslim countries, which have led to different understandings of the Palestinian issue. Governments have different stances, with some focusing on diplomatic engagement and negotiation, and others taking more confrontational approaches. Islamic solidarity therefore must be seen as a process, as a political concept that is not static or necessarily uniform. However, even with the variations, the desire for Palestinian self-determination remains a prominent part of the political agenda in Muslim-majority nations.

India's grasp of the importance of Islamic unity is crucial to deciphering the geopolitical meaning of the Palestinian issue. India has been trying to foster good relations with the countries of West Asia, North Africa, and Southeast Asia which are predominantly Muslim since Independence. India's support for the right to Palestine helped advance its image in these regions as a country that took an active stance on international justice and anti-colonialism. This Palestinian solidarity bolstered India's image as a nation that was pro-active towards anti-colonialism and international justice in these regions. Palestine was thus symbolically significant to the Muslim world which affected India's overall diplomatic relations and foreign policy calculations.

Palestine remains a potent symbol of Islamic unity in today's international politics, even in the face of globalization's shifting dynamics. The political and cultural landscape has changed in the region, and strategic interests have become more varied, but Palestine still exists in the minds and consciousness of Muslim societies. The constant attention and importance of the issue reflects the ongoing significance of identity, historical memory and shared values in international relations. It is the Palestinian cause that is now one of the most important manifestations of Islamic solidarity in the contemporary world. Support for Palestine has spanned political and national lines, and is based on common religious, historical and social background and shared hopes of justice and self-determination. The religious dimension of Jerusalem, the institutional dimension of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the symbolic dimension of Palestine with anti-colonial resistance have all helped to make the issue remain prominent. Though in actual policy terms there have been differences among the various interests and countries, the Palestinian cause remains a potent representation of collective Muslim identity and unity. In order to comprehend India's interactions with the Muslim world and the broader implications of its Palestine policy, it is crucial to understand this dimension.

Palestine and India's relations with the Muslim world

There have been various political, economic, strategic and cultural angles to India's interaction with the Muslim world. New Delhi has been trying to build positive ties with Muslim majority countries of West Asia, North Africa, Central Asia and Southeast Asia since independence. In the context of this general policy, a support for the Palestinian cause became a significant element of India's foreign policy. India's stance on Palestine was inspired by anti-colonial ideas and a commitment to the principles of self-determination, but it also had a major impact on fostering ties with Muslim-majority nations where the Palestinian issue was a matter of great political and symbolic significance. The Palestine issue thus emerged as an important link between the Indian foreign policy norms and its interaction with the Muslim world in general.

In the immediate post-Independence era, India was confronted with the task of projecting itself in a more polarised world. India's emergence as a new nation also meant that it was looking for alliances with other newly independent nations and aiming to occupy a prominent role as a voice for decolonization and sovereign equality. There was some political cooperation and diplomatic solidarity between the Arab and Muslim majority countries because they had similar colonial experiences in the past. In this regard, India's backing of the rights of the Palestinians bolstered its credibility among the Muslim countries and helped in the growth of mutually beneficial relations (Prashad, 2007).

The Arabs played a very significant role in India's foreign policy. During the Cold War era, countries like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates played a prominent role in diplomatic relations. These relationships were reinforced by mutual backing of anti-colonial movements and by working together as Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) members. The consistent push for Palestinian autonomy, a major issue in Arab politics, received wide praise throughout the Arab world. This elevated India above other non-Western states, and solidified its image as a champion of justice and national liberation (Muni & Mishra, 2019).

Egypt was especially influential in India's relations with the Arab world. This personal relationship between Jawaharlal Nehru and Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser helped to build a healthy political co-operation between the two countries. They were anti-colonial leaders and both played a role in founding the Non-Aligned Movement. Their advocacy for the rights of Palestinians was part of a wider movement calling for sovereignty and resisting outside control. India, with the cooperation of Egypt and other Arab countries, further deepened its involvement in the situation in the region and furthered its commitment to Palestine (Ganguly, 2010).

After the oil crises of the 1970s, the importance of the Palestinian issue increased even more. Rising demand for oil in India made Gulf oil producing nations increasingly strategic in nature. The Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, became major suppliers of energy resources. At the same time, many Indians moved to the Gulf region, fostering rich economic and social ties. It was therefore a strategic needs in this context to keep good relations with the Arab countries. India's contribution towards Palestine helped create a conducive diplomatic climate and boost India's image among governments and people of the region (Pethiyagoda, 2017).

The Palestinian cause also helped India bring itself into the contact with the countries of non-Arab Muslim majority. Countries like Iran, Indonesia, Malaysia and Turkey have always backed Palestinian self-determination and treated it as a significant aspect of their foreign policy. India's convergence with these views opened the doors to the wider political arena and cooperation. Despite the various reasons behind this, Palestine could sometimes be a symbol of shared devotion to ideas of sovereignty, anti-colonialism and international justice.

Iran has a special role in this regard. India and Iran have had a history of diplomatic ties and collaboration, although they have faced challenges and difficulties. This has often been the basis for common ground in bilateral relations, particularly in multilateral fora for West Asia concerns. The Palestinian issue has added to the overall fabric of Indian-Iranian diplomatic relations, though the energy security, connectivity projects, and geopolitical dynamics have all played a part in shaping these ties between India and Iran (Pant, 2016).

Indonesia is another example of a country dominated by Muslims, the largest Muslim-majority country in the world, that enabled India to connect with the Muslim world. Both countries came out of the anti-colonial movement and were both active on

the Non-Aligned Movement. Both countries were active members of the Non Aligned Movement and were the result of anti-colonial struggle. Both groups championed the cause of Palestinian independence, as part of their broader principles of national sovereignty and liberation. The same applies to India's ties with Malaysia where Palestine was seen to be a good proxy of solidarity with Muslim issues.

The Palestine problem has also created a threat to the image of India in Muslim majority societies besides its impact on the relationship between the Indian states. Foreign policy roles are influential in creating foreign perceptions and India's history of backing Palestinian rights did help to advance its image through much of the Muslim world. This goodwill was especially important in areas where the public opinion about Palestine was still vital. India had consistently called for a negotiated settlement, based on the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people, and thus, the country was perceived as being firm and fair, and above all, international justice.

But Palestine and India's involvement with the Muslim world cannot be understood just from an ideological perspective. Economic and strategic factors have always been significant in policy making. The Middle East continues to be one of the crucial areas in India for energy imports, trade, investment and for expatriates to work. Gulf countries are a home for millions of Indians who live and work in these countries contributing significantly in the form of remittances to the economy of India. Thus, India's relations with Muslim countries are a mix of values and interests (Pethiyagoda, 2017).

In the post-Cold War period new facets were added to this relationship. India and Israel re-established full diplomatic relations in 1992 and there was some apprehension about India's Palestine policy. In an attempt to make Muslim dominated countries feel better, however, India has sought to reassure them that its ties with Israel would not compromise its commitment to a Palestinian state. India has sought to maintain its trust and goodwill earned over decades in the Muslim nations, in particular, by continuing to support a two-state solution and efforts to win the trust and goodwill of the leadership of the Palestinians (Kumaraswamy, 2010). As the 21st century unfolded, regional politics changed and this balancing strategy grew in importance. India's new economic relationships, the rising security ties, and shifting geopolitical realities demanded that India interact with a variety of countries in West Asia. Palestine was still one part of the diplomatic discussion, but was part of a larger foreign policy paradigm focused on strategic autonomy and national interest. However, the Palestinian issue remains as important a symbol and a diplomatic matter in the relations of India with the Muslim majority countries. The advocacy of Palestinian rights continues to be a part of India's international image and plays a role in its interactions with states and societies that consider the matter to be a current one. Under the new strategic thrust, the Palestine issue remains as a diplomatic connecting thread between India and the rest of the Muslim world. It has been a mixture of ideology, economy and strategy that has influenced India's engagement with the Muslim world. In this context, Palestinian cause support was a major contributor to the relations between the West and Arab and Muslim majority nations during the Cold War and beyond. The issue enabled India to build up its diplomatic credibility, strengthened the anti-colonial identity and helped to create political goodwill in the Muslim world. Along with the strategic and economic considerations, the issue of self-determination of Palestine is and remains an important topic in India's foreign policy discourse. Therefore, the Palestine issue has been a big part of India's relations with the Muslim majority countries and has been a constant part of its foreign policy identity.

India-Israel Relations and Foreign Policy Reorientation (1992-Present)

India's foreign policy towards West Asia took a major turn for the better in January 1992 when it established full diplomatic relations with Israel. Even though India had formally recognized Israel in 1950, it had been keeping a distance from the state for over 40 years after its independence. In these years, the Palestinian cause continued to be a core element of Indian diplomacy and the country possessed anti-colonial orientations, a desire for self-determination, and close ties to Arab and Muslim countries. The end of the Cold War, however, changed the international scenario and gave the impetus to India to revise its foreign policy priorities. As a result, New Delhi began a diplomatic normalisation strategy with Israel, and continued to support the Palestinian right to a state. There were some reasons behind this policy change. The fall of the Soviet Union left the Indian policymakers without a vital strategic ally and forced them to adjust to a fast-changing international landscape. Concurrently, economic liberalization will start in 1991, which promoted more integration with the global economy and more focus on technological modernisation. These developments opened the door to the possibility of working in cooperation with Israel in fields like agriculture, irrigation, defense technology and scientific research (Kumaraswamy, 2010). This, in turn, led to the perception of normalisation as congruent with India's growing economic and strategic goals.

The move towards diplomatic relations with Israel did not mark a complete shift in the traditional Indian Palestine policy. Instead, it was an attempt to distinguish between bilateral relations with Israel and backing for the Palestinians' rights. Indian policymakers contended that the issue of engagement with Israel and support for Palestine were not poles apart. Through this method, India was able to support a two-state solution to the Palestinian conflict and also to pursue joint security cooperation with Israel. This helped India to support a two-state solution and to pursue joint security cooperation with Israel while maintaining its advocacy for a negotiated solution to the Palestinian issue (Pant, 2016). Defensive collaboration has been one of the most important facets of India-Israel relations. Israel has become one of India's top defence partners since the 1990s. The cooperation grew exponentially in fields like military technology, surveillance systems, missile defense, intelligence sharing, counterterrorism, and more. The Kargil conflict of 1999 was an important period in bilateral relations, during which Israel supplied military aid and equipment to India during the conflict. This experience fostered trust between the two parties and emphasized the importance of the partnership (Mohan, 2022).

Security concerns and mutual strategic interests were what spurred the development of defense cooperation. Terrorism, regional instability and border security posed challenges to both nations. Cooperation in intelligence and security issues thus became more and more a part of bilateral relations. India's relationship with Israel evolved into one of its key sources of sophisticated defense technology, playing a significant role in modernizing the Indian Armed Forces throughout the years. Agriculture cooperation has also been a significant component of India-Israel ties. The unique water management, desert farming, and irrigation systems developed in Israel became of special interest to India due to its water scarcity and agricultural productivity issues. Coordinated efforts have helped to transfer technology and technical knowledge from different sectors. Innovations in horticulture, irrigation and crop management have been encouraged by the Centres of Excellence set up in different states of India, and show the practical value of bilateral cooperation (Pant, 2016).

Cooperation in this field has also gradually grown since the establishment of diplomatic relations in the Scientific and Technological sphere. Partnerships between the two countries are underway in areas of innovation, research, cybersecurity and

information technology. This cooperation is one of the signs of a new trend in Indian foreign policy, which has increasingly focused on economic development, technological progress and knowledge-sharing collaboration. The scope of bilateral engagement reflects how strategic and developmental aspects have come to play a greater role in the country's foreign relations.

India-Israel relations began to gain momentum in the twenty-first century. The importance of the partnership was reflected in the increased level of political exchanges at high-level. In 2017, it was the first time that PM Narendra Modi paid an official visit to Israel, a milestone that paved the way for future cooperation. PM Narendra Modi was the first Indian PM to visit Israel officially in 2017, marking a landmark step that set the stage for future collaboration. The visit marked the normalization of bilateral relations, and the importance of cooperation in areas of defense, technology, innovation and economic development (Mohan, 2022). The diplomatic significance of the visit was on the one hand, and on the other, the change in the foreign policy of India. In the past, governments have tended to try balance their relations with Israel with their relations with Palestine during prominent diplomatic events. As the Modi government continued to promote the cause of the Palestinian state, it expressed more confidence in openly recognizing the strategic significance of Israel. This evolution drew the attention of many observers to India's growing interest and pragmatic approach.

However, India's traditional support for Palestine was not given up. Prime Minister Modi's visit to Palestine in 2018 reaffirmed India's support for the Palestinian people's right to a nation and a two-state solution through a negotiating process. The visit showcased India's ongoing commitment to maintaining a balanced stance and emphasized its value of upholding existing ties with the Palestinian leadership. India's separate approach to Israel and Palestine was intended to make a point that one nation cannot be hostile to another if it is making a compromise with one. This balancing strategy is reflected in voting of India at international organizations as well. In the past, India has shifted course according to the prevailing geopolitical landscape, but overall, it has been a steadfast champion of resolutions that reaffirm Palestinian rights and encourage peaceful negotiations. Meanwhile, India has strived to refrain from anything but confrontational words and has looked at dialogue, diplomacy and peaceful resolution of differences. The solution is in line with the general concept of strategic autonomy, aimed at ensuring diplomatic maneuverability without compromising national interests.

Normalization of ties between Israel and several Arab countries, courtesy of the "Abraham Accords," added a twist to regional politics. These pacts were a sign that support for Palestine was no longer the only factor in determining relations between Israel and the Arab world. These developments brought new avenues of opportunity for regional cooperation to India and strengthened its efforts towards a balanced approach with West Asia. As Arab states came to invest in Israel, India's simultaneous relations with Israel, Palestine and the Gulf countries seemed to be increasingly fitting into the emerging regional realities. There are various interpretations of India's changing policy on Israel and Palestine. But others say that the ideological agenda of the previous decades has been gradually replaced by strategic considerations. Others argue that the issue of Palestine Statehood is still a significant normative factor in India's foreign policy stance despite the growing cooperation between the two countries at the strategic level. The other view is that of a balance between principles and pragmatism in the present-day Indian foreign policy, which is a blend of historical bonds and changing national interests (Kumaraswamy, 2010; Mohan, 2022).

The notion of strategic autonomy is useful in examining this change. It is not India's policy to take a side; rather, it has tried to keep a good relationship with both Israel and Palestine. This can help the Indian capital to get technological and security assistance from Israel without losing the diplomatic grace of the Arab and Muslim-majority nations. The strategy marks a shift in the Indian foreign policy from ideology driven to issue driven foreign policy based on national interest. Full diplomatic relations with Israel (established in 1992) marked an important shift in India's foreign policy in the region. In response to shifting geopolitical realities, economic liberalization and new security threats, India increased collaboration in the fields of defence, technology, agriculture and innovation with Israel. But this did not lead to a rejection of Palestine. Rather, India pursued a policy of diplomatic balance, balancing strategic partnership with Israel with a continued push for a Palestinian nation-state. The trajectory of India-Israel relations thus mirrors the broader shift of Indian foreign policy to a more strategic paradigm in which history and pragmatism converge and coexist in a flexible and multi-dimensional strategic approach. The Gaza conflicts of the past few years have presented important challenges for India's balancing approach. Escalations of violence have occurred periodically, sparking international interest in the Palestinian issue and debate. India has mostly reacted with concerns about civilian casualties, appeals for restraint and the importance of peaceful dialogue. Official declarations have been largely reaffirming support for a two state solution, without leaning towards extreme positions. The responses show India's intent to pursue a positive policy of engagement with all stakeholders while retaining a positive image of an independent country that is dedicated to peaceful conflict resolution. There is still disagreement among scholars about the future consequences of these developments. There are some who suggest that India's emerging strategic partnership with Israel is a change in the ideological basis of its foreign policy. Others argue that the Palestinian issue of self-determination has been an important aspect of Indian diplomacy and is continuing to shape relations with the Muslim world. It could be argued that India hasn't discarded its traditional principles, but instead adapted them to the new geopolitical realities. Instead of abandoning ideology, modern policy is a blend of both along with the consideration of national interest and strategic flexibility (Muni & Mishra, 2019).

The future of India's Palestine policy can be determined by a set of factors which are interlinked. The key developments in the Israeli Palestinian conflict, regional geopolitical shifts, developments in the Muslim world and India's growing global role will all shape future policy decisions. Meanwhile, the need for energy, trade, technology and cooperation, and diaspora relations will keep fostering a balanced presence in West Asia. There are indications that India is unlikely to take a stance of complete pro-Israel or pro-Palestinian stance. Rather, it is likely to continue to follow a multi-faceted approach that includes strategic partnerships and diplomatic assistance for peaceful conflict resolution. India's relations with Israel, Palestine, and the rest of the Muslim world have undergone a major change during the Modi era, where India is more visible and active in the Middle East. Strategic cooperation with Israel has grown significantly, but India has not relaxed its official stance on the Palestinian cause of a state and a negotiated two-state solution. The two-step is a reflection of the overall concept of 'strategic autonomy', which has become a core principle of Indian foreign

policy. India has aimed to retain flexibility in its diplomacy and build a stable foothold for the country as an active player in West Asia by striking a balance between upholding historical responsibilities and current national priorities. It is, therefore, probable that India's Palestine policy will continue to be a policy of continuity in principle and adaptability in practice, in order to meet the rapidly shifting requirements of an evolving international system.

Discussion and Analysis

As the preceding chapters show, the policy of the Government of India towards Palestine could not be evaluated in terms of either the ideology of commitment or the strategic calculation. Instead, it has grown out of a history of experience, a set of norms, geographic circumstances and engagement with the Muslim world. The Palestine question has been a tool with which India has defined itself as a post-colonial nation that believes in self-determination, anti-colonialism and international justice. At the same time, Palestine has served as a significant political lever to carry out India's relation-building with countries having Muslim majority and to strengthen India's position in the developing world. One of the main findings of this study has been that the support for Palestine in India emanated from the ideologies behind the national movement. The ideas of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru were spoken from a larger platform of anti-colonialism, sovereignty and opposition to external invasion. These principles are reflected in India's stance against the United Nations Partition Plan of 1947, its backing of Palestinian issues in international forums and its acceptance of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the State of Palestine. These policies further strengthened India's image as a leading advocate of decolonization and national liberation during the Cold war era (Kumaraswamy 2010).

The study also shows that the cause of Islamic solidarity, in an indirect way, has influenced the diplomatic background in which the policy of the Indian government towards Palestine was formed. India is not a Muslim majority country and is not part of institutions like the Organization of Islamic Cooperation but Indian policy makers always knew Palestine has a symbolic significance in the Muslim world. The Palestinian cause is particularly significant in Muslim political awareness as it is connected with the city of Jerusalem, its experience of displacement and the general issues of justice and self-determination (Esposito 2018). As a result, in the eyes of Muslim countries, whose influence proved vital, Palestinian rights helped to create political goodwill in a wide variety of areas.

Another significant discovery relates to the Palestine-India connection with their interaction with the Arab world. The Palestine movement bolstered India's agenda of cooperation with the Arab nations through the Non-Aligned Movement during the Cold War era. The opposition to colonialism and the desire for sovereignty provided a basis for diplomatic cooperation. On practical terms, India's assistance to Palestine helped build its trust with the Arab governments and improved relations with countries that eventually became important partners in energy security, trade, and employment for Indian migrants (Pethiyagoda, 2017). Hence, there was a political dimension, but at the same time ideological concerns played a part.

The findings also show that the Indian involvement with the Muslim world is not solely influenced by the issue of Palestine. Interests, energy needs, regional security and geopolitical factors have always had an impact on policy-making. Foreign policy started to be more guided by pragmatic calculations as India's economic and strategic importance increased since the economic liberalisation in 1991. However, the Palestine cause remained as an integral part of India's diplomacy as a symbol.

There was a big change in 1992 when relations were normalized with Israel. The fall of the Cold War changed the strategic landscape and India turned to diversification. The end of the Cold War changed the strategic landscape and India began to diversify strategic relationships. Israel's defense technology, agricultural and water management skills, as well as its innovation prowess made it an appealing partner. Cooperation grew quickly, especially in the areas of security and defense. However, India's more recent stance on Palestinian statehood (Pant, 2016), which was contrary to the prevailing sentiment that the development of India-Israel relations would lead to a decline in support for Palestine, was largely maintained. This development indicated that Indian policy makers began to think of ties with Israel and Palestine as two parallel policies instead of two conflicting policies.

The idea of strategic autonomy is the most useful to grasp this shift. The concept of strategic autonomy is more about flexibility, autonomy and cooperation based on issues rather than being aligned with ideology. India has tried to be a player in all of this and is trying to play an active role in all these countries in spite of tensions rising between Israel and Palestine, Israel and Saudi Arabia, Israel and UAE, and Israel and Iran. This is in keeping with a foreign policy paradigm change in India from idealism to pragmatism (Mohan, 2022).

The study also shows that the Modi regime is not a new departure but an evolution from the previous policies. The strengthening of India-Israel relations and deepening of strategic cooperation is a clear sign of the growing confidence in the pursuit of the nation's interests. But the presence of a two states solution and India's ongoing negotiations with Palestinian leadership mean that the country has not given up on its traditional commitments. Rather, New Delhi has worked to make these commitments current to a shifting geopolitical landscape of shifting regional alliances and new economic opportunities.

This is confirmed by recent events in West Asia. Some of the diplomatic limitations that determined relations between Israel and Arab states have been curtailed by the Abraham Accords and new regional formations like I2U2. These shifts have now allowed India to be able to be active with many regional actors at the same time. However, the Palestinian issue remains alive in international politics and in world opinion in the Muslim world, therefore, Palestine has a symbolic and political relevance to them.

The results support the theoretical perspectives of the usability of the combination of constructivist, postcolonial and strategic autonomy approaches. Constructivism helps to understand the lasting nature of concepts like anti-colonialism and self-determination in India's foreign policy profile. A postcolonial approach sheds light on the historical underpinnings of solidarity with Palestine and other national liberation movements. Strategic autonomy, on the other hand, is an explanation of the way in which India has modified its foreign policy to suit the current geopolitical situation while maintaining the continuity and continuity of the earlier principles. These frameworks are used together to give a full explanation of policy evolution over time. The analysis also indicates that the links between Islamic solidarity and India's foreign policy are more complicated than is generally believed. Islamic solidarity has not clearly influenced the outcomes of the Indian policy decisions but rather the diplomatic atmosphere in which these decisions have been taken. India's symbolic status with Palestine has given it a strong incentive to support the Palestinian cause, even as it has been seeking to enhance its ties with Israel. In this manner, the Palestinian issue can be seen as a nexus between India's past obligations and its current foreign policy goals. In conclusion, the study proves that the policy of India towards Palestine has been one of continuity and

adaptation in Indian foreign policy. The ideas of the independence movement continue to shape the diplomatic discourse, but their practice has changed with shifting perspectives in the strategic background. This ability to adapt has helped India to have positive engagements with various actors and keep itself as an independent and responsible player in the international scenario.

Conclusion

The study thus concludes that Islamic solidarity has played an indirect effect on India's foreign policy. It has not been in charge of policy outcomes, but it has been the diplomatic setting in which India has functioned. Muslim-majority societies have given Palestine a symbolic meaning which has encouraged India to continue pro-Palestinian policy as a part of its policy of engagement with Muslim world. This support has helped India's credibility in the international community and has aided India in developing cooperation with nations, which still consider the Palestinian issue a political and moral matter. To sum up, the connection between Islamic solidarity and Palestine question with India's interaction with the Muslim world is an example of the complexities of modern-day foreign policy. The strategy India has adopted has shifted from being an ideologically driven orientation at the time of the Cold War to a more complex and flexible orientation in the post-Cold War period. However, the issue of Palestinian self-determination is an integral part of India's foreign policy identity and a factor in its relations with the Muslim majority world. The study confirms that continuity and change are part and parcel of Indian foreign policy which allows India to become a flexible policy maker and adjust to the new geopolitical realities, while maintaining the essential elements of the old. The challenge in an increasingly complex international environment will be to maintain this delicate nexus of interests, norms and diplomacy in the future as India's influence on the global stage keeps growing.

References

- Ayoob, M. (2008). *The many faces of political Islam: Religion and politics in the Muslim world*. University of Michigan Press.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Esposito, J. L. (2018). *Islam and politics* (6th ed.). Syracuse University Press.
- Gandhi, M. K. (1999). *The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi* (Vol. 68). Publications Division, Government of India. (Original work published 1938).
- Ganguly, S. (2010). *India's foreign policy: Retrospect and prospect*. Oxford University Press.
- George, A. L., & Bennett, A. (2005). *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*. MIT Press.
- Khalidi, R. (2020). *The hundred years' war on Palestine: A history of settler colonialism and resistance, 1917–2017*. Metropolitan Books.
- Kumaraswamy, P. R. (2010). *India's Israel policy*. Columbia University Press.
- Mohan, C. R. (2022). *India and Asian geopolitics: The past, present and future*. Brookings Institution Press.
- Muasher, M. (2021). *The Abraham Accords and the changing politics of the Middle East*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Muni, S. D., & Mishra, A. (2019). *India's foreign policy: Contemporary issues and perspectives*. Sage Publications.
- Pant, H. V. (2016). *Indian foreign policy: An overview*. Manchester University Press.
- Pant, H. V. (2019). *Indian foreign policy and emerging geopolitics*. Routledge.
- Pethiyagoda, K. (2017). *India's relations with the Gulf states: Reviving the link*. Brookings Institution Press.
- Prashad, V. (2007). *The darker nations: A people's history of the Third World*. The New Press.
- Said, E. W. (1979). *The question of Palestine*. Vintage Books.
- Wendt, A. (1999). *Social theory of international politics*. Cambridge University Press.