Analysis and Interpretation of Security Perception: Themes and Models

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Abstract
Security is a contested concept which has variation in its meaning. The application of the concept is difficult to be made. It varies from state to state. Some perceive it in terms of defense policy and other considered as a part of national policy. The variation in thematical explanation of the concept has attracted many foreign policy analysts and scholars to shed light on it. The contribution of the scholars in this regard does not only provide the basis for state to identify the security threats but also to formulate policies accordingly. The paper is an addition to the existing literature which focuses on the themes and models of security perception and its interpretation. Furthermore, it also highlights the varying aspects of the concept.

Keywords: Security-insecurity continuum; Security Dilemma; Threat; Vulnerability; Homeland Security; Alliance System; peace; prosperity and progress; Confidence Building Measures (CBMs); Inter-Itra Regional Security

I. Introduction
States in international relations are engaged in numerous issues of which security is the most salient and ambiguous. It becomes more complex due to the pattern of interaction among states which has been cooperative, friendly and interdependent, or of an enmity, conflicting and anarchic. In the former context, the conducive environment prevails if fear, phobia or apprehensions are minimal. The security is conspicuously existed. In the later sense, clash of interests, desires to be hegemon and struggle for power are apparent.

History witnesses that during different epochs, the predominant states succeeded in enforcing their will on the others by which behavior of other states used to be regulated. Over the years, it has been evolved as, “Laws of nations” and “International law”, (Michael, 1970) to direct the conduct of states and to ensure security. It establishes that security is a pivotal concept around which behavior revolves but the problem emerges that there is no international authority, no centralized government and no international organization empowered to manage or control the actions states. In an anarchic world, security has become more complex and confusing concept.

In the modern times, many states have developed their own explanations and interpretations of the concept of security. Nuclear proliferation, political rivalries, mistrust, ideological confrontations, absence of reconciliation and one-power hegemonic scenario has undermined the environment of security. The security has become the frontline concept. It becomes necessary to ensure strategies for security when fears and deterrence is looming on the political horizon. In an insecure environment “security” is a
persistent condition in which states have less fear to their survival and more capabilities to ward off the fear of insecurity. Fear, deterrence and its reciprocated behavior creates security dilemma for the world.

Security has become debatable issue in recent time. States of the world (no matter developed or developing) are following various strategies by which peaceful environment can be generated. Keeping in mind the significance of the concept, the present analysis is and effort to explain the concept of security and its interpretations given by of various scholars. Therefore, the focuses here is on the following

i. Interpretation of the concept of security
ii. Security-insecurity dilemma
iii. Analysis of models of security

The concept of security has been interpreted and defined by various scholars in different ways. They have explained this concept with the help of their own analysis of developing and developed state’s security strategies. Broadly, the literature on security can be categorized into two schools of thought as given below.


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<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Schools of Thought</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Traditional Realists</td>
<td>Believe in use of power for security environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Idealist School of Thought</td>
<td>Believe in use of peaceful measures for security environment</td>
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Most of the literature in the market has been produced by two schools of thought. The first is of those favors the approach of power relations. They derived their thinking from the traditional realist school of international relations. For instance, E.H. Carr, Hans. J Morgenthau, Kaplan and Rosecrance (Morgenthau, 1973, 7) argued that their concept leads them not only to the study of the state power but also the analysis of state capabilities. They contend that all relations are primarily dependent upon power; therefore states should develop and muster power to maintain balance in relations and to ensure security. They are of the opinion that security can only be maintained if states will use their power because the international environment is uncertain and there is no rule and principle by which states can live in a secure environment.

The second school prefers peaceful measures over power to maintain security. It contends that security can only be achieved by using peaceful strategies. The followers of this school argue that their analysis does not only take them toward the criticism on realistic school of thought but also focuses attention directly on the essential matter of war. An off-shoot of this school believed that without war and conflict security cannot be ensured. Kriesberg, Coser, Schelling, Liddle Hart Clauswitz and many others think that war is an inborn mechanism of social fabric. It exists. The generate fear, deterrence and mistrust are removed by power capabilities and consequently security environment prevails. According to Buzan (1983, 4) that these two approaches dominate thinking about the security perception.

While taking these two approaches into considerations, security has been defined as a subjective phenomenon that changes from states to state. It not only includes capabilities and fears of individual state but also the power, deterrence and nuclear
energy. To make it more clearly, it is pertinent to take in to account the analysis of various scholars and security analysts. A group of scholars throws light on the psychological impression of the concept that security is related to the innate fears which psychotically embedded in the any states apparatus.

It is argued by Bellany (1981, 102) considers that security is freedom from fear in international relations. He discussed “security itself is a relative freedom from war coupled with a relatively high expectation that defeated will not be a consequence of any war that should occur”. Mroz (1980: 105) contends “security is relative freedom from harmful threat”. Goldstein considers (Trager, 1973) “security is a condition, a state of affairs by which various actors presume that they are insecure but as a matter of fact they might be secure enough or vise versa” (P.36). On the other hand, McMillan (1984) describes “the security is not a lens to see the reality as a whole yet it is an essential ‘contested concept’, which can be viewed as companion to rather psychological orientation of the decision makers” (p. 12).

Walter Lippman pointed out that security is an ambiguous symbol. He emphasized (Wolfer, 1962) “a nation is secure to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values, if it wishes to avoid war and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by victory in such a war” (p. 150). He discusses about the range of core values. They are political, economic, cultural as well as physical values of the state, which a state needs to be safe and are preserved. Core values according to Walter Lippman’s point of view lead to confusion and conceptual intricacies. The concept of value is very difficult to be determined. What this definition implies is that security rises and falls with the ability of a nation to deter an attack or to defeat it. Wolfer (1962) discussed the concept of security in these words “security in an objective sense measures the absence of threats to acquire values and in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked” (p. 150). He has taken both the sides of the coin and discussed them extensively but problem occurs when balance between the objective realities and subjective dimension is minimal. It becomes confusing.

Another group of analysts observed this concept from the state, policy and military perspective. Trager and Samunie have delineated security concept from a policy perspective. According to them, (Louw, 1978) “it is part of government policy having as its objective, the creation of national and international condition in favorable to the protection or extension of vital national values against existing and potential adversaries” (p. ix). Hedley Bull, Bernard Bradie, Kuth Krause, Kegley, J.T. Rourke faced difficulties in applying this concept. They discussed it from the perspective of the state. The main theme revolves around the quest for security to reduce military threats to its integrity originating outside its borders.

Padelford like Buzan supported the military objectives of states. He discussed security in two contexts;

- **Military context**
- **Non - military context**
Military - security requires having armament, sophisticated weapons, well developing army, strong defense and prevention from war. Non - military security requires having arrangements in which the values of state (political, economic, and social) are not threatened. Padelford et al. (1996) has argued that fundamental objectives of the military and non - military security are preserving national life, independence, territorial integrity of the state, free from outside interference, enjoy certain moral, cultural and material standards of its own choice and maintain national position in the world affairs. His emphasis has been more on military strategy rather than non - military, which is a limited and narrow explanation of states relations. It cannot help in understanding of the phenomenon as a whole.

Brian L. Job analyzes the concept of security in a comprehensive way. He relates this concept with insecurity perception that security becomes evident if a state feels insecurity. He particularly analyzed this concept with the reference of third world states security. He is of the opinion that compared to developed states, third world countries are more influenced by an insecure environment. Various states are involved in third world security environment and establish contrast between the concept of “security dilemma” and “insecurity dilemma”. He identifies central relationship between insecurity dilemma and weak state and argued “The insecurity dilemma as a phenomenon exclusive to the third world countries, the manners in which it influence the so called security strategies adopted by states and regimes” (Job, 1992, p. 14). To understand it more clearly, he identifies four dimensions of security in third world:

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<th>S. No</th>
<th>Dimensions of Security</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Security related to the self determination of a state</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Security of individual, regime and nation</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Security concerns its substantive scope and content</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Security is related with theoretical perspective realist / non-realist paradigm</td>
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According to Job (1992) insecurity in third world countries is generated from four ways:

a. Within the border of states
b. The regime in power
c. The state lacks effective capabilities to provide peace and order as well as the condition for satisfactory physical existence for the population
d. The prevailing threat is generally internal threat to and from the regime in power, rather than externally motivated.

Barry Buzan tries to overcome the gap between the concept of security and insecurity and freely uses insecurity-security continuum. Buzan has labeled security as a contested concept, which has various definitions to explain. Buzan makes efforts to delimitize the concept. He used this concept in his analysis of weak and strong nations. Buzan (1983) emphatically asserted that weak and strong nations are subjectively defined with their capabilities and it is difficult to measure the strength of entire nations at the same parameter. As far the capabilities of these states are concerned, those are relatively varied. The weak and strong states develop relations among themselves on the basis of their capabilities and demands. While discussing about the weak and strong nations, he suggests that balance should exist between capabilities and demands. He explains that insecurity is generated by two reasons;
a. Threats;
b. Vulnerability;

It can result in the destruction or distortion of institutions particularly ideological, economics and political bases of the state. He gives comprehensive security analysis, which is divided at three levels;

<table>
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<th>Levels</th>
<th>Systems</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 Top</td>
<td>International</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Mid</td>
<td>Regional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bottom</td>
<td>Individual state</td>
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</table>

Each level has its own features of security. These levels and systems are also interrelated. The dynamic of interrelationship can be military, economic, political, and environmental. He particularly deals with the pattern of ‘amity’ and ‘enmity’ among states. The amity relationships range from genuine friendship to expectation of protection or support. Buzan (1983) has argued that the enmity relationship set by suspicion and by the interaction of the actors, states confront with security dilemma. He asserted that it is difficult to observe the relations between strong and weak nations on the bases of capabilities alone. The relationships among states are deteriorated not only on the basis of social, political and economic threats, but also situation, environment and unexpected variables play role in developing and enmity in states relations.

In contemporary environment, states are facing the threat to security not only at internal, regional but also at global level. It is not remained the problem of third world countries but it also affected the peaceful environment of the developed states. After 9/11, the meanings of security have changed. Although the bases are the same for the analysis of security perception, the explanation is different. America projected the nation of ‘Homeland security’ which is more related to the national security of a state.

The varying interpretation of security concept make it more complicated. Therefore, some broad spectrum with well-defined conceptual paradigm is needed to capture dimensions of security perception. Different scholars have given models to understand the concept of security, of which following are the most significance;

i. Competitive Security Model (CSM)
ii. Cooperative Security Model (COSM)
iii. International / Collective Security Model (ICSM)
iv. Peace Keeping Security Model (PKSM)
v. Regional Security Model (RSM)
SECURITY MODELS

<table>
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<th>SECURITY MODELS</th>
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<td>1 Competitive Security Model</td>
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<td>Forces Military/Weapons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Regional Security Model</td>
<td>Regional Org SAARC- ASEAN- ECO NATO</td>
<td>To Attain Collectively Common Interest for The Security (Defense &amp; Eco)</td>
<td>To Developed Environment for Regional Security</td>
<td>Alliances Assistance Interaction on Eco, Pol &amp; Cul Grounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Peace – Keeping Security Model</td>
<td>Multilateral - Defense Org, Eco Org, Peace Keeping Forces</td>
<td>To Defend Against the steps of Adversary Commands</td>
<td>To Create an Environment Of Peace</td>
<td>Collective Commands</td>
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These models have been developed either by one or many scholars. As a matter of fact, some of these models have been derived out of the work done by various writers.

II. Competitive Security Models (CSM)

The model based on the competition among the states for attaining a level of security or maintaining a security environment. The competition continues till the security is not ensured. To achieve the objective, states remains involve in long confrontation and competition which resulted either in war or an arm race. The reflection can be found in USA and USSR confrontation. Competitive Security Model can be understood in the following content;

Actors______________ U.S / U.S.S.R
Explanation___________ Arm race - Aggression
Outcome___________ Cold War- Competition in terms of ideological and military security objectives

According to Peter Mangold (1990), Competitive Security Model (CSM) is based on the East - West antagonism. To pursue their security interests, they were involved in
power competition. Both tried to become the hegemon of the world. In order to establish this, both resorted to competition, which consist of two basic security objectives;

a. Ideological security objectives
b. Military security objectives

The world had been divided on ideological ground. To preserve their ideology the competition as a strategy was used. There were several states that have either followed the same ideology or have been the supporters of the other. On the bases of same, competition became an excuse for the preservation of ideology. States also launched anti-propaganda against each other’s ideology. Military security objectives included strategies of armaments / weapons and use of force. Development of new and sophisticated weapons and confronted attitude against each other for becoming hegemonic power in the world were the bases for Competitive Security Model.

The difference between East-West ideology and military arsenals was symbol of the contradictions of ideologies of communism and capitalism. These contradictions led other states to involve in conflicting situation, which created security perception particularly for the South Asian region. They did not reconcile to the existence of each other, which involved them in acquisition of power in terms of arm race. Ideological differences and arm race created an insecure and this interaction generated the environment of cold war between two competing blocks. It resulted in widening the gulf between the two, cultivated distrust and doubts.

The Model, instead of taking stock of facts, figures and information focused on two aspects i.e. ideology and arms race. These two variables have not been sufficient in grabbing the reality of security perception. Another aspect has been that the model could not lead the world to the threshold of security. In the words of George F. Kenon (Mangold, 1990), “the world has been moved to the brink of destruction” (p. 10). Moreover, the consequence of the operationalization of this model was cold war, which created power blocks and unnecessary insecurity. When the Soviet Union disintegrated, the bases of the model also eroded. The states are more interested to use those strategies by which the antagonism or competition is replaced by cooperation.

III. Cooperative Security Model (COSM)

The theme of the model is based on the cooperation among the states to avoid from the war or an insecure environment. Cooperative Security Model has three requirements;

a. Cooperation to share common interest for security
b. Apply the rule which made by cooperation
c. Alliances for the cooperation

According to Peter Mangold, Cooperative Security Model consists of cooperation for security rather than the competition of power between rivals. This is based on the assumption (Mangold, 1990) that competition can be controlled and that security is something, which states can ‘share’. Cooperative Security Model applies when states make transition from traditional (usually military oriented) strategies to the espousal of military transparency, force reduction or economic internationalism. They must leave and
move toward alliances, pacts and negotiations. This in other words can be known as Alliance Model — alliances are either bilateral or multilateral. It is not necessary that alliance system can only be for war or power. It can be economic, political and social cooperation to enhance the capabilities.

In order to resist external threats to the national security states prefer to acquire power or get entangled in alliance system in international politics. They promote cooperation for security between them. In general, Cooperative Security Model is an agreement, which made between two or three nations to collaborate on the matters of national security. It requires mutual military assistance between two or more sovereign states. This means that use of force, as an obligation to protect an ally in international relations is the most effective tool for the working of the international system. Hence the obligation for member is to promote peaceful cooperation within the alliances and stand united to counter any aggression with force.

The working example of cooperative is European Union. The EU set new structure for regional cooperation for the rest of the world but it cannot applied on those countries who have mistrust and hostility from the time they appear on the world map i-e the third world countries where the cooperation remained doubtful.

IV. International / Collective Security Model (ICSM)
Karen Mingst has discussed Collective Security Model in her book “Essential of International Relations”. This Model is based on the objective of collectivism at international level against international security threats. It is captured in the old adage (Mingst 1999) “One for all and all for one” (p.167).

The hypothetical assumption of ICSM (Ahmer, 1998) has been derived from the Covenant of the League of Nations and the Charter of the United Nations. In both of these historic documents, concept of security has been endorsed. The concept of Collective Security is not new one, it is an old expression used previously. The assumption further extended that war and never-ending accumulation of armament can not give security to the states at international relations. It evolved in to attempt to organize international arrangements for peace and security. The model, with gradual passage of time, got two dimensions; first which is heavily dependent upon the Covenant and the Charter and other obtained from the pages of the history and practice of many nations.

Grotious, Lime, Brierly, Brandt and Horward believed that when one or more than one states tried to frustrate the peace of the society, the others should joined hands to defeat such a behavior. In order to materialize this concept, the League of Nations and the United Nations have been organized.

League of Nation after First World War and United Nation after Second World War are the moves toward security arrangements of the world as a whole. The main objective was to promote international cooperation and to maintain international peace and security. It included 3ps - Peace, Prosperity and Progress in its charter. It has four - point programme;

a. Arbitration for the settlement of international dispute;
b. Application of economic and military sanctions against the aggressor;
c. Codification of international law;
d. Setting up of an international executive or administrative system.

As Prof Mahendra Kumar (Rourk, 1999) has stated that the rock bottom principle of collective security is “attack on any one state will be regarded as an attack on the formation of all states” (p. 167). It required avoiding war, established open honorable relations, promoting international law, justice and treaty obligations between nations. Under the Charter of the United Nation, the member states are expected to settle their disputes by peaceful means so that international peace, prosperity and progress are not endangered. They are expected to refrain from the threat or use of force against any other state to save the new generation from the danger of war.

Both League of Nation and United Nation became the instrument of international peace and security. To avoid war and maintain peace and security becomes the main objective behind every move of the international organizations.

The big powers have been ignoring the United Nations and trying to cash their interests and objective themselves. Their acts undermined the concept of Collective Security. This attitude also presented in the one power world after 1992. America manipulated partners and friends to suppress Iraq and later tried to check terrorism emerging from Afghanistan. It can be safely stated that the role of big powers has considerably damaged the collective security arrangement.

V. Peace - Keeping Security Model (PKSM)

What the U.N has been able to do more often is implemented by a process commonly called Peace Keeping Security Operations. Out of which a Model has been developed which is known as Peace Keeping Security Model (PKSM). Peace keeping is deployment of international observers under the supervision of U.N to ward off the danger and gradually resume the peace and security. The international force is neutral between the combatants. It is deployed (Bhutto, 1967) on the invitation at least one of the combatants.

Fen Osler Hampsen has discussed in his article, “A New Role for Middle East in regional Conflicts” that this Model seemingly is offshoot of the element of Collective Security Model. Their nature and dimensions are overlapping but their working and implementation is different.

United Nation Charter envisaged direct negotiation and other peaceful means of settlement of dispute to be employed by member- states and collective security measures in case of breach of the peace. In practice, there are functions like Peace-Keeping Operations that have been employed by U.N which help in controlling the threats against international peace and security. It also plays role of impartial third party to help create and maintain a cease - fire and form a buffer zone between warring states. It can involve military missions made up of unarmed officers, peace-keeping force, or a combination of both. It has concerned with such activities as “supervising peace agreement, monitoring cease-fires, patrolling demilitarizing zones, creating buffer zones between opposing
forces and removing local conflicts that risk wider wars.” Peace-keeping operations fall into two “generations”:

a. First Generation Peace - keeping
b. Second Generation Peace - Keeping

In first generation peace keeping, multilateral institution such as United Nation seeks to contain conflicts between two states through third party military forces. Arm forces of U.N have been used to prevent the escalation of conflict to keep the warring parties apart until the dispute can be settled. First generation peace - keeping efforts (Mingst, 1999) for international security are most effective under the following conditions:

a. A clear purpose and practicable mandate for the operation
b. Consent of parties involved and composition of the force
c. Strong financial support of the members of U.N
d. Acceptance of troop-contributing countries
e. An understanding among peacekeepers to resort to the use of force only for self-defense.

Second-generation peace-keeping activities respond to civil wars and domestic unrests. It has taken on a range of both military and non military functions. In military, the Peace Keepers Observers have aided the verification of troops withdrawal and have separated warring factions until the underlying issues could be settled. Second generation has vastly expanded in the post - cold war period. To give strength to the operation to the peace keeping observers ‘Agenda for Peace’ is given. That agenda for peace laid emphasis on greater coordination between preventive diplomacy, peace - keeping and peace - building activities.

Security is not only the prevention from war or conflict but also expected to be sustained for long time. By this model security is artificially designed and given. It does not play a role in minimizing the fear in the mind of the people and decision makers.

VII. Regional Security Model (RSM)

The term Regional Security has been borrowed from European and Western experience. American political scientists like Ernst Hass and Karl Deutsch (1957) have discussed about the security arrangements at regional level.iii Other writers like S. D. Muni, Robert O, Neil, Felipe B. Miranda, Richard Pennell deal with security arrangements in different regions.

Regional Security Model stresses on regional organizations at regional level for security purpose. Primarily various states form regional organizations for common defense and economic development. This has given birth to regionalism. On the bases of behavior and activities of regional organizations, this Model has been developed.

Regional Organizations are based on the consent of the states for regional organization. This is a close association of the states links them in collective decision-making system. Joseph Nye has observed that the formation of regional organizations is a process of integration and recognition of mutual obligation and common interests. The article 52 of the Charter of the U.N permits (Kegley, 1999), “the existence of regional
arrangements and agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security” (p. 531).

Regions and countries have been linked together in regional security arrangement indirect or direct. Regional security arrangement made in Europe, America, Africa, Asia, South East Asia, and Middle East. The regional organizations have multidimensional objectives i.e. military, economic, political and social security objectives. But most of the regional organizations have military alliances. These included North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), South Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), the Baghdad Pact (CENTO) and Warsaw Pact. Some still exist; the others have either become defunct or formally dissolved.

**Regional Organization Security Model**

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<tr>
<th>REGIONS</th>
<th>ORGANIZATIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>European Union (EU)</td>
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<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>Organization of America States (OAS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>Organization of African Unity (OAU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>South Asian Association Regional Organization (SAARC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East Asian</td>
<td>The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)</td>
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</table>

Mohammad Ayub has categorized these organizations into two parts.

a. Inter-Regional Security Level
b. Intra-Regional Security Level

At Inter-Regional Level, countries of the region bind themselves for security within the region, while at Intra-regional Level; regions make security arrangements with other regions.

**REGIONAL SECURITY**

![Diagram of Regional Security](attachment:diagram.png)

Ayoob (1986) has emphasized on the problem of Regional Security in third world and argued “regional security arrangements for third world countries like a chimera. They can make alliances for Regional Security but cannot be practicized” (p. 57). According to
him third world countries are normally involved in security arrangements for two basic purposes;
a. To minimize the tensions and conflicts between states of the region  
b. To limitize the external intervention in their conflicts

Regional organizations have been organized one another like WARSA, NATO, Asian Security Pacts like CENTO, SEATO another like NAFTA and EU. These organizations play doubled edged role. One is positive and second is negative. In the former context, they worked out for economic recovery program and the later sense they pull the carpet under the feet of the adversaries which instead of multiplying insecurity risks. Most of the regional organizations worked for socio political and economics objectives, which could serve effectively as Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) among the member states. These organizations have been pursuing their basic objectives but they are perhaps too weak to achieve it successfully. This model can serve in South Asia but working of SAARC though has been contributing but has not been able to create an environment of security in South Asia. In the presence of these organizations, the tension has been mounting, borders are being insecure and fear of conflict has been out to be become eminent.

These models have contributed a great deal in explicating the intricacies of state relations. The phenomenon is complex as well as delicate and too deeply embedded in the socio - psychological and environmental dimensions that most of the models and individuals efforts have to remain limited or narrow in dimension in explaining the security perception and demarcating of boundaries. All these models have focused on “Security Perception”. It is accepted that in the environment of fear, mistrust and hated, neither interaction between states, nor efforts to ensure peace can be seriously launched, it reveals that insecurity is a necessary condition for security.

To sum up, security perception is the central concept which, no doubt, is value laden and psychologically overtone. But it has capability to portray the interaction between states. Various writers on the basis of their postulations analysis, observation and evaluation have explained the concept. In the light security perception, it becomes evident that when such a condition of insecurity prevails, security measures become necessary. Security perception is ways and means by which condition of insecurity pushed aside, removed or reduced.

References


