War and Peace: Territorial Disputes and Public Opinion in India *

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Abstract

What can public audiences learn from violent escalations or diplomatic cooperation in territorial disputes? I argue that prior activity acts as a heuristic for public audiences to update their views toward adversary states and other active territorial disputes. Peacefully resolving a dispute enhances individual trust in neighboring states and increases dovish beliefs, whereas the onset of violence bolsters hawkish public opinion by stoking nationalist fears about homeland defense. I test these ideas using two original experiments in India. I first examine the effects of peace using a pre-registered face-to-face survey experiment (n=2,513). I find that informing respondents of a prior peaceful resolution that India negotiated modestly increases their support for peaceful settlement with any of India's neighbors, conditional on the pre-treatment levels of dispute salience. Second, I use a terrorist attack during the fielding of my survey as a natural experiment (n=1,113) to measure the effects of violence. I find that violence in the disputed territory of Kashmir increases hawkish attitudes and sharply reduces the favorability of neighboring states. While the benefits of peace are limited, the costs of violence are dramatic. Given that states are engaged in multiple active disputes and often constrained by domestic public opinion, these findings help inform how activity in one dispute can influence the resolution of another.

Keywords: Territorial Disputes | Public Opinion | Terrorism | South Asia | Survey Experiments | Conflict Resolution

Territorial disputes remain one of the most significant international security issues, affecting 70% of states from 1816 to 2001. Furthermore, states with at least one territorial dispute average more than three disputes per year, involving several unique adversaries (Frederick, Hensel and Macaulay, 2017). Given their commonality, it is essential to examine whether and how one territorial dispute can influence the resolution or escalation of another. Prior research shows that states and leaders can learn from one interstate dispute to change their behavior in other active disputes (Melin and Grigorescu, 2014; Joshi and Quinn, 2016; Wiegand and Powell, 2011; Huth, 1996). However, we still do not know if public opinion in one territorial dispute can be influenced by state behavior in another. This is especially crucial considering the role that domestic audiences play in influencing leaders' behavior in territorial dispute negotiations (Fravel, 2008; Wright and Diehl, 2016; Gibler, Hutchison and Miller, 2012; Zhou, Goemans and Weintraub, 2025; Zhou, 2024; Simmons, 1999; Wiegand, Powell and McDowell, 2021; Wiegand, 2011). In this paper, I examine how state behavior in one territorial dispute changes public opinion in other disputes and whether there is a spillover effect of peaceful resolution and violence.

Existing research on territorial disputes has argued that public audiences have entrenches views on territory due to the indivisibility or intangible salience of land (Hensel and Mitchell, 2005; Goddard, 2006; Fang et al., 2022; Toft, 2010), the perceived security ramifications (Pan, Kastner and Pearson, 2023; Zellman, 2020, 2015), or the belief in economic value of disputed land (Tanaka, 2016; Quek and Johnston, 2017; Lee, 2023; Lim and Tanaka, 2022). Furthermore, over time, public opinion becomes harder to change (Hassner, 2006). However, new research on public opinion and foreign policy finds that observing state behavior in one interstate dispute influences public opinion about other interstate disputes (Aksoy, Enamorado and Yang, 2024; Myrick and Wang, 2024). Thus, one way the public could change its beliefs is by learning from other active conflicts. I build on this growing literature to evaluate the spillover effects of peace and violence in territorial disputes on public opinion. Specifically, I contend that citizens can use violent escalations or diplomatic cooperation in one dispute as a heuristic to update their beliefs about other disputes in which their state is actively engaged.

First, I argue that peaceful settlements in one dispute can increase dovish public opinion

in other active disputes. Learning about prior peaceful settlements demonstrates the reliability of negotiating partners (Brewer et al., 2004; Kydd, 2007) and the tangible benefits of a peaceful settlement (Tanaka, 2016; Fang et al., 2022; Zellman, 2015). Domestic audiences use this information to update their attitudes toward other active disputes through the *spillover of trust* or the *spillover of perceived benefits*. A peaceful settlement of one dispute increases generalized trust of other adversaries and the perception of material benefits in future settlements. Thus, both mechanisms can provide pathways for individuals to learn from prior peaceful settlements and increase dovish behavior toward other active territorial disputes.

Second, despite the prevalence of peaceful settlements, the outbreak of violence is common in territorial disputes. Public responses to violence are often punitive and vengeful (Liberman and Skitka, 2017; Dafoe et al., 2022). Violence stokes nationalist narratives of a homeland (Shelef, 2016) and builds public belief in the retaliatory violence as self-defense (Johnson and Toft, 2013). I argue that violence in territorial disputes taps into individual fears about territorial sovereignty and leads to a *spillover of distrust* in public opinion toward any other adversary state. Observing violence makes one anxious about threats from neighboring states and increases the distrust and unfavorable view of them. Accordingly, this distrust increases hawkish public opinion in other active territorial disputes.

I test these arguments about the influence of peaceful settlements and the outbreak of violence by fielding two original experiments in India. First, I embed an experiment in an original pre-registered face-to-face survey (n=2,513) in four Indian states. I inform the respondents of India's 2015 Land Boundary Agreement with Bangladesh to explore the effects of peaceful settlements. After informing respondents of the agreement, I measure their support for peaceful settlements, military action, and compromise in India's other active territorial disputes. Next, I probe the underlying mechanisms of my theory. I present three different framings of the treatment that highlight the economic, security, or homeland benefits of the agreement to evaluate whether learning about benefits in one dispute can influence public perception of other territorial disputes. To measure the change in trust, I ask respondents to indicate how much they trust India's territorial adversaries after receiving the treatment.

In the second study (n=1,113), I leverage a natural experiment[1] that occurred during the fielding of my survey. While interviewing respondents in Delhi, terrorists attacked tourists in Indian Administered Kashmir, a disputed territory with Pakistan. Indian elites were quick to attribute responsibility to Pakistan, and tensions escalated between the countries. I replicated my experiment immediately after the attacks with additional respondents from Delhi. This allowed me to analyze the immediate impact of the outbreak of violence in a dispute on public opinion and assess the spillover effects of violence.

In the first study, I find that the spillover effects of prior peaceful settlements are limited. Indians who are informed about the peaceful resolution of the India-Bangladeshi dispute are more likely to support peaceful settlements and compromise in territorial disputes with any of India's neighbors, but no less likely to support military action. Moreover, this effect is conditional on the *salience* of disputed territories. Respondents who place greater importance on disputed territories are more likely to support a peaceful settlement after being informed of the prior resolution. Unpacking the potential mechanisms behind this result, I show that the peaceful settlement treatment increases trust in neighboring states of Bangladesh and China, but informing respondents of the material benefits of the agreement has no meaningful change. In summary, individuals learn little from prior peaceful settlements.

However, in the second study, I show that the outbreak of violence in a dispute has devastating effects on public opinion. After the attacks in Kashmir, Indians become less supportive of peaceful settlements and compromise with any of India's neighbors, and more likely to support militarized action. While the peaceful settlement generates a moderate increase in public support for peace, this effect is dwarfed by the substantial negative effects of exposure to violence. Predictably, violence in Kashmir exponentially increases the unfavorability and distrust of Pakistan, but it also has extensive spillover effects on India's other neighbors. Together, these findings show that violent outbreaks reverberate within the public and spill over to reduce support for peaceful settlements with any of India's neighbors.

My findings have important ramifications for the literature on territorial disputes and public opinion. Scholars have shown that territorial disputes are on the rise (Charaniya,

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[1]This second study capitalized on violence that occurred during the fielding of the original experiment. Accordingly, this experiment was not pre-registered.

2024; Goemans and Carter, 2025),[2] and public opinion matters for the resolution of these disputes. I show that while the positive effect of peacefully settling disputes is limited, the negative spillover effect of violence is strong. This suggests that domestic constituencies can learn from other disputes, but the learning is asymmetrical. Peaceful resolutions of one dispute do little to buoy dovish attitudes, but the outbreak of violence in one dispute promotes hawkish preferences in others.

Second, existing work has argued that terrorism can have a spoiling effect on peace processes and diplomatic relations (Kydd and Walter, 2002, 2006). In Kashmir, Pakistani-sponsored terrorism has long been an obstacle to dovish Indian foreign policy (Perkovich and Dalton, 2016). Indeed, following the attacks in Kashmir, India expelled Pakistani diplomats and withdrew from the decades-old water-sharing treaty.[3] My results expand the scope conditions of spoiling strategies and provide evidence of their effect on domestic public opinion. Terrorism in Kashmir can spoil peace with Pakistan and damage domestic public opinion toward a peaceful resolution with any of India's neighbors. Finally, territorial disputes in South Asia are some of the most intractable conflicts in the world. These findings contribute to a broader agenda that seeks to unpack domestic public opinion of territorial disputes and prospects for peace (Zhou, 2024; Justwan and Fisher, 2020).

Territorial Disputes and Public Opinion

Scholars of international conflict have long pointed to the importance of domestic constituencies in conflict resolution (e.g. Fearon 1994; Schultz 2001; Putnam 1988). Domestic audiences penalize state leaders who initiate interstate wars or who back down from threats they have previously made (Tomz, 2007; Schultz, 2001). More specifically, the literature on territorial disputes shows that public opinion can deter efforts by leaders to compromise on disputes over territory (Fravel, 2008; Wright and Diehl, 2016; Gibler and Hutchison, 2013; Zhou, Goemans and Weintraub, 2025; Zhou, 2024). Conversely, other work shows the integral

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[2]Countries also have multiple active disputes. For example, India is entangled in disputes with Pakistan, China, and Bangladesh. Syria has outstanding disputes with Israel and Turkey.

[3]Pakistan responded by suspending the Shimla Agreement of 1972, which established the de facto border in Kashmir.

role public opinion plays in supporting the peaceful resolution of disputes (Simmons, 1999; Wiegand, Powell and McDowell, 2021; Wiegand, 2011). For example, in 1998, Ecuador and Peru signed an agreement settling their border dispute after nearly six decades of war. A contributing factor to the timing and feasibility of the settlement was the shift in public attitudes by both Ecuadorians and Peruvians to support the pursuit of an agreement (Simmons, 1999).

Given the importance of domestic constituencies, scholars have examined the determinants of public opinion over territorial disputes. Some scholars argue that the belief in the indivisibility or intangible salience of land drives public opinion on territorial disputes (Hensel and Mitchell, 2005; Goddard, 2006; Fang et al., 2022; Toft, 2010). These findings show that territory is closely linked to national identity and homeland (Goertz and Diehl, 1992; Herb and Kaplan, 1999). Accordingly, territorial disputes pose a direct threat to the perceived homeland, and citizens are more likely to support military action for defense (Johnson and Toft, 2013).

Oftentimes, nationalist organizations use historical narratives of the homeland or organize domestic populations around territorial issues (Fang and Li, 2020; Murphy, 1990) and increase polarization (Balcells, Daniels and Kuo, 2024). In South Korea, civic groups use the Dokdo dispute to drum up nationalist attitudes by highlighting the threat of an expansionist Japan (Wiegand and Choi, 2017). More recently, Cambodian nationalist groups have used ownership of a historical border temple to revive Khmer nationalism and incite violent confrontations with Thai border patrols (Wheeler, 2025).[4] Recent work has shown how citizens are even willing to die for their country over disputed territories (Kim, 2020). In sum, these findings show that the perceived indivisibility of the homeland is an important determinant of public opinion toward territorial disputes.

An emerging strand of work has identified alternative determinants of public opinion on territorial disputes. New experimental studies show that citizens often view territorial disputes through an economic or security lens and moderate their opinions based on the perceived benefits of dispute resolution. In experimental evidence from Japan, Tanaka (2016)

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[4]The Cambodian example provides an informative illustration of how nationalist fever can spill over to violent conflict. At least 12 people have died in violent clashes along the border. *Source:* `https://www.bbc.com/news/live/c98j77zde86t`

shows that citizens who believe that the resolution of disputes has economic benefits are more likely to support their state in finding peaceful solutions. Similarly, Quek and Johnston (2017) show that the economic costs of conflict can decrease Chinese support for military action against Japan. Economic opportunity and interdependence can be powerful motivators for domestic audiences to soften their hawkish attitudes and decrease their support for violent conflict (Kim, 2020; Tanaka, Tago and Gleditsch, 2017; Lim and Tanaka, 2022).[5]

The security ramifications of territorial disputes can also influence public opinion. Pan, Kastner and Pearson (2023) show how Taiwanese citizens are more likely to support peace agreements when China makes security guarantees or sovereignty concessions. Conversely, citizens are hostile toward agreements where Taiwan sacrifices its security infrastructure. This follows work by Zellman (2020, 2015) who contends that territorial issues framed with a security lens are more likely to elicit sympathetic audiences than those framed with symbolic or cultural histories. He shows that when individuals believe that territorial agreements facilitate the defense of their state, they are more inclined to support them.

Overall, these studies show what attributes (i.e. security, economic, or nationalist) of territorial disputes and potential peace agreements shape public attitudes. But while the existing research has focused on how individuals form their ideas over a single conflict, less work has explored how public opinion can spill over *across* multiple conflicts. Disputes can lie dormant for long periods, and yet citizens may still change their beliefs about the feasibility of peaceful settlement or the necessity to use force. One way to update prior attitudes is to transfer beliefs from other active conflicts. For example, Aksoy, Enamorado and Yang (2024) show that Chinese citizens update their views on the use of force against Taiwan after reading news about the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Even though China and Taiwan have not fought a conflict or signed a recent agreement, Chinese citizens shifted their views on the likelihood of a settlement and the need for militarization. Similarly, Myrick and Wang (2024) argue that citizens can learn about the resolve of states by observing international crises and update prior beliefs.

I build on this growing literature to evaluate the spillover effects of peace and violence in public opinion across territorial disputes. Specifically, I argue that individuals who observe

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[5]For an exception, see Lee (2023) on the limits of economic benefits as a means of national mobilization.

state behavior and conflict dynamics in one dispute update their beliefs about peaceful resolution and military action in *other* conflicts. Observing a successful peaceful settlement improves generalized trust in adversary states and reinforces the perception of material benefits from a peaceful settlement. In turn, this fosters dovish attitudes toward future settlement. Conversely, observing violence in a territorial dispute highlights threats toward the homeland and leads citizens to form hawkish views toward dispute resolution. Next, I establish the linkage between territorial disputes and detail how public audiences can use state behavior as a heuristic to influence their beliefs about other active territorial disputes.

Interconnected Territorial Disputes

The recent rise in international conflict and spike in territorial claims allows individuals to learn from existing disputes. Conflict has reached its apex since the end of the Cold War (Beals and Salisbury, 2023)[6] and territorial claims have been a driving factor in this trend (Goemans and Carter, 2025). Specifically, three patterns of territorial disputes bolster individual ability to learn from these disputes and update their beliefs. First, these disputes are often located in regional hot spots (Braithwaite, 2016). Individuals who are proximate to one dispute are more likely to be near another. Moreover, conflicts that are geographically concentrated share similar characteristics and are more salient to regional constituencies. The similarity of conflict characteristics helps facilitate the ability for individuals to compare state behavior across territorial disputes. Therefore, activity in a territorial dispute, whether violence or peaceful negotiation, can more likely influence public opinion in other disputes.

Second, states are often embroiled in several territorial disputes at once. From 1816 to 2001, states had an average of 3.18 active territorial disputes a year (Frederick, Hensel and Macaulay, 2017). States that struggle with territorial integrity do so on multiple borders with several adversaries. This provides diverse dispute cases for citizens to observe state behavior and learn about the costs and benefits of peace or violence.

Finally, state behavior in territorial disputes is heterogeneous. Sometimes states pursue peaceful negotiation, while other times choose to escalate claims to military conflict (Fravel,

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[6]Conflict datasets such as ACLED and UCDP have documented this trend.

2008; Huth, Croco and Appel, 2011; Wiegand, 2011). This mixed strategy creates variation in the levels of violence and peaceful settlement in active territorial disputes. 40% of all territorial disputes involved at least one dyadic militarized conflict, and 30% have involved at least one attempt at peaceful settlement.[7] An estimated 15% of claims have had both. Thus, the variation in state behavior provides opportunities for citizens to observe and learn from activity in territorial disputes.

Research has shown that individuals tend to have little knowledge about foreign affairs. The salience of international issues varies, and information is unevenly distributed among the public. Therefore, voters can often take cues from elites (Saunders, 2022), peers (Kertzer and Zeitzoff, 2017), the news, or their moral values (Kertzer et al., 2014). I argue that citizens can also take cues from activity in a territorial dispute to form views toward other active disputes. Peaceful settlements or violent events serve as a heuristic to learn about potential adversaries and the process of conflict resolution. Learning that an adversary is trustworthy in one dispute can increase general trust in international actors (Brewer et al., 2004), which, in turn, boosts confidence in negotiating with another adversary. Similarly, observing a conflict resolution can demonstrate the costs and benefits of resolution and signal to citizens that future conflicts might conclude similarly. In turn, this informs their broader beliefs about territorial disputes.

However, I expect this argument to hold under the following conditions. First, knowledge will only transfer across territorial disputes. Given the similarity of issues, it is likely that the citizens can learn about the value of land or the costs of compromise in one dispute and form beliefs about another. Transferring across types of disputes (i.e., trade disputes, civil conflicts, or immigration concerns) is unlikely given the unique role territory plays in national security issues.

Second, there must be some variation in the state behavior in disputes. For citizens to change their beliefs about peaceful settlement or violent escalation, there must be a reasonable expectation that adversary states would engage in that behavior. Public audiences cannot expect territorial disputes without any history of peaceful cooperation or violent

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[7]These numbers are likely conservative estimates given that data on militarized disputes is not available after 2001 (Frederick, Hensel and Macaulay, 2017), and data on peaceful settlement attempts is not available before 1945 (Wiegand and Powell, 2011).

escalation to produce those outcomes in the future. Therefore, a dispute should have some variation in peace and violence to facilitate the transfer of beliefs across conflicts. In sum, I expect citizens to update their beliefs about comparable conflicts with a history of peace and violence. In the following section, I outline the mechanisms through which public audiences learn from peaceful settlements or violent escalations.

Learning from Peace

The literature on war termination and international arbitration has pointed to the possibility of learning from prior settlements. In civil wars, peace agreements can positively influence the probability of peace in future conflicts by mitigating the commitment problem and signaling a reputation as a trustworthy actor (Joshi and Quinn, 2016; Quinn, Joshi and Melander, 2019). Similarly, in international disputes, states can use prior agreements and conciliatory gestures to boost their credibility and reputation as a reliable partner (Kydd, 2007; Mattes, 2018; Allee and Huth, 2006; Wiegand and Powell, 2003). A successful settlement can help prove the viability of future agreements by establishing friendly intent. For example, in 2020, Israel signed the historic Abraham Accords with the United Arab Emirates to normalize diplomatic relations. After praising the deal's merits, Bahrain signed a similar agreement a month later, specifically citing the treaty with the UAE as a motivating factor.[8]

I argue that these spillover effects can also apply to domestic populations. Similar to states or rebel groups, prior resolutions can establish negotiating partners as trustworthy and demonstrate the material benefits of peace. Consequently, this increases public support for peaceful settlement more broadly and dampens support for military action. Prior work has shown how individuals can learn from international disputes and update their attitudes across conflicts (Aksoy, Enamorado and Yang, 2024; Myrick and Wang, 2024). I build on these findings by arguing that the peaceful settlement of one territorial dispute can shape public opinion in other active territorial disputes. I posit that this dynamic can occur through two main channels: *spillover of trust* or *spillover of perceived benefits*.

First, peaceful settlements can generate a spillover of perceived benefits from conflict

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[8]https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/9/12/bahrain-follows-uae-to-normalise-ties-with-israel

resolution. Existing studies on the public opinion of territorial disputes argue that individuals respond to perceived benefits of international territorial agreements (Zellman, 2015; Zhou, Goemans and Weintraub, 2025). Highlighting economic benefits (Tanaka, 2016; Kim, 2020; Tanaka, Tago and Gleditsch, 2017) and salient national security threats (Zellman, 2020), or countering nationalist stories about threats to the homeland (Goddard, 2006; Fang et al., 2022; Fang and Li, 2020; Kim, 2020) changes the public's attitude toward military action.

But understanding the benefits of peaceful settlements is difficult without concrete examples. Prior settlements are one such example that highlight the benefits of agreements and point to the potential of future agreements providing similar benefits. After the settlement of a territorial dispute with one country, citizens can learn about the possibility of economic, security, or nationalist benefits of peaceful settlements in a realistic setting. This shifts the conceptualization of benefits from a vague, abstract concept to an observable fact. Public audiences can use prior settlements, then, to update their prior beliefs about the benefits of peaceful settlement and improve their perception of benefits from future resolution. Specifically, I contend that information on the benefits of dispute resolution can increase public support for future settlements.

Second, peaceful settlements can increase trust in adversary states, which leads to an increase in dovish public opinion. Prior work suggests that public audiences can use trust as a heuristic to develop their beliefs about foreign affairs. Trust can influence attitudes toward isolationism or intervention (Hetherington and Husser, 2012) and support for foreign aid (Macdonald, 2025). As it pertains to territorial disputes, more recent work shows that high-trusting individuals are more likely to view an adversary state as a good-faith actor and consider their claims as legitimate (Justwan and Fisher, 2020). These findings build on work by Brewer et al. (2004) who argue that public support for international negotiations or peace agreements in foreign affairs is conditional on the collective belief that adversarial states will behave fairly and in good faith. This concept, referred to as generalized international trust, dictates the willingness of citizens to believe that any foreign actor is genuine. They show how citizens with high generalized international trust are more likely to trust individual state actors.

I build on these findings and posit that demonstrating an adversary's trustworthiness in

a prior peace agreement can build generalized international trust. Successfully negotiating a peace agreement improves public confidence in the motives of an adversary state and increases international trust in peace negotiations and diplomacy. Positive and productive negotiations create the perception of a collaborative international environment wherein states can work together to peacefully resolve disputes. Indeed Brewer et al. (2004) write that *"experiencing a benign international environment may foster international trust"*. Peaceful settlements can contribute to building a benign, or rather, positive international environment to facilitate international trust. In turn, this international trust produces a stronger public belief that foreign adversaries will act in good faith.[9] I refer to this as the *spillover of trust* mechanism. Belief in the sincerity of one country leads to high international trust, which generates public trust in other states. Thus, I argue that prior peaceful settlements will boost public support for peaceful settlements in territorial disputes more broadly.

Both mechanisms provide pathways through which domestic constituencies can update their prior beliefs. I argue that prior peaceful settlements can act as a heuristic for individuals to learn about the benefits of peace and the trustworthiness of neighboring states. In this way, the peaceful settlement of a territorial dispute can shape public opinion over other disputes and bolster dovish attitudes.

Learning from Violence

While many territorial disputes are resolved peacefully, violence is still common. An extensive literature has linked territorial disputes to war (Huth, 1996; Vasquez, 1993; Holsti, 1991; Diehl and Goertz, 2001). However, lower levels of violence, such as militarized disputes (Gibler, 2017) and non-state violence (Carter, Kaplan and Schultz, 2022; Ghatak and Karakaya, 2021), are also common occurrences. Accordingly, it is worthwhile to examine the effect of territorial violence on public opinion and whether it shapes views towards other disputes. I argue that violence in territorial disputes diminishes trust in neighboring states, which, in turn, decreases support for peaceful settlement and increases support for military action.

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[9]Specifically Brewer et al. (2004) find that high international trust leads to a greater probability of seeing adversaries are "more friendly" and "less threatening".

It is well-documented that violence can cultivate hawkish and vengeful public opinion. Driven by anger over violence, domestic audiences often support retaliatory and punitive actions by their government to punish perpetrators of violence (Wayne, 2023). Even if the target is not responsible for the violence, displaced aggression can lead to public support for revenge (Liberman and Skitka, 2017). Indeed, the public's sensitivity to violence and security threats can foster support for military action against rival states in a crisis (Clary, Lalwani and Siddiqui, 2021; Dafoe et al., 2022). But the unique role that territory plays in national identity (Cederman, 2024) can exacerbate public reactions to violence in territorial disputes more specifically.

Territory is inextricably linked to the idea of a homeland (Vasquez, 1993). Domestic populations rely on a clearly defined territorial unit coupled with a historical narrative about that land to construct national identity (Herb and Kaplan, 1999; Murphy, 2002). Violence in disputed territories challenges this national identity and anchors public support for self-defense in the need to protect the homeland (Johnson and Toft, 2013). In examining the role of homelands in conflict, Shelef (2016) argues that the *"premium nationalism places on controlling a specific territory makes "homelands" much more salient for international conflict"*. Territory is paramount to a national homeland, and thus, violence in disputed territories is an attack on the homeland.[10]

I argue that violence in territorial disputes can also influence public opinion toward other active disputes by tapping into nationalist sentiment (Wiegand and Choi, 2017) and consolidating public opinion against rival states (Igarashi, 2018). Prior work has demonstrated how violence can buoy national identification (Gibler, Hutchison and Miller, 2012) and cultivate prejudice (Tir and Singh, 2015; Nair and Sambanis, 2019) or distrust of any out-group members (Hadzic, Carlson and Tavits, 2020). I build on these findings and contend that this distrust of an adversary in one dispute leads to distrust of adversaries in other territorial disputes. Observing territorial violence draws out broader fears about national sovereignty and the survival of the homeland. Fears about future potential violence spike distrust of any ad-

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[10]For example, in 2023, Armenian foreign minister Ararat Mirzoyan delivered a speech to the UN Security Council where he argued that the attacks in Nagorno-Karabakh by neighboring Azerbaijan were motivated by *"the aim of bringing down the will and ability of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh to resist and maintain their lives and livelihood in their ancestral homeland"*

versary that challenges territorial integrity. Thus, the public becomes increasingly distrustful of adversary states that are disputing their country's borders. I refer to this as the *spillover of distrust* mechanism. Independent of their involvement in the violence, individuals will view adversaries in active territorial disputes as more hostile and distrusting.

Ultimately, the spillover of distrust leads to skepticism of neighboring states as reliable negotiating partners and damages public belief that peace is a viable path for resolution. I argued previously that trust and perception of peaceful settlements help buoy dovish public attitudes. Conversely, distrust and fear of neighboring states will strengthen more hawkish behaviors from individuals. Parochial views of neighboring states due to the fear of potential violence legitimized the use of force in active territorial disputes. Even in cases where the neighboring state was not responsible for the violence, individuals might be more supportive of preemptive military action to mitigate future conflict. Thus, violence in disputed territory can have a spillover effect on public opinion toward any territorial dispute more broadly.

In sum, I argue that individuals can use violent escalations or peaceful settlements in one dispute as a heuristic to update their beliefs about future territorial disputes. Prior peaceful settlements increase perceptions of tangible benefits and trust in neighboring states. Thus, this increases more dovish attitudes toward future disputes. Conversely, the onset of violence increases distrust of adversary states and intensifies hawkish public opinion

Case Context

I test my theory about the spillover effects of peace and violence in territorial disputes in the context of India. Since India's independence in 1947, the country has been plagued by territorial disputes with its neighbors. The pre-colonial boundaries overlaid with the British colonial project have left states with competing ideas of territory and borders (Chester, 2017; Chatterji, 2002). India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh have had 10 different territorial claims since the countries' inception, leading to 4 wars between India and Pakistan. This does not include the litany of militarized disputes, skirmishes, and non-state violence throughout this period. Similarly, India and China have had an additional six territorial disputes, one of which led to the Sino-Indian War in 1962. Most recently, India and China clashed over their

disputed border in 2022,[11]just two years after their last deadly conflict.

Figure 1: Disputed Areas in South Asia
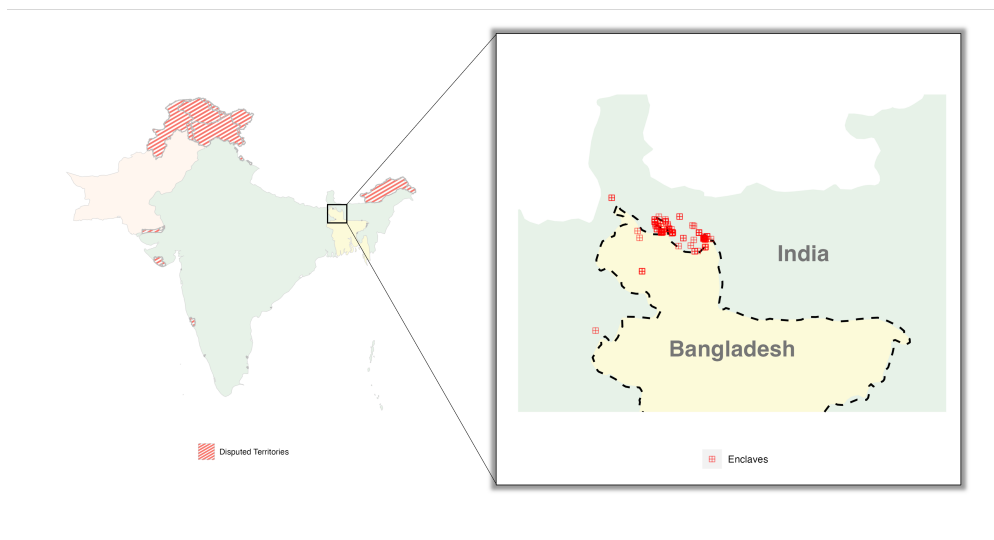
Despite being plagued by bouts of violence and hostility, India has also benefited from cooperation and peace with its neighbors. During periods of power consolidation by the executive or autocratic incursions, India and Pakistan negotiated extensive agreements to temper hostilities on territorial issues like Kashmir (Clary, 2022). Landmark agreements like the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 or the Shimla Agreement of 1972 have provided consistent peaceful cooperation between the two states for decades (Malik, 2019).[12] India has also made inroads in peace agreements and the settlement of disputes with China. Despite two skirmishes along its border since 2020, India and China reached a deal in 2024 to cease hostilities along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and give both countries respite from the fighting.[13] These agreements build on larger cooperation over territorial claims and border disputes between neighboring states. For example, China has been able to cooperate with the neighboring states of Nepal, Myanmar, and Pakistan to settle colonial-era disputes (Fravel, 2008).

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[11]https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/12/another-clash-india-china-border-underscor es-risks-militarization

[12]Both treaties were suspended by at least one party following the exchange of missiles and border skirmishes in May 2025.

[13]https://www.stimson.org/2024/india-china-disengagement-bilateral-and-regional-implica tions/

Public opinion in India is diverse concerning territorial disputes and neighboring states. A vast literature has studied the historical rivalry between India and Pakistan (Ganguly, 2002; Paul, 2006; Cohen, 2004; Clary, 2022) and the anxiety over Pakistan as a constant threat (Narang and Staniland, 2018). While traditional military confrontation remains a concern, the consistent fear has largely coalesced around the threat of state-sponsored terrorism in Kashmir and the Indian mainland (Perkovich and Dalton, 2016). However, the lack of consistent survey data makes studying Indian public opinion more challenging. Limited annual surveys from the Pew Research Center show that Indians don't view Pakistanis favorably, but do support peace negotiations to ease tensions in the region. However, recent work on the electoral cost of compromise in Kashmir finds that Indians are unwilling to compromise on the Kashmiri issue (Zhou, 2024).

Views on China oscillate more, but historical wars and regional power dynamics still drive the largely negative view (Milliff and Staniland, 2022). Recently, skirmishes in 2020 and 2022 have highlighted the regional threat of China and its status as a regional power. Scholars have noted India's underbalancing of China (Clary, 2025), and recent surveys of the Indian public confirm concerns over deterrence capability and military posturing (Saxena, Kewalramani and Kumar, 2024). Indeed, Indian respondents continue to identify border disputes with China as their primary concern in the strained relationship.

Figure 2: Indian Public Opinion of Pakistan
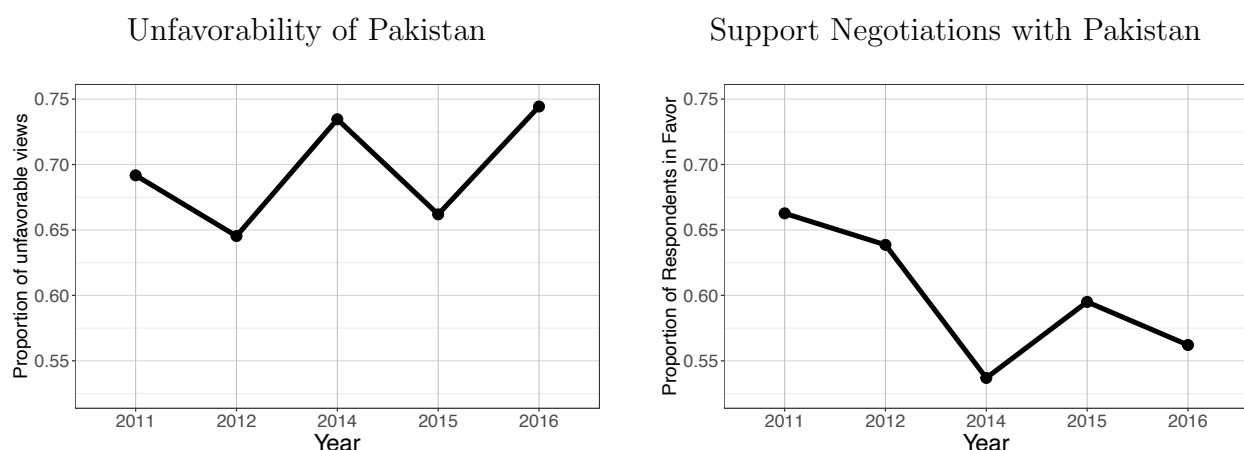
Note: Data comes from PEW Research annual surveys. Data is not available for 2013.

Finally, Bangladesh is one of India's neighbors that doesn't have an active rivalry with

the state, yet public opinion toward the country is still variable. The historical migration of Bangladeshi Muslims is subject to controversial politics in India (Shamshad, 2017) and was the focal point of the recent Citizenship Amendment Act in 2019.[14] Negative sentiments continue to fester over the issue of border demarcation and the control of border regions. In 2001, tensions built into an open conflict between India and Bangladesh, where 21 people were killed until a ceasefire was negotiated.[15]

In this context, it is noteworthy that India and Bangladesh were able to agree to settle their disputed border peacefully in 2015. A collection of 162 territorial enclaves that had plagued the two states since their independence were exchanged to restore territorial integrity to the border.[16] Individuals living in enclaves were given the choice of citizenship to ease their transition. This landmark agreement was a culmination of decades of negotiation and represented a cooperation between two nations with a shaky history in border diplomacy.[17] Figure 1 shows the location of the enclaves relative to the border.

This land boundary agreement has helped shift the attitudes of Indian and Bangladeshi elites toward other active disputes around water rights and maritime boundaries. During the signing of the treaty, Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India remarked that in this bill, both states have *"...shown political resolve and mutual goodwill with the Land Boundary Agreement. I am confident that with the support of state governments in India, we can reach a fair solution on the Teesta and Feni rivers. We should also work together to renew and clean our rivers."*[18] This suggests that Indian officials view the Land Boundary Agreement as a potential stepping stone for additional negotiations with Bangladesh on outstanding territorial disputes.

I use the Land Boundary Agreement of 2015 to prime respondents with an example of a peaceful settlement in territorial disputes and measure the spillover effects. I designed a

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[14]https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/03/india-citizenship-amendment-act-is-a-blow-to-indian-constitutional-values-and-international-standards/

[15]https://www.nytimes.com/2001/04/26/world/16-indian-soldiers-are-victims-in-bangladesh-border-skirmish.html

[16]See (Van Schendel, 2002) for a history of the disputed enclaves. For ethnographic investigations into citizenship and national identity, see Cons (2016) and Ghosh (2023).

[17]https://www.brookings.edu/articles/sambandh-blog-india-and-bangladesh-exchanging-border-enclaves-re-connecting-with-new-citizens/

[18]https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/India-Bangladesh-ratify-historic-land-deal-Narendra-Modi-announces-new-2-billion-line-of-credit-to-Dhaka/articleshow/47567164.cms

treatment vignette that captures the key payoffs of the agreement to test how respondents update their prior beliefs about territorial disputes. Given the volatility of the Bangladeshi border, this agreement serves as a unique test case of how Indians respond to peace in a long-standing dispute. Moreover, the agreement is well-suited to test the spillover effects of peace to India's neighbors for a few reasons.

First, both Bangladesh and Pakistan are Muslim majority countries. Though scholars have contested the merits of framing conflict in South Asia as religious, to the extent that it permeates collective public opinion, this case can help build collective trust for negotiating with another Muslim country (i.e. Pakistan). Second, the 2015 agreement represented a resolution of a partition-era dispute. Many disputes in South Asia are entrenched from the colonial period. By highlighting the history of the dispute, respondents can make comparisons to the colonial history of the India-Pakistan (Radcliffe) border and the India-China border (McMahon Line). Finally, the resolution came with impactful, yet reasonable benefits for both countries. Both countries increased cross-border investments, cooperated on border security, and addressed issues of citizenship. These are issues that India has previously cooperated with China and Pakistan on, making them reasonable expectations in future agreements with both states.

Study I : Spillover Effects of Peace

Research Design

In the first study, I aim to test the spillover effects of peaceful settlements in territorial disputes. I embedded an experiment in a pre-registered face-to-face survey with 2,513 respondents in India.[19] The Delhi-based research firm Quest Research and Development administered the survey from March 2025 to May 2025. I opt for a face-to-face survey to better communicate the treatment vignette and reach border populations in India that are difficult to reach over the phone. However, given the cost of in-person surveys, geographic variability is limited, and enumerators can often only visit locations once. This can sometimes lead to

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[19]The experiment was pre-registered on the Open Science Framework: https://osf.io/fnbvw and approved by the Institutional Review Board (202406058).

demographic imbalances in the sample due to the availability of respondents and local conditions. I opted to field the survey in the three states of Karnataka, Gujarat, West Bengal, and the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi. These locations were chosen for their demographic, geographic, and political variability.

First, Gujarat and West Bengal represent respondents living in border states with a history of contested territories with India's neighbors (Pakistan and Bangladesh, respectively), while respondents in Karnataka and Delhi do not live close to international borders. Second, the selected territories vary in terms of state politics. While Gujarati politics is dominated by the BJP, West Bengal has never elected a BJP majority, and Karnataka is a battleground for the party. Delhi is the political capital of India. Finally, the states vary in their religious and linguistic makeup. Muslims make up an estimated 27% of the population in West Bengal, 13% in Delhi and Katakana, and 10% in Gujarat. While Hindi dominates Delhi politics, West Bengal, Gujarat, and Karnataka have developed distinct regional identities around local languages. The survey is administered in Gujarati, Kannada, and Bengali to accommodate these differences.

In Delhi, enumerators traveled to four neighborhoods in the city[20] and in Karnataka, six cities were selected.[21] The full sample from Gujarat was taken from the border district of Kachchh. Individuals living here have a closer relationship with border conflicts and territorial disputes, and I expect the treatment vignette to be more salient to them. Finally, in West Bengal, I sampled respondents from 3 districts: Cooch Behar, Kolkata, and Malda. Cooch Behar is the district where the majority of disputed enclaves were located. Respondents here have an intimate relationship with territorial disputes and the treatment case. Malda district is also along the border with demographics that match the broader state. Kolkata district is one of the largest in India and a metropolitan hub of the country. It does not border Bangladesh and provides a comparative sample. Figure 3 maps these locations.

In each location, enumerators traveled to the city center to begin the survey. After selecting the first house, they skipped the subsequent 10 homes before knocking on the next door. If the respondent who answered the door was 18, they were asked to participate. Only

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[20]Respondents were sampled from Ashok Nagar, Karawal Nagar, Meet Nagar, and Samay Pur Badli
[21]Respondents were selected from Bijapur, Bellary, Chamarajanagar, Hassan, Mysore, and Bangalore.

Figure 3: Map of Sampling Strategy
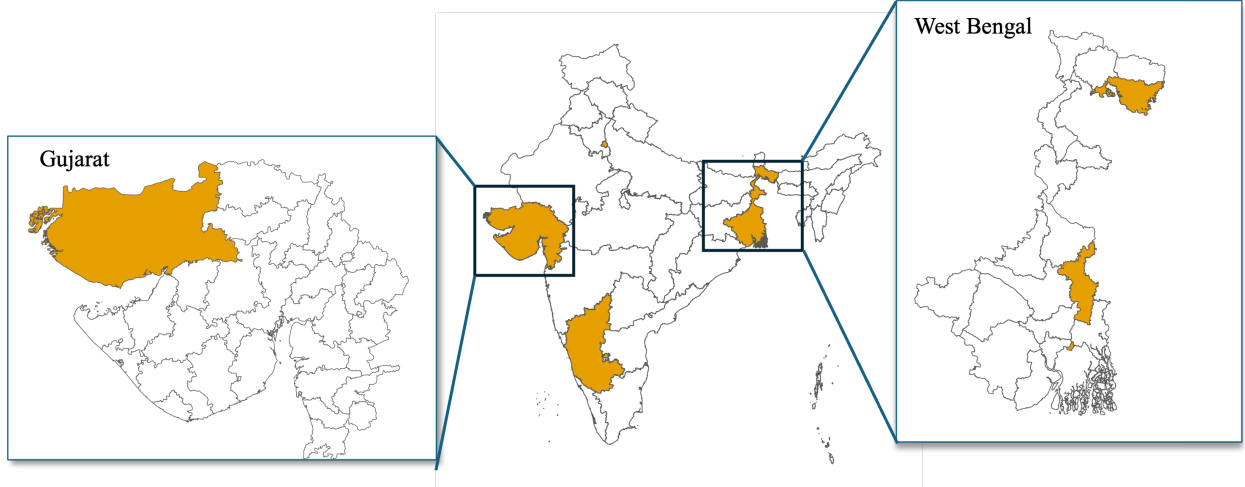
one respondent from each house was interviewed. I sampled roughly 500 participants from the states of Gujarat, Karnataka, and Delhi.[22] Given that my experiment focuses on a settled dispute between India and Bangladesh, I expect that individuals living along the India-Bangladesh border might display a localized effect. Therefore, I oversampled respondents from West Bengal and recruited 1,017 to ensure an adequate sample size to detect a localized effect. This brings the total sample size to 2,513. Summary statistics and balancing tables for the sample are available in Appendix A.

Treatment Design

In each case, the enumerator reads a short treatment vignette to each participant to provide them with information about the recent peaceful territorial dispute resolution between India and Bangladesh. Respondents are randomly sorted into one of five groups. The first group is a blank control that receives no vignette. The second group read the following paragraph about the settled dispute:

Treatment Vignette:

The border between India and Muslim-majority Bangladesh has been poorly defined since both countries' independence. Recently, the Indian and Bangladeshi Governments signed a treaty to peacefully resolve the dispute. This settlement resolved a 70-year-old dispute

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[22]The exact sample sizes from Gujarat, Karnataka, and Delhi were 501, 500, and 505, respectively.

between the states. The Prime Ministers of both countries praised the compromise. They emphasized that it could lead to more cooperation in future disputes with other countries.

The vignette provides some basic information about the settled dispute and identifies the time frame of the dispute to highlight its length and entrenchment. I make specific callouts to the religious makeup of Bangladesh (Muslim-majority) to help draw the similarity between two of India's adversary states: Bangladesh and Pakistan.[23]

To examine the first mechanism, *spillover of perceived benefits*, the remaining three treatment groups were informed of specific benefits of the agreement in addition to the information above. I theorized that reminding citizens of the economic, security, or nationalist benefits of peaceful resolutions can help conceptualize the tangible benefits and drive support for peaceful settlement. To draw out the effect of the mechanism, each group was shown one of the economic, security, or nationalist benefits of the agreement that maps to one of the benefits. Table 1 shows the benefits that respondents were informed about. All the additional information included is factual and based on verifiable news sources and public statements. I expect that if there is a spillover of perceived benefits, the treatment vignette with additional information will be more effective at increasing public support for peaceful settlement than the general treatment vignette.

Outcome Variables

I argued that peace and conflict dynamics in one territorial dispute can shape public attitudes toward other active disputes. To measure public opinion, I ask respondents three separate questions about their support for peace, militarization, and compromise in future disputes. First, each respondent answered whether India should peacefully resolve a dispute with any country. Respondents were read a statement and indicated their level of agreement using a 5-point Likert scale.[24] Second, respondents are asked if they would support India proposing

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[23]I pilot tested the treatment with a small online sample before fielding the experiment to ensure the effectiveness of the treatment.

[24]5-point scales are standard practice in this strand of experimental research (Aksoy, Enamorado and Yang, 2024; Fisher and Justwan, 2020). I opt not to recode the outcomes into a binary scale, given that there is no bimodal distribution across the responses.

Table 1: Treatment Conditions

Treatment	Information
Economic Benefits	*The deal was accompanied by a series of economic agreements that invested more than Rs. 40000 crore into joint electric infrastructure. This was in addition to the establishment of a new joint economic zone to increase trade between the two nations.*
Security Benefits	*Resolving border disputes prevents terrorism and wars. Thus, both governments are optimistic that this agreement will improve border security and prevent future conflict.*
Nationalist Benefits	*Despite previous concerns that India's land could not be divided, the land was distributed between the two states without damaging the homeland. Indians and Bangladeshis were free to choose which country they would have citizenship in.*

a compromise with any country over one of its active territorial disputes. This outcome tests a higher threshold of support by questioning if individuals would support concessions from their state. Finally, I ask respondents whether they believe India should use military action to settle any of its active disputes. I use these three outcomes to measure the change in public opinion after observing peace or conflict in disputes.

Recent work in IR has shown that asking respondents general questions can induce ambiguity about the context (Suong, Desposato and Gartzke, 2023). Individuals often consider different countries or conflicts when answering vague questions that don't name specific cases. For each dependent variable described above, I ask whether respondents would support peaceful settlements, compromise, or militarization in an active dispute with "any country". Then, to address concerns about ambiguity, I replicate the question using either Bangladesh, Pakistan, or China. I use these three countries, given that they have active disputes with India. Pakistan and China are two of India's military rivals, while Bangladesh is the same country as the treatment vignette. This provides a more specific test of the vignette's effects. Finally, to explore the *spillover of trust* mechanism, respondents were asked if they trusted any of the potential negotiating partners. This measures the change in international trust and the ability to learn from peaceful settlements.

All respondents were asked a series of demographic questions to balance the sample.[25] I

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[25]These tables are available in Appendix A.

also asked respondents to indicate their level of concern with border disputes and whether they considered any of India's active disputes to be important. Manekin, Grossman and Mitts (2019) argue that the salience of territory to an individual can determine their preferences toward disputed territories. These pre-treatment measures of border salience help evaluate its moderating effect.

Results

I begin by pooling my treatment conditions to estimate the spillover effect of peaceful settlements on public opinion. I coded respondents who received either of the vignettes as treated and the remainder as control. I use a series of OLS models with robust standard errors to estimate the treatment effect on each outcome. Each model includes a vector of controls, x_i, for any unbalanced demographic and pre-treatment characteristics. Additionally, I include state-level fixed effects to account for the regional variation in Indian politics. This yields the following model:

$$\text{Response}_i = \beta_1 \text{Treatment}_i + \beta_2 x_i + \gamma \text{State Fixed Effects} + u_i \tag{1}$$

The estimated quantity of interest is β_1, the treatment effect on the response. In Figure 4, I summarize the main results in a series of coefficient plots. In panel (a), I illustrate how the peaceful settlement of a dispute can influence public attitudes toward disputes with other countries. First, I measure the change in opinion toward any country. The remaining outcomes measure change in opinion toward a specific neighbor. In each case, I find no evidence that public opinion meaningfully changes. After learning about a prior agreement, individuals do not update their opinion on future peaceful settlements with any country. For Bangladesh, I find a small effect that individuals improve their support for future settlements with Bangladesh, but this coefficient is statistically insignificant. There is some evidence of a spillover effect indicated by the small increase in support for a settlement with Pakistan. But, again, this is not significant.

Figure 4: Effect of Pooled Treatment on Public Opinion
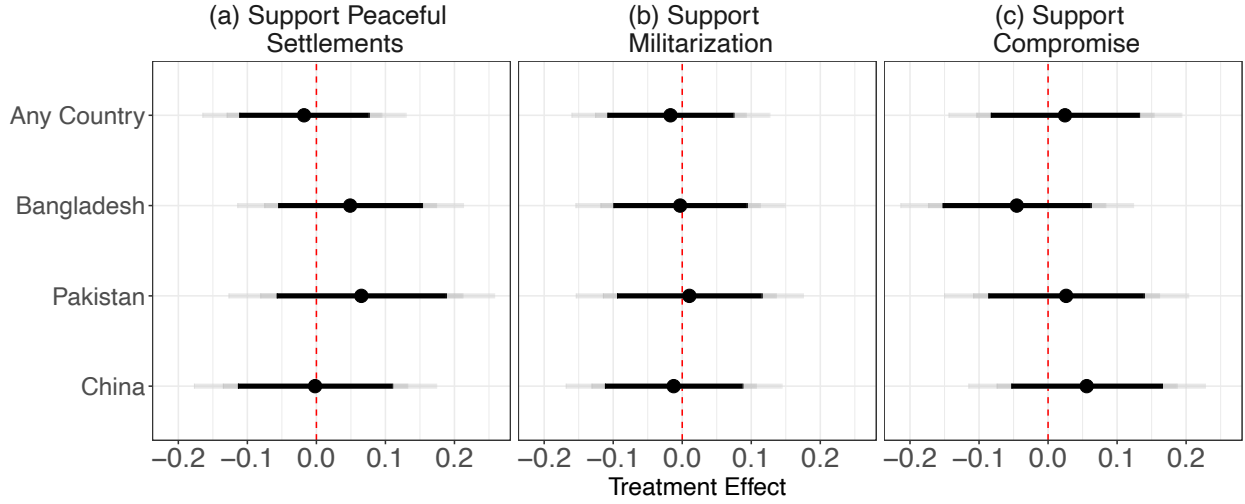
In panel (b), I estimate the effect on support for military action. Across the board, I find a null effect on support for military action.[26] I hypothesized that by learning about a peaceful resolution, respondents would be less likely to support the militarization of other claims. However, in Figure 4 I show that it is not the case. Priming respondents appears to have no change in their support for military action. In panel (c), I show no treatment effect for support for compromise in territorial disputes. When asked about future compromises with Bangladesh, respondents appear to *decrease* their support for compromises after being read the treatment. However, this coefficient is not significant.

Overall, these results suggest that public support for peaceful settlement, military action, or compromise does not change after learning about prior settlements. But while the null effect is consistent across various outcomes and partner countries, there might be variation in the type of respondent. I argued that peaceful settlements can act as a heuristic for individuals to learn about territorial dispute settlement. Accordingly, an individual's ability and willingness to learn could be conditional on their knowledge of or their attachment to disputed territories. For example, we know from prior work that the salience of land can shape policy preferences and behavior (Manekin, Grossman and Mitts, 2019; Kim, 2020).

On one hand, we might expect that respondents for whom disputed territories are more

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[26]In Appendix B.1 I show that baseline support for military action is high. Therefore, it is unlikely that there is a ceiling effect and likely that the treatment is ineffective at reducing support for military action.

salient could have more well-developed preferences. This makes it more difficult to induce shifts in support for peaceful settlement with the treatment vignette. On the other hand, respondents could learn new information from a prior peaceful settlement that challenges pre-existing beliefs. Thus, we might expect to see a greater shift in support amongst these individuals. Conversely, individuals for whom disputed territories are less salient might have incomplete information about India's disputes. This lack of information could facilitate easier learning or signal that respondents are apathetic about territorial disputes. I examine these competing expectations by measuring how prior peaceful settlements in territorial disputes affect public opinion, conditional on the *salience* of disputed territories.[27]

To explore this further, I construct a novel measure of dispute salience amongst the respondents. Before administering the treatment, I asked respondents to indicate whether each of India's six active territorial disputes is important to them.[28] I create a simple index ranging from one to six to measure how many disputed territories were important to each respondent. This provides a proximate estimate for the salience of India's disputes.[29] An estimated 80% of the sample indicated at least one disputed territory was important to them, and the average number of important territories was 2.85, and the median response was 3. To ease interpretation, I collapse the index into a binary variable for respondents who indicated a salience level above or below the median. I code respondents who selected fewer than three disputes as *low salience* individuals and those who selected three or more disputes as *high salience* individuals.[30]

In Figure 5, I use an interaction term to estimate the heterogeneous effect of the vignette given the binary measure of disputed territory salience to each respondent. I produce probability plots to show the predicted responses of respondents conditional on the importance of disputed territories. Respondents who indicated *high salience* are reported in yellow, and

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[27]It is important to note these hypotheses were not pre-registered and should be interpreted as exploratory.

[28]Respondents were asked to select which disputes were important from a list of six active disputes: Kashmir, Sir Creek River Boundary, Junagadh District, Siachen Glacier, Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh. They were also allowed to say "none" if they felt neither of them was important.

[29]In Appendix I.4.2 I replicate this index but weight the territories by the proportion of respondents who indicated it was important. This helps balance the high importance of Kashmir relative to India's lesser-known disputes. The results are robust to this specification.

[30]Appendix I.4.1 replicated these results with the continuous measure of dispute salience. My results are robust to both specifications.

respondents who indicated *low salience* are reported in green. The full tables for these results are available in Appendix I.4.

In panel (a), I first estimate the treatment effect on public opinion toward peaceful settlements. Here, I find a statistically and substantively significant effect of the treatment effect conditional on the importance of dispute territories. Respondents who placed a higher importance on disputed territories are more likely to support the peaceful settlement of future disputes after receiving the treatment. When naming Bangladesh as a partner, *high salience* respondents change their response on a five-point Likert scale by .313 (p < .01) after receiving the treatment. More importantly, the positive treatment effect spills over into other neighboring states. The comparable effect is .261 for China (p < .1) and .360 for Pakistan (p < .1).

Figure 5: Effect of Treatment on Public Opinion by Dispute Salience
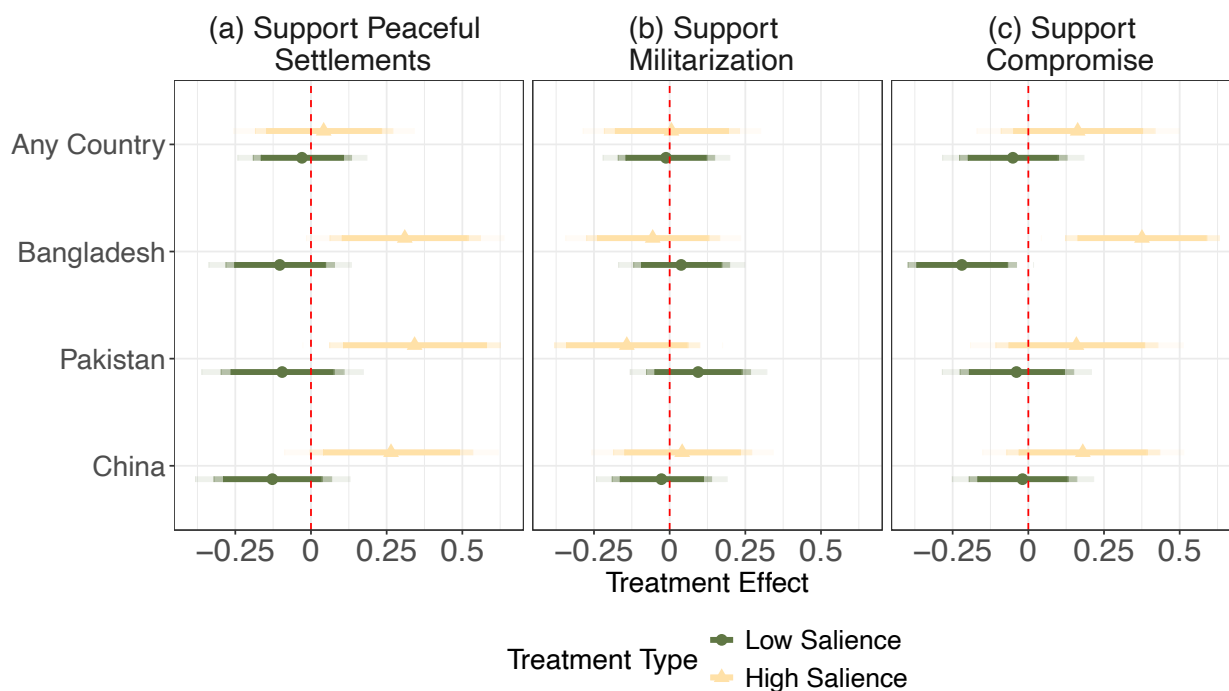
Note: 90 % confidence intervals are down in dark green and yellow. 95 % and 99 % are represented by lighter shades.

Peaceful settlements with Bangladesh cultivated a positive and supportive public opinion toward settling other disputes with India's rival neighbors. This compares to a null effect on respondents who indicated *low salience* of disputes. These results suggest that as respondents

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report increased importance of disputed territories, the treatment vignette is more likely to improve their attitudes toward peaceful settlements. However, In panel (b), I find no effect of the vignette on reducing support for military action, conditional on dispute salience. The treatment appears to reduce support for militarization amongst *high salience* respondents; however, this effect is not statistically significant in any case. Pakistan shows the highest tempering effect (0.145), but again, the coefficient is imprecisely estimated.

Finally, panel (c) measures the support for pursuing compromises in territorial disputes. Here, I find mixed results for the treatment. When asked about pursuing an additional compromise with Bangladesh, treated respondents are significantly more likely to support a compromise, conditional on finding disputed territories important. *High salience* Respondents change their support for compromise by 0.368 (p < .01) after receiving the treatment. However, I do not find any evidence of a spillover effect. When China or Pakistan is named as the potential partner, the treatment modestly increased support among *high salience* respondents, but the coefficients are not statistically significant. While respondents might update their priors about future compromises with Bangladesh, they do not apply these beliefs to potential compromises with other states.

Overall, these results provide limited support for my argument. Prior peaceful settlements can influence public opinion toward future territorial dispute settlement under limited conditions. The treatment vignette is effective at cultivating support for peaceful settlements only among high salience respondents. However, it is ineffective at tempering support for military action. These mixed results suggest that the spillover effects of peaceful settlements in public opinion are minimal.

Mechanisms

Next, I turn to the mechanisms that are driving this effect. I argued that the public can learn from prior peaceful settlements through the *spillover of perceived benefits* or the *spillover of trust*. Individuals might learn of the broader material benefits of settling a dispute or view adversary states more favorably. Below, I examine the plausibility of either pathway.

Spillover of Perceived Benefits

To probe whether learning about benefits can increase dovish attitudes, I designed various treatment vignettes that contain additional information about the benefits of the land boundary agreement. In Figure 6, I estimate the treatment effect on my main outcomes but disaggregate the vignettes based on the benefits of the peaceful settlement. I estimate whether the security, economic, or nationalist benefits of the agreement can move public support for peaceful settlements, militarization, or compromise in other disputes. If learning about the benefits of an agreement drives the support for future dovish attitudes, I expect to see a stronger treatment effect on the vignettes that include information about the benefits.

Figure 6: Effect of Agreement Benefits on Public Opinion
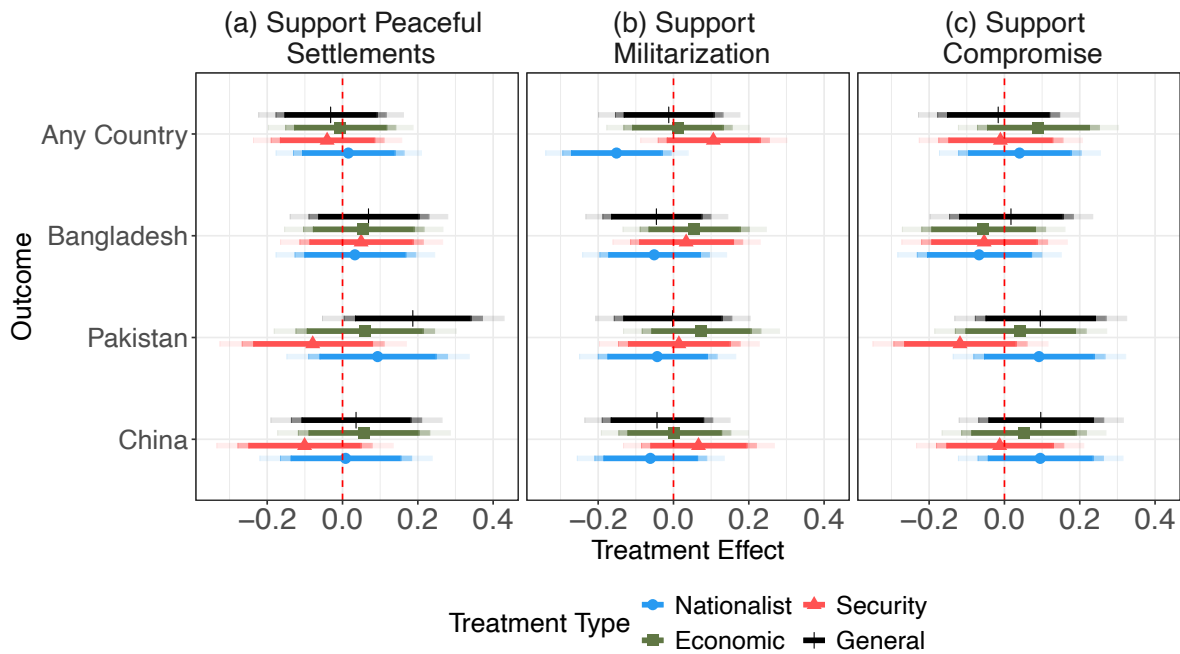
Note: 90 % confidence intervals are down in dark green, black, red, and blue. 95 % and 99 % are represented by lighter shades. The omitted category is the true control group.

In Figure 6, I show that this is not the case. Though they appear to be in the hypothesized direction, the majority of the estimates are statistically insignificant, t. In panel (a), I find null effects on increasing public support for peaceful settlements. The sole exception is the general treatment case increasing support for peaceful settlements with Pakistan (p < .05). However, this result is not robust to p-value corrections. The remaining framing strategies

are ineffective at facilitating a spillover effect in public opinion.

In panel (b), the nationalist treatment is effective at reducing support for military action with any country (p < .1). But it fails to reproduce this effect when naming a specific country partner. The remaining treatment vignettes are ineffective at changing public opinion. The security and economic framings appear to increase support for military action. However, these estimates are statistically insignificant. Finally, in panel (c), I find no treatment effect for any of the vignettes on support for India pursuing a compromise in any of its territorial disputes.

Overall, these results do not support the hypothesized mechanism of *spillover of perceived benefits*. While some of the vignette strategies appear to increase support for peaceful settlements and reduce support for military action, they are limited in scope.[31] However, it is unclear if respondents truly did not learn about new benefits or were simply unable to update their beliefs toward all disputes after receiving the treatment. The former would indicate a weak treatment, while the latter would suggest a true null where the public does not generalize the benefits of peaceful settlements.

In Appendix D, I examine this further and show that respondents did not generalize the benefits to other disputes. Despite learning about the benefits of the land boundary agreement, respondents did not identify peaceful settlements as having material benefits more broadly. That the public has difficulty in transferring information from one dispute to another is suggestive evidence that generalizing benefits impedes learning from prior settlements. These findings strengthen the claim that the treatment effect is a true null.

Spillover of Trust

Lastly, I argued that respondents who observe peaceful settlements in disputes can update their beliefs about the reputation of neighboring states. Specifically, peace agreements can bolster individual trust in other adversaries. To assess this, I ask respondents to indicate how much they would trust one of India's neighbors in a future dispute negotiation. Responses are again recorded on a five-point Likert scale.

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[31]I estimate the same models conditional on dispute salience. I find the economic treatment is effective at driving support for a peaceful settlement, but the remaining framings are not. The full results tables are available in Appendix C.

Figure 7: Treatment Effect on Trust for Neighboring States
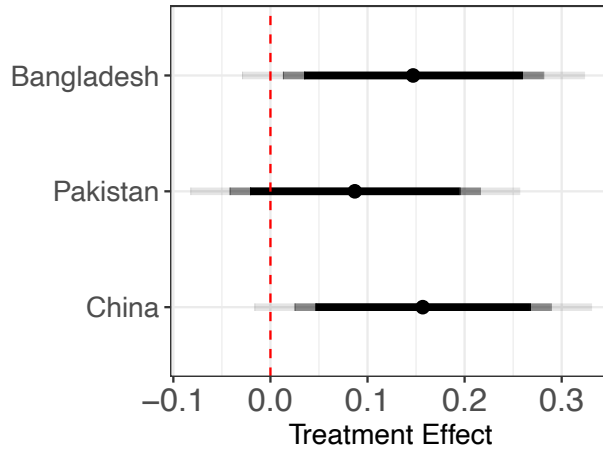
In the first row, I find that the treatment is effective at building trust for Bangladesh. I recover a positive treatment effect (0.136, p < .05) on the change in trust in Bangladesh after receiving the treatment. In the second row, I find no change in trust in Pakistan. While the treatment shows a small increase in trust, this coefficient is insignificant. India has a long history of conflict and distrust with Pakistani negotiators. Therefore, it is an extremely difficult case to change public support or trust despite showing a successful example of an agreement.

In the third row, I show a promising spillover effect of the peaceful settlement on trust. I find that respondents are more likely to trust China in a future negotiation after receiving the treatment. The estimated effect (0.140 p < .05) was significant and substantively meaningful. This suggests that Indian respondents can update their prior beliefs about trust in rival states after learning of a prior peaceful agreement. While the increase in trust for Bangladesh is expected, this finding suggests there is a transferability of beliefs from one dispute to another. I interpret these results as suggestive evidence of trust bolstering support for public opinion in peaceful settlements and compromise.

Overall, these results provide limited support for my hypotheses about the role of prior peaceful resolutions in shaping public opinion. I find that peaceful resolutions have spillover effects on public support for *future* peaceful settlements. However, the effect is small and

limited to a specific type of respondent. Moreover, I show that the spillover effects of support for compromise or reduction in support for militarization are nonexistent. While respondents might update their priors about peaceful settlement, they show no change in support for other critical outcomes. These findings complement a growing literature in Indian politics that suggests the saliency of foreign policy issues can influence the motivation of domestic constituencies to engage in electoral politics (Narang and Staniland, 2018). If the treatment vignette is effective when the salience of dispute territories is high, it suggests that leaders can point to prior settlements to build public support when the territorial issue is important to domestic audiences.

Study II: Learning from Violence

In the first study, I examined how the peaceful resolution of a territorial dispute influences public opinion over other disputes. In the second study, I evaluate how the outbreak of violence in a dispute can increase calls for military action and damage support for peaceful resolution in other active disputes.

I leverage a natural experiment during the fielding of my survey. While interviewing respondents in Delhi, terrorists killed 26 civilians in Pahalgam in Indian Administered Kashmir. This was the largest and deadliest attack against Indian civilians since the 2008 Mumbai bombings. Moreover, the suspected communal nature of the attacks and the ensuing Indian-Pakistan crisis further sensationalized the attacks and Kashmir.[32] Indian officials were quick to attribute the violence to Pakistan and retaliated accordingly. The long-standing Indus Waters Treaty was suspended, and all Pakistani diplomats were expelled from India.[33] In a televised speech following the attacks, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced (in English) that India will "identify, track, and punish every terrorist *and their backers*".[34] A clear signal to the possibility of Pakistani support.

The timing of the attacks provides a unique opportunity for a before-and-after compar-

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[32]See an overview of the attack and ensuing conflict here: https://www.stimson.org/2025/four-day s-in-may-the-india-pakistan-crisis-of-2025/

[33]https://www.bbc.com/news/live/c8x8yqwzznqt

[34]https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/modi-speech-bihar-pahalgam-terror-attack-punis h/article69485876.ece

ative sample from Delhi about the immediate effects of violence. I compiled a dataset of 1,113 responses in Delhi, with 618 of these responses coming after the attacks. I estimate a series of OLS models to evaluate the effects of the attacks on public support for peaceful settlements, militarization, and compromise with India's neighbors. I use the same modeling strategy as the previous section and estimate the change in public opinion measured on a five-point Likert scale.[35] In this model, I include an additional covariate for respondents who were recruited after the attacks. Thus the estimands of interest include β_1 and β_2 in the following model:

$$\text{Response}_i = \beta_1 \text{Peaceful Resolution}_i + \beta_2 \text{Onset of Violence}_i + \beta_3 x_i + u_i \qquad (2)$$

Figure 8 is a coefficient plot that compares the estimated effect of responding after the attack or receiving the treatment vignette. Both covariates were included in each model.[36] Therefore, the coefficients for *"Onset of Violence"* can be interpreted as the effect of responding after the attack, independent of treatment assignment. Whereas the coefficients for *"Peaceful Resolution"* represent the effect of the treatment vignette, holding exposure to the attacks constant. The full tables can be found in Appendix J.

Panel (a) shows the effect of the treatment vignette and responding after an attack on the public support for peaceful settlements in red. I find a statistically significant effect for the treatment vignette on support for a peaceful settlement with Pakistan (.25, p < .05).[37] When subsetting the sample down to respondents in Delhi, including those who responded after the attack, the treatment is moderately effective at building public support for peace with Pakistan. This contrasts with the first study, where the treatment was ineffective for all countries. Respondents in Delhi were, on average, more dovish than respondents from other states.[38] Thus, prompting respondents of prior peace deals could have intensified prior dovish beliefs. However, limitations of the survey design make it difficult to draw out the mechanisms driving this. Overall, no hypotheses were pre-registered about the

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[35]I drop the state fixed effects from these results, given that the entire sample of respondents was recruited from Delhi.

[36]In Appendix E, I estimate the model with an interaction term as well. The results do not change.

[37]While I find significant effects for Bangladesh (.20, p < .1), and China (.188, p < .1) as well, these coefficients are not robust to p-value corrections.

[38]Appendix F elaborates on this point.

localized effect of the vignette in Delhi. Therefore, these results are exploratory and should be interpreted with caution.

Figure 8: Effect of Territorial Violence on Public Opinion
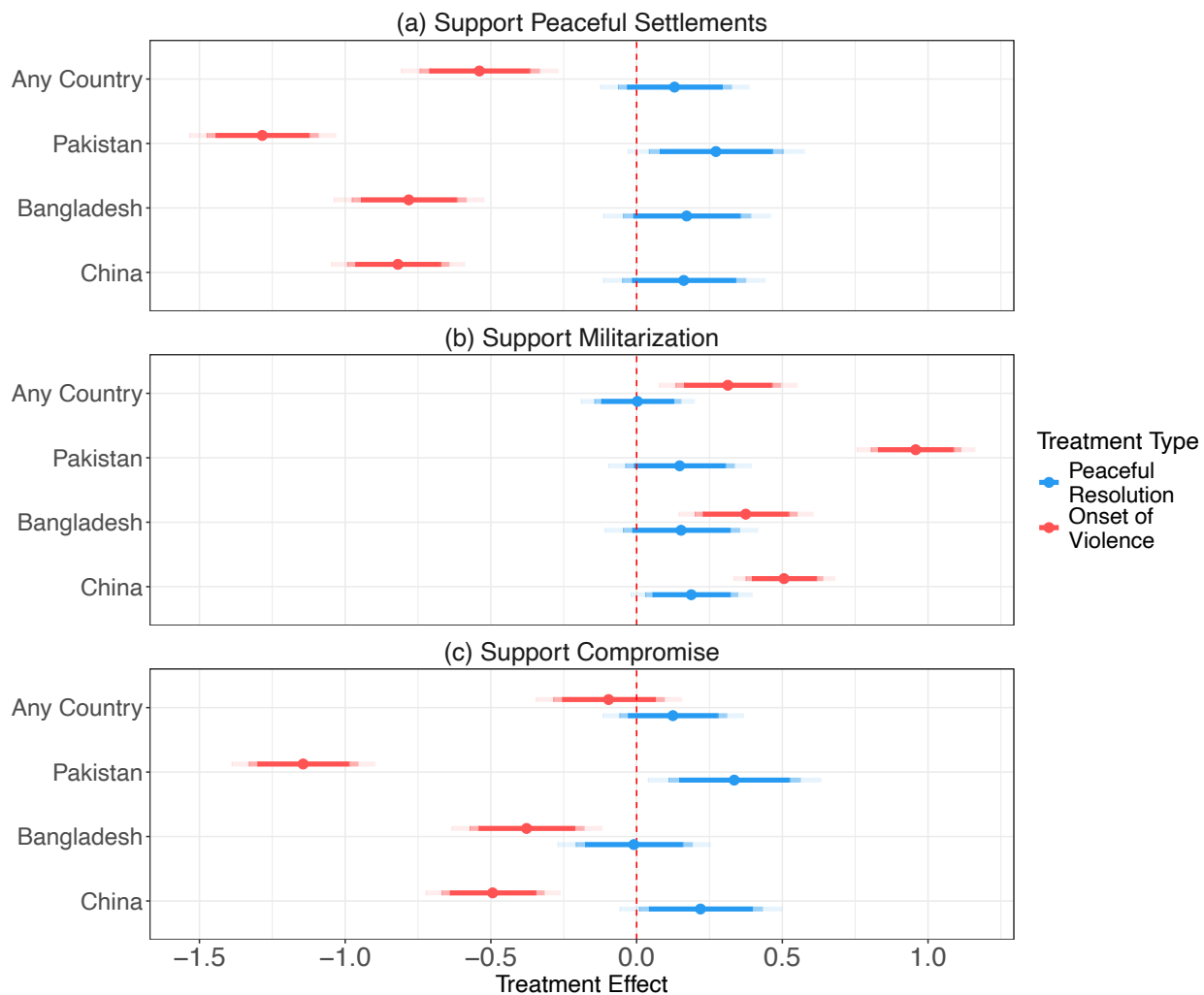
However, individuals who were exposed to the violence dramatically reduced their support. Across each country partner, and the "any country" case, respondents were significantly less likely to support peaceful settlements after hearing about the Pahalgam attacks. Predictably, when asked about settlements with Pakistan, the post-attack coefficient was the largest (-1.21, p <.01). Indians blamed Pakistan for the violence and punished them accordingly in potential negotiations. But the violence in Kashmir had resounding spillover effects, too. The scale of violence shaped individual attitudes toward India's other neighbors and active disputes. Respondents were less likely to support peaceful settlements with

Bangladesh (-.60, p < .01) and China (-.544, p < .01). All of these coefficients were two to three times the effect of the treatment vignette. This suggests that the spillover effects of violence dwarf any persuasive effects of prior peaceful settlements.

In panels (b), I re-estimate the models using support for military action as the outcomes. Interestingly, the peaceful resolution vignette *increases* support for military action as well. But these coefficients are not significant. The exposure to violence, however, showed a strong and substantively significant effect on support for military action. After the Pahalgam attacks, the support for military action against each potential partner was high. Respondents showed the strongest change in support for military action against Pakistan (.941, p < .01) with almost a full point change on the Likert scale. But the attacks also had a spillover effect on India's other neighbors. Change in support for military action against Bangladesh (.329, p < .01) and China (.183, p < .01) were high as well. Respondents who observed the violence were significantly more likely to support India taking military action against other neighbors to settle territorial disputes. These results show strong support for the spillover hypothesis.

Finally, in panel (c), I estimate the violence effect on support for compromise. Similar to panel (a), the peaceful treatment vignette is effective at building support for pursuing a compromise with Pakistan (.308, p < .01). The modest increase in support for compromise with China is not statistically significant after p-value corrections. Given that the only significant treatment effect is with Pakistan, this suggests that concerns over the cost of future conflict could be driving this result. The exchange of drone attacks and shelling along the border could encourage respondents to support compromises to the dispute. Conversely, the onset of violence resulted in a decrease in support for compromise with any of India's neighbors. Respondents show a decrease in support for compromise with Pakistan (-1.155, p < .01) but with Bangladesh (-.179, p < .1), and China (-.236, p < .01) as well. I interpret this as strong evidence that violence in territorial disputes can diminish dovish beliefs about disputes more broadly and damage public support for compromise.

Overall, I find that the spillover effects of violence are consistent across a variety of outcomes and partnering countries. While the payoffs of peace are limited in scope and moderate, the costs of violence are resounding. Public reactions to peace are limited and

likely small relative to other domestic issues. However, when faced with violence in territorial disputes, public support for military action is strong and substantive. This effect is not just limited to the offending state but to any neighboring partner with a history of territorial disputes. These results suggest that pursuing peace after a violent attack is an improbable task, regardless of the potential negotiating partner in the deal.

One concern of these results is the limited geographical scope of the sample. While Study I recruited participants from four states, I am restricted to respondents from Delhi for Study II. Accordingly, the results could be biased by Delhi politics and have limited generalizability. In Appendix F, I show why the geographical bias is likely limited. Delhi residents were, on average, most dovish across both samples. Respondents in the control group from Delhi were more likely to support a peaceful resolution and less likely to support military action compared to respondents from other states. Accordingly, the results shown here demonstrate a militarizing effect amongst the most *dovish* respondents who might be hesitant to support military action.

Mechanism: Spillover of Distrust

I argued that violence in territorial disputes heightened nationalist sentiment, which consolidated public unfavorability and distrust for neighboring states. Thus far, I have shown how this resulted in a decrease in support for peaceful settlements and an increase in support for military action. However, these findings do not provide evidence for the hypothesized spike in unfavorability and distrust. To parse out the underlying mechanism, I repeat the analysis from Study I and ask respondents how much they trust each of India's neighbors following the attacks in Kashmir. Figure 9 shows the results of the analysis.

In blue, I show the estimated effects of the treatment vignette on trust in neighbors. Contrary to Study I, I find that the treatment is ineffective at bolstering trust in any of India's neighbors. This is unsurprising given the political climate in which the survey was fielded. Respondents recruited into Study II were still recovering from the deadly attacks and inundated with a barrage of news, rallies, and political statements about the attacks. Investigations into the perpetrators of the attacks and speculations about their backers dominated the media. The treatment, then, while compelling, was likely consumed in tandem with the

hostile media environment, which could bias the results. Given this, these coefficients should be interpreted with caution.

Figure 9: Effect of Territorial Violence on Trust
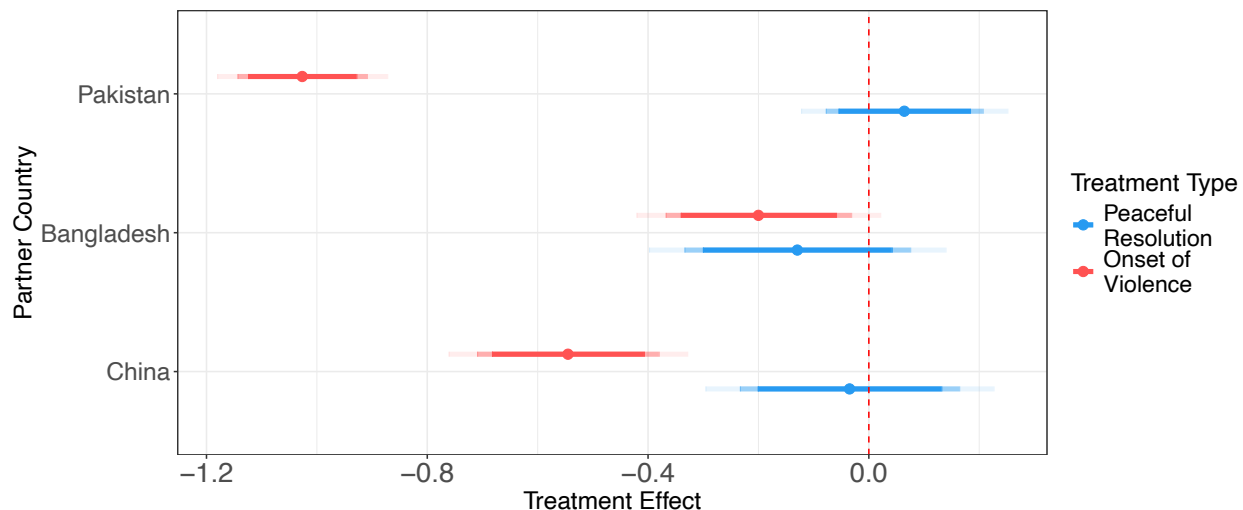
In red, I show the effect of the attacks on trust for any of India's neighbors. In the top row of Figure 9. Predictably, find the strongest penalty for Pakistan (-1.03, p < .01). The attacks resulted in respondents moving down a full point on the Likert scale. A substantial reduction in trust. The attacks likely activated deep-rooted skepticism of Pakistan over a history of state-sponsored terrorism and militant support in Kashmir. Accordingly, Indians do not view the Pakistani government as a good-faith actor who can be relied on in negotiations.

However, if there is a spillover effect, we should expect the distrust to extend to India's other neighbors. I argued that the violence in Kashmir can depress generalized international trust, which reduces trust in individual states. In the second and third rows, I find compelling evidence of a spillover of distrust. Although Pakistan was the country accused of responsibility, respondents were quick to penalize all of India's neighbors. The violence in Kashmir sharply reduced trust in Bangladesh (0.20, p < .05) and China (0.55, p < .01). My results show that indians became more skeptical of Bangladesh and China as potential partners in future negotiations over territory. Together, these findings provide evidence for a spillover of distrust amongst the public.

In addition to trust, I measure additional barometers of confidence in neighboring states. In Appendix G, I estimate the effect of violence on *unfavorability* in neighboring states.

Though this question does not capture trust, it is strongly correlated. Moreover, the unfavorability questions were asked pre-treatment, assuaging any concerns of bias. I find that the unfavorability of all neighboring states dropped sharply as well. This result further strengthens my argument about the spillover effects of violence in territorial disputes.

Discussion and Conclusion

Territorial conflict is on the rise again (Charaniya, 2024; Goemans and Carter, 2025), and states are entangled in multiple territorial disputes with several adversaries. Furthermore, a voluminous literature has demonstrated how state leaders are constrained by domestic public opinion when managing the resolution of territorial conflict. Individuals are often reluctant to support efforts to compromise or settle disputes peacefully. In this paper, I examine whether violent escalations or diplomatic cooperation in one territorial dispute can influence public opinion in another. I argue that public audiences use the peaceful resolution of or the onset of violence in a dispute as a heuristic to update their views about other active territorial conflicts. Peaceful settlements improve individual trust in neighboring states and increase dovish beliefs, while the onset of violence bolsters hawkish public opinion by increasing distrust of neighboring states. Using two original experiments in India, I find mixed support for the first hypothesis but strong support for the second.

In the first study, I find limited evidence that prior peaceful resolutions can buoy dovish beliefs. After learning about the Land Boundary Agreement with Bangladesh, Indians are more likely to support peaceful settlements in active disputes with any other state, conditional on the salience of disputed territories. Specifically, respondents who identify disputed territories as highly salient are more likely to support peaceful resolutions of disputes with Bangladesh, China, or Pakistan after reading the treatment vignette. Furthermore, I show that the treatment does not improve perception of benefits from future agreements but can shift underlying trust for some neighboring states. This provides mixed evidence for the hypothesized mechanisms.

In my second study, I leverage a terrorist attack during the fielding of my experiment to measure the effect of territorial violence on respondents. This unique design enables a

careful and specific identification of the costs of violence. I find that Indians are far less likely to support peaceful settlements and more likely to support militarization with *any* of India's neighbors after the onset of violence. Though the violence was concentrated in one dispute and attributed to a single state, public trust in all neighboring adversaries fell, and hawkish public opinion increased exponentially. Together, these two studies show that public learning from territorial disputes is asymmetrical. While prior settlements can modestly increase support for future peace, violence dramatically increases support for future military action.

Though this provides support for my theoretical argument, the one-sided learning by respondents was unexpected. There could be several explanations for this result. First, differences in experimental design might have influenced the outcome. The peaceful treatment vignette in the first study was older than the violence treatment in study two. Therefore, asymmetrical learning could be conditional on the immediacy of the event rather than the content. While plausible, this does not explain the consistent effect of both treatments on trust in adversary states. Across both studies, I showed that both peaceful settlements and violence were effective at changing individual trust in neighboring states. If the results were a function of the treatment strength, we should also expect variation in the underlying mechanisms.

A second explanation of my results could be the role of prospect theory in public opinion. New research shows how public audiences prioritize averting losses rather than obtaining gains in territorial conflicts (Zhou, Goemans and Weintraub, 2025). Individuals are quick to support military action to minimize losses, but do not favor compromise to expand national territory. Similarly, violence in territorial disputes threatens the loss of sovereignty, whereas peaceful settlements suggest the gain of additional land. If respondents prioritize minimizing losses, then they should be more likely to update their priors after observing violence rather than learning about peaceful settlement. This helps explain why Indians were more influenced by violence in Kashmir than by a peaceful settlement with Bangladesh.

Finally, we know from prior work that public opinion toward foreign affairs is biased. Research in political psychology suggests that individuals are predisposed to hawkish beliefs in international relations (Kahneman and Renshon, 2007; Kertzer et al., 2022; Weiss, 2019).

The public is inherently more likely to favor military action and punitive policies against adversarial states. It is expected, then, that violent events reinforce hawkish priors, but peaceful settlements are limited in cultivating dovish beliefs. If public audiences are already hawkish, they are more likely to respond to the threat of violence than to the offer of peace. Thus, asymmetrical learning could be a product of pre-existing biases rather than the strength or immediacy of the treatments. Design limitations prohibit explicitly testing this; however, future work could explore whether hawkish biases exacerbate the effect of territorial violence.

In sum, territorial disputes are among the strongest drivers of war and rivalry. Given this, state leaders are motivated to mitigate their effects and negotiate a peaceful settlement. But the pursuit of peace is often conditional on domestic public support. My findings contribute to an active literature on public opinion and territorial conflict. I demonstrate how prior peaceful settlements can build modest support for future peaceful resolutions, but the onset of violence severely damages it. Moreover, I show how the effects in public opinion can spill over into other active disputes a state is engaged in. This contributes to our understanding of how the public forms its beliefs and what might change it in future conflicts.

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Appendix

Amaan Charaniya

Contents

A   Balancing Tables

Table A.1: Categorized Treatment Balancing Table

Variable	Control	General	Homeland	Security	Economic	P-Value
Disputed Region Importance						
0	104 (20.68%)	87 (17.30%)	96 (19.09%)	119 (23.66%)	97 (19.28%)	0.3596
1	112 (19.11%)	118 (20.14%)	121 (20.65%)	103 (17.58%)	132 (22.53%)	0.3596
2	55 (22.27%)	43 (17.41%)	58 (23.48%)	41 (16.60%)	50 (20.24%)	0.3596
3	51 (20.90%)	54 (22.13%)	50 (20.49%)	47 (19.26%)	42 (17.21%)	0.3596
4	27 (25.71%)	24 (22.86%)	19 (18.10%)	14 (13.33%)	21 (20.00%)	0.3596
5	11 (26.83%)	9 (21.95%)	4 (9.76%)	10 (24.39%)	7 (17.07%)	0.3596
6	169 (21.42%)	170 (21.55%)	150 (19.01%)	138 (17.49%)	162 (20.53%)	0.3596
Biggest Threat						
Struggling Economy	85 (19.50%)	93 (21.33%)	84 (19.27%)	70 (16.06%)	104 (23.85%)	0.3188
Domestic Terrorism	166 (23.06%)	143 (19.86%)	130 (18.06%)	135 (18.75%)	146 (20.28%)	0.3188
International War	70 (18.92%)	84 (22.70%)	79 (21.35%)	67 (18.11%)	70 (18.92%)	0.3188
Corruption	208 (21.03%)	185 (18.71%)	205 (20.73%)	200 (20.22%)	191 (19.31%)	0.3188
Age						
18-24	100 (21.79%)	78 (16.99%)	103 (22.44%)	78 (16.99%)	100 (21.79%)	0.4715
25-34	179 (20.48%)	189 (21.62%)	152 (17.39%)	175 (20.02%)	179 (20.48%)	0.4715
35-44	123 (20.36%)	120 (19.87%)	137 (22.68%)	108 (17.88%)	116 (19.21%)	0.4715
45-54	73 (21.10%)	76 (21.97%)	63 (18.21%)	62 (17.92%)	72 (20.81%)	0.4715
55-64	35 (22.29%)	25 (15.92%)	32 (20.38%)	32 (20.38%)	33 (21.02%)	0.4715
65+	19 (25.33%)	17 (22.67%)	11 (14.67%)	17 (22.67%)	11 (14.67%)	0.4715
Monthly Income						
Below Rs. 10,000	70 (20.17%)	69 (19.88%)	66 (19.02%)	77 (22.19%)	65 (18.73%)	0.9081
Rs. 10,000 − Rs. 25,000	195 (19.58%)	200 (20.08%)	198 (19.88%)	192 (19.28%)	211 (21.18%)	0.9081
Rs. 25,000 − Rs. 50,000	96 (22.17%)	86 (19.86%)	92 (21.25%)	73 (16.86%)	86 (19.86%)	0.9081
Rs. 50,000 − Rs. 1,00,000	52 (26.53%)	40 (20.41%)	32 (16.33%)	34 (17.35%)	38 (19.39%)	0.9081
Rs. 1,00,000 − Rs. 2,00,000	14 (24.56%)	9 (15.79%)	10 (17.54%)	13 (22.81%)	11 (19.30%)	0.9081
Above Rs. 2,00,000	1 (50.00%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (50.00%)	0.9081
Refuse to answer	101 (20.87%)	101 (20.87%)	100 (20.66%)	83 (17.15%)	99 (20.45%)	0.9081
Education						
Primary School	46 (23.96%)	40 (20.83%)	28 (14.58%)	37 (19.27%)	41 (21.35%)	0.3479
Secondary School	128 (22.26%)	106 (18.43%)	131 (22.78%)	105 (18.26%)	105 (18.26%)	0.3479
Some College	148 (21.02%)	152 (21.59%)	138 (19.60%)	141 (20.03%)	125 (17.76%)	0.3479
Bachelor's Degree	178 (19.52%)	186 (20.39%)	173 (18.97%)	170 (18.64%)	205 (22.48%)	0.3479
Post-graduate Degree	24 (23.53%)	16 (15.69%)	22 (21.57%)	14 (13.73%)	26 (25.49%)	0.3479
None	5 (16.67%)	5 (16.67%)	6 (20.00%)	5 (16.67%)	9 (30.00%)	0.3479
Gender						
Female	132 (22.68%)	129 (22.16%)	114 (19.59%)	111 (19.07%)	96 (16.49%)	0.0809
Male	397 (20.54%)	376 (19.45%)	384 (19.87%)	361 (18.68%)	415 (21.47%)	0.0809
Vote						
BJP	197 (21.84%)	193 (21.40%)	162 (17.96%)	162 (17.96%)	188 (20.84%)	0.3338
INC	62 (19.62%)	62 (19.62%)	70 (22.15%)	53 (16.77%)	69 (21.84%)	0.3338
TMC	45 (18.83%)	41 (17.15%)	54 (22.59%)	45 (18.83%)	54 (22.59%)	0.3338
Other	34 (23.61%)	31 (21.53%)	37 (25.69%)	20 (13.89%)	22 (15.28%)	0.3338
Did not Vote	30 (26.32%)	20 (17.54%)	17 (14.91%)	22 (19.30%)	25 (21.93%)	0.3338
Refuse	161 (20.12%)	158 (19.75%)	158 (19.75%)	170 (21.25%)	153 (19.12%)	0.3338
Affected by Border Disputes						
Not affected	291 (20.65%)	269 (19.09%)	271 (19.23%)	272 (19.30%)	306 (21.72%)	0.6440
Not very affected	95 (22.14%)	96 (22.38%)	85 (19.81%)	78 (18.18%)	75 (17.48%)	0.6440
Somewhat affected	103 (21.37%)	103 (21.37%)	94 (19.50%)	86 (17.84%)	96 (19.92%)	0.6440
Very affected	40 (20.51%)	37 (18.97%)	48 (24.62%)	36 (18.46%)	34 (17.44%)	0.6440
Social Media Usage						
Less than half an hour	113 (19.22%)	121 (20.58%)	110 (18.71%)	109 (18.54%)	135 (22.96%)	0.5741
Half an hour to an hour	116 (20.98%)	117 (21.16%)	116 (20.98%)	87 (15.73%)	117 (21.16%)	0.5741
1-2 hours	149 (20.55%)	151 (20.83%)	140 (19.31%)	148 (20.41%)	137 (18.90%)	0.5741
2-3 hours	109 (23.80%)	81 (17.69%)	90 (19.65%)	93 (20.31%)	85 (18.56%)	0.5741
3+ hours a day	42 (21.99%)	35 (18.32%)	42 (21.99%)	35 (18.32%)	37 (19.37%)	0.5741
Political News Consumption						
Once a day or more	202 (19.94%)	192 (18.95%)	193 (19.05%)	219 (21.62%)	207 (20.43%)	0.2198
Once every few days	162 (23.21%)	145 (20.77%)	132 (18.91%)	110 (15.76%)	149 (21.35%)	0.2198
Once a week	54 (18.82%)	54 (18.82%)	58 (20.21%)	61 (21.25%)	60 (20.91%)	0.2198
Once a month	47 (21.86%)	45 (20.93%)	49 (22.79%)	36 (16.74%)	38 (17.67%)	0.2198
Less than once a month	64 (21.19%)	69 (22.85%)	66 (21.85%)	46 (15.23%)	57 (18.87%)	0.2198
Concern with Border Disputes						
Not concerned	117 (20.07%)	105 (18.01%)	116 (19.90%)	124 (21.27%)	121 (20.75%)	0.0973
Not very concerned	77 (17.23%)	102 (22.82%)	88 (19.69%)	80 (17.90%)	100 (22.37%)	0.0973
Somewhat concerned	182 (20.71%)	190 (21.62%)	178 (20.25%)	162 (18.43%)	167 (19.00%)	0.0973
Very concerned	153 (25.25%)	108 (17.82%)	116 (19.14%)	106 (17.49%)	123 (20.30%)	0.0973
State						
Delhi	124 (24.55%)	90 (17.82%)	108 (21.39%)	85 (16.83%)	98 (19.41%)	0.0260
Gujarat	103 (20.60%)	110 (22.00%)	95 (19.00%)	73 (14.60%)	119 (23.80%)	0.0260
Karnataka	101 (20.49%)	112 (22.72%)	94 (19.07%)	96 (19.47%)	90 (18.26%)	0.0260
West Bengal	201 (19.76%)	193 (18.98%)	201 (19.76%)	218 (21.44%)	204 (20.06%)	0.0260

Table A.2: Pooled Treatment Balacing Table

Variable	Control	Treatment	P-Value
Disputed Region Importance			
0	104 (20.68%)	399 (79.32%)	0.6964
1	112 (19.11%)	474 (80.89%)	0.6964
2	55 (22.27%)	192 (77.73%)	0.6964
3	51 (20.90%)	193 (79.10%)	0.6964
4	27 (25.71%)	78 (74.29%)	0.6964
5	11 (26.83%)	30 (73.17%)	0.6964
6	169 (21.42%)	620 (78.58%)	0.6964
Biggest Threat			
Struggling Economy	85 (19.50%)	351 (80.50%)	0.3354
Domestic Terrorism	166 (23.06%)	554 (76.94%)	0.3354
International War	70 (18.92%)	300 (81.08%)	0.3354
Corruption	208 (21.03%)	781 (78.97%)	0.3354
Age			
18-24	100 (21.79%)	359 (78.21%)	0.9019
25-34	179 (20.48%)	695 (79.52%)	0.9019
35-44	123 (20.36%)	481 (79.64%)	0.9019
45-54	73 (21.10%)	273 (78.90%)	0.9019
55-64	35 (22.29%)	122 (77.71%)	0.9019
65+	19 (25.33%)	56 (74.67%)	0.9019
Monthly Income			
Below Rs. 10,000	70 (20.17%)	277 (79.83%)	0.2806
Rs. 10,000 − Rs. 25,000	195 (19.58%)	801 (80.42%)	0.2806
Rs. 25,000 − Rs. 50,000	96 (22.17%)	337 (77.83%)	0.2806
Rs. 50,000 − Rs. 1,00,000	52 (26.53%)	144 (73.47%)	0.2806
Rs. 1,00,000 − Rs. 2,00,000	14 (24.56%)	43 (75.44%)	0.2806
Above Rs. 2,00,000	1 (50.00%)	1 (50.00%)	0.2806
Refuse to answer	101 (20.87%)	383 (79.13%)	0.2806
Education			
Primary School	46 (23.96%)	146 (76.04%)	0.6235
Secondary School	128 (22.26%)	447 (77.74%)	0.6235
Some College	148 (21.02%)	556 (78.98%)	0.6235
Bachelor's Degree	178 (19.52%)	734 (80.48%)	0.6235
Post-graduate Degree	24 (23.53%)	78 (76.47%)	0.6235
None	5 (16.67%)	25 (83.33%)	0.6235
Gender			
Female	132 (22.68%)	450 (77.32%)	0.2707
Male	397 (20.54%)	1536 (79.46%)	0.2707
Vote			
BJP	197 (21.84%)	705 (78.16%)	0.5041
INC	62 (19.62%)	254 (80.38%)	0.5041
TMC	45 (18.83%)	194 (81.17%)	0.5041
Other	34 (23.61%)	110 (76.39%)	0.5041
Did not Vote	30 (26.32%)	84 (73.68%)	0.5041
Refuse	161 (20.12%)	639 (79.88%)	0.5041
Affected by Border Disputes			
Not affected	291 (20.65%)	1118 (79.35%)	0.9175
Not very affected	95 (22.14%)	334 (77.86%)	0.9175
Somewhat affected	103 (21.37%)	379 (78.63%)	0.9175
Very affected	40 (20.51%)	155 (79.49%)	0.9175
Social Media Usage			
Less than half an hour	113 (19.22%)	475 (80.78%)	0.4803
Half an hour to an hour	116 (20.98%)	437 (79.02%)	0.4803
1-2 hours	149 (20.55%)	576 (79.45%)	0.4803
2-3 hours	109 (23.80%)	349 (76.20%)	0.4803
3+ hours a day	42 (21.99%)	149 (78.01%)	0.4803
Political News Consumption			
Once a day or more	202 (19.94%)	811 (80.06%)	0.4539
Once every few days	162 (23.21%)	536 (76.79%)	0.4539
Once a week	54 (18.82%)	233 (81.18%)	0.4539
Once a month	47 (21.86%)	168 (78.14%)	0.4539
Less than once a month	64 (21.19%)	238 (78.81%)	0.4539
Concern with Border Disputes			
Not concerned	117 (20.07%)	466 (79.93%)	0.0131
Not very concerned	77 (17.23%)	370 (82.77%)	0.0131
Somewhat concerned	182 (20.71%)	697 (79.29%)	0.0131
Very concerned	153 (25.25%)	453 (74.75%)	0.0131
State			
Delhi	124 (24.55%)	381 (75.45%)	0.1792
Gujarat	103 (20.60%)	397 (79.40%)	0.1792
Karnataka	101 (20.49%)	392 (79.51%)	0.1792
West Bengal	201 (19.76%)	816 (80.24%)	0.1792

B Average Support for Outcomes

In Table B.1, I show the average level of support for my main outcomes within treatment and control groups. Support is measured on a 5-point Likert scale with 5 being the greatest level of support and 1 being the smallest level of support. I find that support for peaceful settlement and compromise is quite high across the board, which could contribute to the null finding. If support for peace and compromise is sufficiently high, there could be little room to move respondents. This suggests the treatment strength isn't an issue, but rather a ceiling effect in public opinion. Conversely, the high baseline support for military action should facilitate an opportunity for the treatment to temper support. Therefore, the treatment may be ineffective here at curbing militant attitudes.

Table B.1: Support for Outcomes (Study 1)

Country	Support Peaceful Settlements		Support Military Action		Support Compromise	
	Control	Treat	Control	Treat	Control	Treat
Any Country	4.09	4.03	4.01	3.98	3.7	3.68
Bangladesh	3.67	3.68	3.67	3.68	3.41	3.3
China	3.49	3.43	3.49	3.43	3.27	3.24
Pakistan	3.25	3.27	3.25	3.27	3.14	3.1

In Table B.2 I replicate the table with the data from the second experiment. Despite similar baselines in the control group, I found a strong effect of the onset of violence on public opinion. It is important to note that the respondents in study two were drawn only from Delhi. The differences in baseline support could be a function of regional politics in India.

Table B.2: Support for Outcomes (Study 2)

Post Attack	Support Peaceful Settlements		Support Military Action		Support Compromise	
	Control	Post Attack	Control	Post Attack	Control	Post Attack
Any Country	4.39	3.91	4.29	4.67	4.11	4.07
Bangladesh	3.88	3.16	3.88	3.16	3.77	3.46
China	3.96	3.18	3.96	3.18	3.85	3.43
Pakistan	3.52	2.22	3.52	2.22	3.5	2.35

C Benefits of Peaceful Settlement and Dispute Salience

In the paper, I argued that prior peaceful settlements could influence public opinion through the *spillover of perceived benefits*. Individuals learn about the potential payoffs of peacefully settling a dispute and become more dovish about future settlements. However, I showed in Figure 6 that this mechanism is not driving the result. Indeed, respondents are not updating their priors due to the perception of benefits.

In the tables below, I replicate this result using my measure of dispute salience. Given that the main effect of peaceful settlement is conditional on high dispute salience, we might expect that each treatment vignette has heterogeneous effects on respondents. In Table C.1, I find that the economic framing is effective at increasing support for peaceful settlement with Bangladesh, Pakistan, and China among high salience respondents. Indeed, the coefficient is the largest of the different treatment types. While there is also some support for the effectiveness of the security treatment, these coefficients are not robust to p-value corrections. Thus, this suggests that the economic mechanism could play a role in increasing more dovish beliefs.

Table C.1: Support for Peaceful Settlement Conditional on Dispute Salience

	Dependent variable:		
	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)
General x High Dispute Salience	0.283*	0.311*	0.289*
	(0.161)	(0.183)	(0.174)
Nationalist x High Dispute Salience	0.186	0.225	0.199
	(0.162)	(0.184)	(0.175)
Security x High Dispute Salience	0.272*	0.319*	0.173
	(0.165)	(0.188)	(0.179)
Economic x High Dispute Salience	0.493***	0.484***	0.380**
	(0.161)	(0.183)	(0.175)
General Treatment	−0.087	0.010	−0.130
	(0.118)	(0.135)	(0.128)
Nationalist Treatment	−0.055	−0.001	−0.082
	(0.115)	(0.130)	(0.125)
Security Treatment	−0.075	−0.216	−0.171
	(0.117)	(0.133)	(0.127)
Economic Treatment	−0.191*	−0.170	−0.130
	(0.115)	(0.131)	(0.125)
High Dispute Salience	0.145	0.419***	0.337***
	(0.114)	(0.129)	(0.123)
Dispute Concern	0.280***	0.204***	0.304***
	(0.027)	(0.031)	(0.029)
Gujarat	0.033	−0.019	−0.467***
	(0.081)	(0.092)	(0.088)
Karnataka	−0.423***	−0.645***	−0.565***
	(0.080)	(0.091)	(0.087)
West Bengal	−0.233***	−0.457***	−0.724***
	(0.079)	(0.089)	(0.085)
Constant	2.966***	2.742***	2.918***
	(0.125)	(0.142)	(0.137)
Observations	2,254	2,274	2,250
Adjusted R^2	0.092	0.103	0.133

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

In Table C.2, I repeat this analysis using military force as the outcome. Across each country and treatment framing, I find a consistently null effect. There is no effect of the various benefits on tempering support for military action.

Table C.2: Support for Military Action Conditional on Dispute Salience

	Dependent variable:		
	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)
General x High Dispute Salience	−0.013	−0.216	−0.053
	(0.142)	(0.155)	(0.147)
Nationalist x High Dispute Salience	0.022	−0.116	0.045
	(0.144)	(0.157)	(0.149)
Security x High Dispute Salience	−0.223	−0.044	0.036
	(0.147)	(0.160)	(0.153)
Economic x High Dispute Salience	−0.016	−0.178	0.147
	(0.143)	(0.156)	(0.149)
General Treatment	−0.046	0.103	−0.022
	(0.103)	(0.113)	(0.108)
Nationalist Treatment	−0.040	0.035	−0.073
	(0.102)	(0.111)	(0.106)
Security Treatment	0.167	0.058	0.060
	(0.105)	(0.114)	(0.109)
Economic Treatment	0.080	0.179	−0.065
	(0.102)	(0.111)	(0.107)
High Dispute Salience	0.642***	0.715***	0.430***
	(0.100)	(0.109)	(0.104)
Dispute Concern	0.011	−0.199***	−0.141***
	(0.024)	(0.026)	(0.025)
Gujarat	−0.334***	−0.130*	−0.375***
	(0.072)	(0.079)	(0.075)
Karnataka	−0.265***	−0.091	−0.329***
	(0.071)	(0.078)	(0.074)
West Bengal	−0.256***	0.148*	−0.087
	(0.070)	(0.076)	(0.073)
Constant	3.689***	4.025***	4.257***
	(0.112)	(0.121)	(0.116)
Observations	2,268	2,291	2,273
Adjusted R²	0.068	0.099	0.066

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Finally, in Table C.3, I use support for compromise as the outcome. I find that priming respondents with specific benefits (nationalist, security, or economic) is effective at increasing support for compromise among high salience individuals. Indeed, the coefficients are larger relative to the general treatment priming. Moreover, the general treatment is not robust to p-value corrections. This suggests that the findings in Figure 5 could indeed be driven by an increase in perception of material benefits.

Table C.3: Support for Pursuing Compromise Conditional on Dispute Salience

	Dependent variable:		
	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)
General x High Dispute Salience	0.294*	0.089	0.194
	(0.165)	(0.174)	(0.165)
Nationalist x High Dispute Salience	0.334**	0.049	0.152
	(0.166)	(0.175)	(0.165)
Security x High Dispute Salience	0.368**	0.202	0.198
	(0.168)	(0.177)	(0.168)
Economic x High Dispute Salience	0.495***	0.280	0.171
	(0.165)	(0.174)	(0.164)
General Treatment	−0.140	0.036	−0.019
	(0.118)	(0.124)	(0.118)
Nationalist Treatment	−0.225*	0.079	0.035
	(0.115)	(0.121)	(0.115)
Security Treatment	−0.209*	−0.191	−0.079
	(0.116)	(0.122)	(0.115)
Economic Treatment	−0.295**	−0.078	−0.016
	(0.115)	(0.120)	(0.114)
High Dispute Salience	0.239**	0.514***	0.526***
	(0.116)	(0.122)	(0.115)
Dispute Concern	0.380***	0.304***	0.382***
	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.028)
Gujarat	−0.001	0.197**	−0.083
	(0.085)	(0.090)	(0.085)
Karnataka	−0.359***	−0.448***	−0.502***
	(0.085)	(0.089)	(0.085)
West Bengal	−0.668***	−0.731***	−0.981***
	(0.081)	(0.085)	(0.081)
Constant	2.579***	2.378***	2.449***
	(0.129)	(0.134)	(0.128)
Observations	2,408	2,433	2,407
Adjusted R^2	0.204	0.190	0.262

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

D   Learning from Peaceful Settlements

I hypothesized that one way citizens can update their beliefs about territorial disputes is to learn about the potential material benefits of dispute resolution. To evaluate this, I designed three different treatment vignettes that emphasized one of the economic, security, or nationalist benefits of the Land Boundary Agreement. Each vignette pointed to how India specifically benefited from the agreement. However, in the paper, I found that the different benefits had no significant effect at increasing support for future peaceful resolutions.

One possible reason is that respondents did not learn about the benefits of settlements despite receiving the treatment. To assess this, I asked respondents a series of questions about the potential benefits of territorial disputes. First, I asked respondents if settling territorial disputes is good for their country's economic development or is good for trade. Second, I asked respondents if settling territorial disputes makes their country safe from war, terrorism, or helps secure the border. Finally, I ask whether it is possible to divide land in a disputed territory or whether it hurts the homeland. These questions capture individual perceptions of the benefits of disputes.

In Figure D.1, I estimate the effect of the different treatment vignettes on these outcomes. In each panel, I examine whether the type of benefit (economic, security, nationalist) was effective at increasing the individual perception of that benefit. Across each panel, I find no effect. Despite being told of the specific benefits, respondents were no more likely to improve their perception of future agreements.

Figure D.1: Learning from Peaceful Settlements
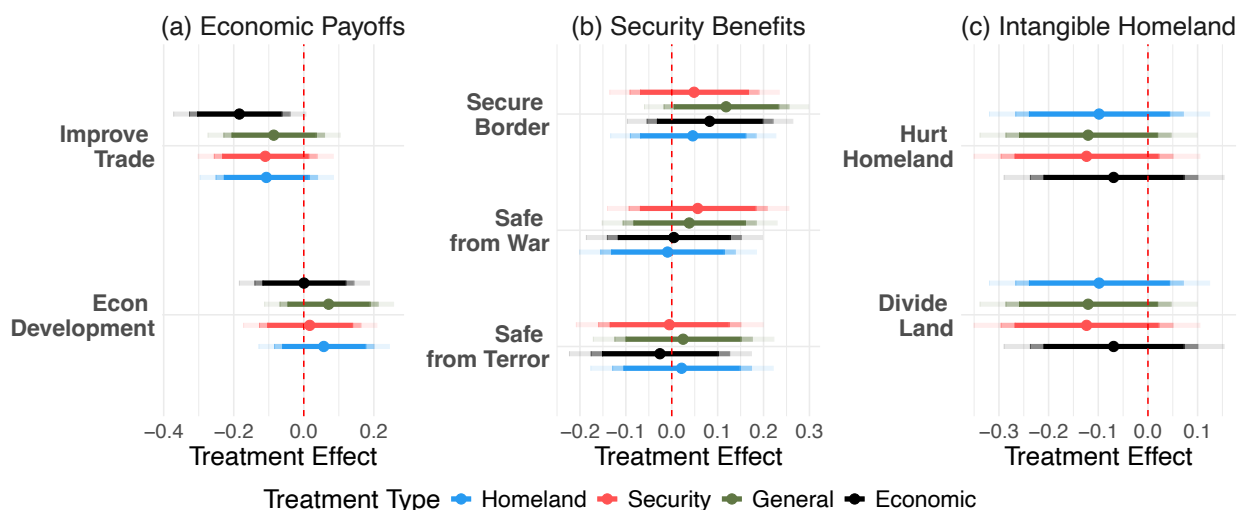
Overall, these results show that respondents had difficulty in transferring beliefs from one dispute to another. Being informed of prior peaceful settlements does not meaningfully change the perception of benefits from future settlements. In fact, the economic treatment reduced the belief that future agreements have economic benefits. I interpret these findings as a repudiation of the *spillover of perceived benefits.*

E   Effect of Violence: Alternative Models

In the main text, I estimate the effect of the peaceful treatment and the onset of violence separately on my main outcomes. However, it could be that the effect of the treatment vignette is magnified among respondents who observed the terrorist attacks in Kashmir. Indeed, we might expect that after witnessing violence, reminding respondents of prior peace can temper their militarizing behavior. To examine this, I re-estimate the models with an interaction term:

$$\text{Response}_i = \beta_1 \text{Peaceful Resolution}_i + \beta_2 \text{Onset of Violence}_i \\ + \beta_3 \text{Peaceful Resolution*Onset of Violence} + \beta_4 x_i + u_i \tag{A-3}$$

In Table E.1, the results do not change. There is no heterogeneous effect of the treatment vignette. I find that the onset of violence still reduced support for peaceful settlement with each of India's neighbors.

Table E.1: Support for Peaceful Settlement (Post Attack)

	Dependent variable:			
	Any Country	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Treatment x Onset of Violence	0.301	0.163	0.298	0.289
	(0.200)	(0.221)	(0.235)	(0.215)
Treatment	−0.016	0.090	0.127	0.016
	(0.139)	(0.157)	(0.164)	(0.153)
Onset of Violence	−0.777***	−0.910***	−1.519***	−1.047***
	(0.178)	(0.197)	(0.209)	(0.191)
Dispute Concern	0.157***	0.144***	−0.090*	0.105**
	(0.043)	(0.047)	(0.050)	(0.046)
Constant	3.904***	3.361***	3.704***	3.607***
	(0.186)	(0.207)	(0.218)	(0.206)
Observations	1,101	1,078	1,099	1,082
Adjusted R^2	0.042	0.063	0.148	0.072

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

In Table E.2, I find that the results are largely robust. The onset of violence increases support for military action with Pakistan and China. However, the effect on support for military action with Bangladesh is no longer significant.

Table E.2: Support for Military Action (Post Attack)

	Dependent variable:			
	Any Country	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Treatment x Onset of Violence	0.429***	0.244	−0.007	0.134
	(0.145)	(0.175)	(0.190)	(0.161)
Treatment	−0.212**	0.031	0.151	0.121
	(0.103)	(0.124)	(0.132)	(0.114)
Onset of Violence	−0.026	0.183	0.963***	0.401***
	(0.129)	(0.156)	(0.169)	(0.143)
Dispute Concern	0.196***	0.034	−0.076*	0.046
	(0.031)	(0.038)	(0.040)	(0.035)
Constant	3.832***	3.802***	3.777***	3.691***
	(0.136)	(0.166)	(0.175)	(0.152)
Observations	1,095	1,088	1,090	1,085
Adjusted R^2	0.074	0.029	0.123	0.060

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Finally, in Table E.3, I estimate the effect on support for compromise. Across each named country outcome, I find that the onset of violence sharply reduces support for a compromise. Interestingly, the effect of the interaction term on support for compromise with Pakistan is significant. It is possible that the attacks could have primed respondents with concerns about future conflict and war. Consequently, reminding them of a prior peaceful settlement improved support for a compromise to mitigate future war.

Table E.3: Support for Pursuing Compromise (Post Attack)

	Dependent variable:			
	Any Country	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Treatment x Onset of Violence	0.096	0.255	0.552**	0.226
	(0.187)	(0.214)	(0.229)	(0.215)
Treatment	0.077	−0.138	0.064	0.107
	(0.131)	(0.153)	(0.161)	(0.152)
Onset of Violence	−0.172	−0.579***	−1.578***	−0.671***
	(0.166)	(0.191)	(0.204)	(0.191)
Dispute Concern	0.145***	0.197***	−0.075	0.189***
	(0.040)	(0.046)	(0.049)	(0.046)
Constant	3.592***	3.253***	3.685***	3.169***
	(0.175)	(0.202)	(0.214)	(0.202)
Observations	1,101	1,085	1,106	1,081
Adjusted R^2	0.010	0.027	0.130	0.035

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

F   Delhi Sample Dovish Bias

In the paper, I argued that respondents who observed violence in territorial disputes were more likely to decrease support for peaceful settlement and increase support for military action. Specifically, in Figure 8 I find a strong spillover effect of violence on public opinion. One concern of these results is that the entire sample is drawn from Delhi. Accordingly, the results could have limited generalizability. However, data from Study I suggests that Delhi respondents are among the most dovish in the entire sample. On average, respondents are more likely to support peaceful settlement and compromise compared to respondents from other states. Table F.1 is a crosstabulation of my main outcomes by state. I show the average support for each main outcome across treatment and control groups. Overall, respondents in Delhi are more likely to support a peaceful settlement with each of India's neighbors.

Table F.1: Average Support for Outcomes by State

	Any Country		Bangladesh		China		Pakistan	
	Control	Treat	Control	Treat	Control	Treat	Control	Treat
Support for Peaceful Settlement:								
Delhi	4.43	4.37	3.84	3.90	3.97	3.95	3.41	3.55
Gujarat	4.27	4.13	3.75	3.93	3.53	3.47	3.62	3.56
Karnataka	3.98	3.82	3.59	3.52	3.66	3.43	3.12	2.99
West Bengal	3.75	3.88	3.54	3.50	3.03	3.11	2.96	3.10
Support for Military Action:								
Delhi	4.48	4.23	3.84	3.90	3.97	3.95	3.41	3.55
Gujarat	3.77	3.76	3.75	3.93	3.53	3.47	3.62	3.56
Karnataka	3.98	4.05	3.59	3.52	3.66	3.43	3.12	2.99
West Bengal	3.84	3.92	3.54	3.50	3.03	3.11	2.96	3.10
Support for Compromiset:								
Delhi	4.07	4.12	3.91	3.73	3.80	3.87	3.43	3.52
Gujarat	3.76	3.62	3.78	3.71	3.79	3.75	3.93	3.67
Karnataka	3.53	3.67	3.48	3.51	3.55	3.45	3.30	3.15
West Bengal	3.50	3.51	2.87	2.77	2.52	2.59	2.45	2.59

The dovish bias of Delhi respondents suggests that this sample presents a challenging case for testing the militarizing effects of violence. Thus, we might expect that citizens in Delhi are more likely to resist the calls for military action and conflict. Indeed, in Table F.2, I show that respondents from Delhi are less concerned about war than respondents from other states. Given this, it is reasonable to interpret the effects as the militarizing effect of violence on the most *dovish* respondents in the sample. Effect sizes are unlikely to hold for respondents with higher baseline hawkish beliefs. However, the transferability of hawkish biases is likely easier for respondents from other states.

Table F.2: Distribution of *Biggest Threat* by State

	International War	Domestic Terrorism	Corruption	Struggling Economy
Delhi	0.07	0.34	0.42	0.17
Gujarat	0.29	0.44	0.25	0.03
Karnataka	0.22	0.47	0.18	0.13
West Bengal	0.08	0.10	0.56	0.26

G   Exposure to Violence and Unfavorability

In addition to measurements of trust, I asked respondents to indicate their favorability of each neighboring country on a five-point scale. The responses provide an alternative measure of confidence in neighboring countries as negotiating partners. Furthermore, these questions were asked pre-treatment, assuaging concerns of the peaceful treatment bias. Figure G.1 shows the distribution of attitudes before and after the attacks in Pahalgam.

Despite the Pakistani government insisting it had nothing to do with the attacks,[39] the proportion of respondents who viewed Pakistan as "very unfavorable" spiked to 97 percent following the attacks. The total number of Indians who viewed Pakistan as "very" or "somewhat" favorable was low to begin with, at 11 percent, but fell to an astonishing .5 percent following the attacks. In raw numbers, only 3 of the 618 respondents reported having any positive view of Pakistan. But if public opinion of violence does spill over into other disputes and heighten nationalist distrust of any state, we would expect to observe a change in favorability toward India's other neighbors. In panels (b) and (c), this is precisely what I find.

When respondents were asked how they viewed Bangladesh and China, Indians shifted their views following the attacks as well. Before the violence, only 54 percent of Indians saw Bangladesh "somewhat" or "very" unfavorable, but this number jumped to 69 percent following the attacks. Unfavorability toward Bangladesh is common in the Indian public. But the progress in India-Bangladesh relations following the 2015 agreement was building a positive public perception. However, the attacks in Pahalgam appeared to have shifted public opinion more negatively.[40]

Figure G.1: Effect of Attacks on Favorability
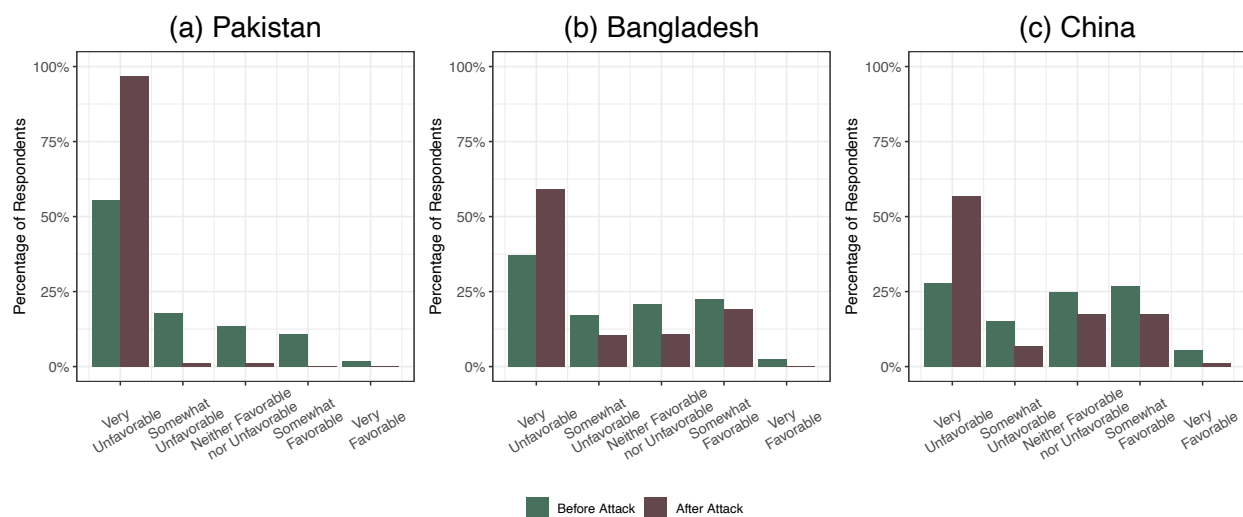
Similarly, negative views of China increased following the attacks. In October of 2024,

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[39]https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/4/26/pakistan-calls-for-neutral-investigation-into-kashmir-attack

[40]A series of t-tests on the difference in means rejects the null hypothesis that the difference in favorability is equal to 0.

India signed a border agreement with China to settle the Galwan Valley clashes in 2020. Perhaps due to this, the Indian public viewed China in a relatively positive light before the Pahalgam attacks. However, following the attacks, the favorability numbers dropped to just 18 percent while the unfavorability numbers spiked to 63 percent. Conflict over territory with Pakistan likely heightens fears of a Pakistani-Chinese partnership in the region. Violence in Kashmir heightened fears about threats to the homeland and consolidated public opinion against India's perceived adversaries. This sharp increase in unfavorability provides strong support for my hypothesis that the outbreak of violence in territorial disputes has spillover effects on the public opinion of neighboring states.

H   Effect of Violence on Muslim and Non-BJP Voters

The incumbent party in India, the BJP, has campaigned on a strong anti-Pakistan position and highlighted the importance of the Hindu homeland. Moreover, the party has been criticized for its discriminatory treatment of Indian Muslims. One alternative explanation, then, for the results in study two is that the effect is being driven by BJP elites or their voters. To adjudicate these claims, I filter my sample size down to only Muslim respondents (n=89) and non-BJP voters (n=449). I re-estimate the effect of the onset of violence on each of my outcomes within each sample. Figure H.1 shows the results.

Figure H.1: Effect of Violence on Public Opinion
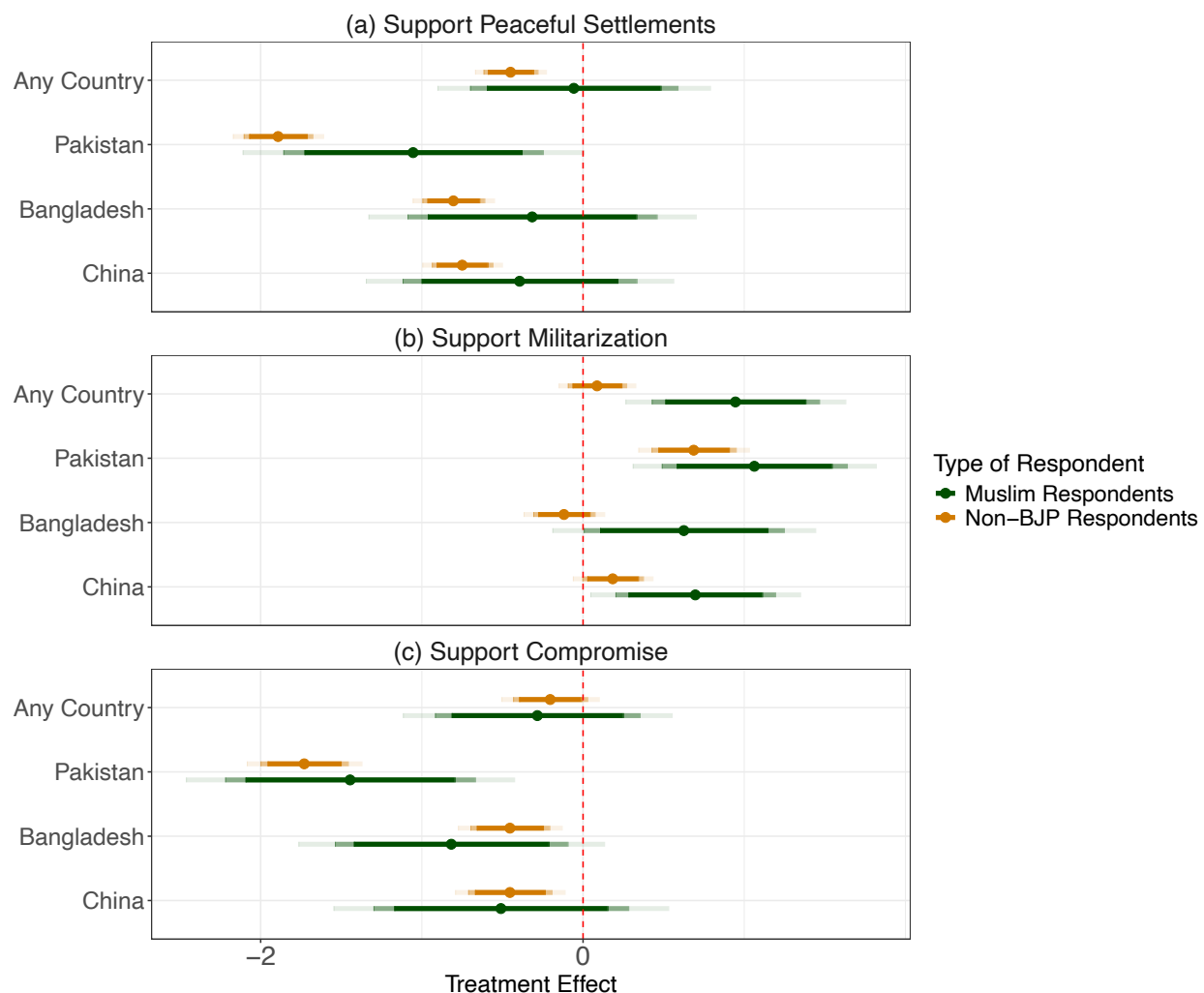
In green, I show the effect of violence on the public opinion of Muslim respondents in India. Conversely, in orange, I show the effect on any non-BJP voter. Across both samples, I find that the onset of violence sharply reduced support for peaceful settlement or compromise with Pakistan and increased support for military action. For Muslim voters, there is little spillover effect to other neighbors. Though the coefficients for Bangladesh and China are in

the expected directions, they are not robust to p-value corrections. However, for non-BJP voters, I find a strong spillover effect in public attitudes toward other states. Though there is a limited militarizing effect, non-BJP voters are less likely to support a peaceful settlement or compromise with Bangladesh or China.

Overall, these results suggest that BJP voters are not the sole driver of my results. However, given the limited sample sizes, there should be caution whe interpreting these results.

I Study I Tables

I.1 Pooled Treatment Tables

Below, I report the full regression tables for the pooled treatment results of study one. I include a control for any unbalanced covariates in addition to state fixed effects. In each table, Delhi is the omitted state category. It is noteworthy that many of the state coefficients are negative with respect to support for peaceful settlement. Of particular surprise is Karnataka, given it is not a BJP stronghold. These results conflict with table I.2 where there is a reduction in support for military action among respondents in Karnataka.

Table I.1: Support for Peaceful Settlement

	Dependent variable:			
	Any Country	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Treatment	−0.018	0.049	0.065	−0.002
	(0.059)	(0.064)	(0.074)	(0.070)
Dispute Concern	0.183***	0.304***	0.244***	0.336***
	(0.025)	(0.027)	(0.031)	(0.030)
Gujarat	−0.150**	0.127	0.154*	−0.327***
	(0.073)	(0.081)	(0.093)	(0.088)
Karnataka	−0.522***	−0.338***	−0.493***	−0.449***
	(0.072)	(0.080)	(0.093)	(0.088)
West Bengal	−0.367***	−0.088	−0.211**	−0.528***
	(0.070)	(0.077)	(0.089)	(0.084)
Constant	3.823***	2.888***	2.699***	2.884***
	(0.105)	(0.115)	(0.133)	(0.127)
Observations	2,220	2,254	2,274	2,250
Adjusted R^2	0.057	0.070	0.051	0.098

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table I.2: Support for Military Action

	Dependent variable:			
	Any Country	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Treatment	−0.017	−0.003	0.010	−0.012
	(0.058)	(0.058)	(0.063)	(0.059)
Dispute Concern	0.023	0.040	−0.170***	−0.119***
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.027)	(0.026)
Gujarat	−0.517***	−0.182**	0.032	−0.263***
	(0.072)	(0.073)	(0.080)	(0.076)
Karnataka	−0.253***	−0.133*	0.043	−0.228***
	(0.071)	(0.073)	(0.079)	(0.075)
West Bengal	−0.364***	−0.037	0.366***	0.083
	(0.069)	(0.070)	(0.075)	(0.072)
Constant	4.232***	3.808***	4.176***	4.317***
	(0.105)	(0.106)	(0.113)	(0.108)
Observations	2,214	2,268	2,291	2,273
Adjusted R^2	0.025	0.003	0.047	0.031

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table I.3: Support for Pursuing Compromise

	Dependent variable:			
	Any Country	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Treatment	0.025	−0.045	0.026	0.056
	(0.065)	(0.066)	(0.070)	(0.066)
Dispute Concern	0.104***	0.427***	0.361***	0.441***
	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.028)
Gujarat	−0.420***	0.136	0.368***	0.092
	(0.083)	(0.086)	(0.090)	(0.086)
Karnataka	−0.463***	−0.233***	−0.307***	−0.355***
	(0.083)	(0.086)	(0.090)	(0.086)
West Bengal	−0.482***	−0.495***	−0.538***	−0.775***
	(0.078)	(0.081)	(0.085)	(0.082)
Constant	3.760***	2.451***	2.344***	2.409***
	(0.117)	(0.120)	(0.126)	(0.121)
Observations	2,386	2,408	2,433	2,407
Adjusted R^2	0.032	0.171	0.149	0.217

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

I.2 Categorized Treatment Tables

To test the *spillover of perceived benefits* mechanism, I designed three different versions of the treatment vignette to induce public support for peaceful settlement. Each vignette corresponded to the hypothesized benefit. In the tables below, I report the results of the different treatments on the main outcomes. In these tables, I include an additional control for gender since it was not balanced across each group. Across each outcome and treatment type, I find no effect of the treatment. The exception was the general treatment effect on public support for a peaceful settlement with Pakistan. However, this coefficient is not robust to p-value corrections.

Table I.4: Support for Peaceful Settlement

	Dependent variable:			
	Any Country	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
General	−0.032	0.069	0.187**	0.036
	(0.075)	(0.081)	(0.094)	(0.088)
Homeland	0.015	0.033	0.093	0.008
	(0.075)	(0.082)	(0.094)	(0.089)
Security	−0.041	0.049	−0.079	−0.101
	(0.076)	(0.084)	(0.096)	(0.091)
Economic	−0.006	0.055	0.059	0.056
	(0.075)	(0.082)	(0.094)	(0.089)
Dispute Concern	0.186***	0.305***	0.252***	0.342***
	(0.025)	(0.027)	(0.031)	(0.030)
Male	−0.029	−0.084	0.067	−0.035
	(0.061)	(0.067)	(0.077)	(0.073)
Other	−0.973**	−0.290	−2.174***	−1.583***
	(0.404)	(0.444)	(0.515)	(0.483)
Gujarat	−0.138*	0.153*	0.133	−0.316***
	(0.075)	(0.083)	(0.096)	(0.091)
Karnataka	−0.510***	−0.345***	−0.456***	−0.429***
	(0.073)	(0.081)	(0.093)	(0.088)
West Bengal	−0.354***	−0.064	−0.220**	−0.509***
	(0.072)	(0.079)	(0.091)	(0.086)
Constant	3.827***	2.935***	2.631***	2.884***
	(0.111)	(0.122)	(0.140)	(0.134)
Observations	2,220	2,254	2,274	2,250
Adjusted R^2	0.058	0.069	0.060	0.102

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table I.5: Support for Military Action

	Dependent variable:			
	Any Country	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
General	−0.013	−0.045	−0.002	−0.044
	(0.073)	(0.073)	(0.080)	(0.075)
Homeland	−0.151**	−0.051	−0.043	−0.061
	(0.073)	(0.074)	(0.081)	(0.076)
Security	0.106	0.034	0.014	0.066
	(0.075)	(0.076)	(0.082)	(0.078)
Economic	0.011	0.055	0.073	0.002
	(0.073)	(0.074)	(0.080)	(0.076)
Dispute Concern	0.024	0.040	−0.168***	−0.116***
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.027)	(0.026)
Male	−0.208***	0.031	0.057	0.049
	(0.059)	(0.060)	(0.066)	(0.062)
Other	0.240	−0.319	−0.654	−1.094***
	(0.396)	(0.404)	(0.442)	(0.415)
Gujarat	−0.456***	−0.191**	0.013	−0.274***
	(0.074)	(0.076)	(0.082)	(0.078)
Karnataka	−0.288***	−0.124*	0.059	−0.209***
	(0.072)	(0.073)	(0.080)	(0.075)
West Bengal	−0.315***	−0.045	0.352***	0.069
	(0.070)	(0.072)	(0.077)	(0.074)
Constant	4.359***	3.787***	4.137***	4.279***
	(0.110)	(0.111)	(0.119)	(0.114)
Observations	2,214	2,268	2,291	2,273
Adjusted R^2	0.034	0.002	0.047	0.034

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table I.6: Support for Pursuing Compromise

| | *Dependent variable:* | | | |
| | Any Country | Bangladesh | Pakistan | China |
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
General	−0.017	0.017	0.095	0.096
	(0.083)	(0.084)	(0.089)	(0.085)
Homeland	0.040	−0.067	0.092	0.095
	(0.083)	(0.084)	(0.089)	(0.085)
Security	−0.011	−0.054	−0.118	−0.013
	(0.084)	(0.085)	(0.090)	(0.086)
Economic	0.089	−0.056	0.042	0.051
	(0.083)	(0.084)	(0.089)	(0.084)
Dispute Concern	0.105***	0.428***	0.369***	0.445***
	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.028)
Male	−0.034	−0.247***	0.022	−0.016
	(0.069)	(0.071)	(0.075)	(0.071)
Other	−0.523	−0.568	−2.227***	−1.197**
	(0.462)	(0.471)	(0.501)	(0.476)
Gujarat	−0.410***	0.210**	0.364***	0.099
	(0.086)	(0.088)	(0.093)	(0.089)
Karnataka	−0.456***	−0.258***	−0.269***	−0.338***
	(0.084)	(0.086)	(0.091)	(0.087)
West Bengal	−0.468***	−0.422***	−0.529***	−0.762***
	(0.081)	(0.083)	(0.087)	(0.084)
Constant	3.774***	2.597***	2.302***	2.404***
	(0.124)	(0.128)	(0.133)	(0.128)
Observations	2,386	2,408	2,433	2,407
Adjusted R^2	0.031	0.175	0.156	0.218

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

I.3 Trust for Neighboring States

Below, I report the full tables for the effect of the treatment vignette on trust for adversary states. I find that the treatment vignette is effective at increasing trust for neighboring states of Bangladesh and China. However, it does not increase trust in Pakistan. These coefficients are robust to p-value corrections.

Table I.7: Trust for Negotiating Partners

	Dependent variable:		
	Trust Bangladesh	Trust Pakistan	Trust China
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Treatment	0.147**	0.087	0.157**
	(0.068)	(0.066)	(0.067)
Dispute Concern	0.243***	0.171***	0.169***
	(0.029)	(0.027)	(0.028)
Gujarat	0.737***	0.890***	0.283***
	(0.088)	(0.085)	(0.088)
Karnataka	0.397***	0.031	−0.055
	(0.091)	(0.087)	(0.090)
West Bengal	0.110	0.084	−0.467***
	(0.084)	(0.080)	(0.083)
Constant	1.446***	1.531***	1.987***
	(0.125)	(0.118)	(0.123)
Observations	2,348	2,385	2,368
Adjusted R^2	0.080	0.082	0.081

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

I.4 Dispute Salience Interaction Models

I showed that high salience individuals are more likely to update their prior beliefs after receiving the treatment vignette. In the tables below, I report the full table from the dispute salience figure in the main text. I show that respondents who indicate disputed territories have high salience are significantly more likely to support peaceful settlements of future claims, but not more likely to support compromise and military action.

Table I.8: Support for Peaceful Settlement

	Dependent variable:		
	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Treatment x High Dispute Salience	0.310**	0.342**	0.264*
	(0.127)	(0.144)	(0.137)
Treatment	−0.103	−0.095	−0.128
	(0.091)	(0.104)	(0.099)
High Dispute Salience	0.145	0.418***	0.336***
	(0.114)	(0.129)	(0.123)
Dispute Concern	0.280***	0.203***	0.304***
	(0.027)	(0.031)	(0.029)
Gujarat	0.034	−0.012	−0.462***
	(0.081)	(0.092)	(0.088)
Karnataka	−0.419***	−0.641***	−0.565***
	(0.080)	(0.091)	(0.087)
West Bengal	−0.230***	−0.460***	−0.724***
	(0.079)	(0.089)	(0.085)
Constant	2.964***	2.743***	2.917***
	(0.125)	(0.142)	(0.137)
Observations	2,254	2,274	2,250
Adjusted R^2	0.093	0.103	0.133

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Interestingly, in table I.16, I show that *high salience* has a strong and statistically significant effect on increasing support for military action, while the treatment vignette has a null effect. Respondents who believe disputed territories are highly salient are more likely to support military action against Bangladesh, Pakistan, and China. Prior work from Hensel and Mitchell (2005) demonstrated how the salience of a dispute can motivate states to pursue military action. My results below provide individual-level support for this finding.

Table I.9: Support for Military Action

	Dependent variable:		
	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Treatment x High Dispute Salience	−0.056	−0.142	0.041
	(0.112)	(0.122)	(0.116)
Treatment	0.038	0.094	−0.027
	(0.081)	(0.088)	(0.084)
High Dispute Salience	0.641***	0.715***	0.430***
	(0.100)	(0.109)	(0.104)
Dispute Concern	0.012	−0.199***	−0.140***
	(0.024)	(0.026)	(0.025)
Gujarat	−0.334***	−0.128	−0.375***
	(0.072)	(0.079)	(0.075)
Karnataka	−0.263***	−0.093	−0.323***
	(0.071)	(0.078)	(0.074)
West Bengal	−0.250***	0.146*	−0.080
	(0.069)	(0.075)	(0.073)
Constant	3.682***	4.025***	4.253***
	(0.112)	(0.121)	(0.116)
Observations	2,268	2,291	2,273
Adjusted R^2	0.068	0.100	0.066

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table I.10: Support for Pursuing Compromise

	Dependent variable:		
	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Treatment x High Dispute Salience	0.375***	0.159	0.180
	(0.130)	(0.137)	(0.129)
Treatment	−0.220**	−0.039	−0.019
	(0.091)	(0.096)	(0.091)
High Dispute Salience	0.239**	0.514***	0.527***
	(0.116)	(0.122)	(0.115)
Dispute Concern	0.379***	0.304***	0.382***
	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.028)
Gujarat	0.001	0.200**	−0.083
	(0.085)	(0.090)	(0.085)
Karnataka	−0.352***	−0.451***	−0.506***
	(0.085)	(0.089)	(0.085)
West Bengal	−0.665***	−0.739***	−0.986***
	(0.081)	(0.085)	(0.081)
Constant	2.577***	2.382***	2.451***
	(0.129)	(0.134)	(0.127)
Observations	2,408	2,433	2,407
Adjusted R^2	0.206	0.190	0.263

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

I.4.1 Continuous Dispute Salience Measure

I estimate the models again using a continuous measure of dispute salience. Respondents indicated how many of the six disputed territories were important to them. I take a simple continuous measure where 0 means a respondent indicated no territories were important and 6 means all territories were important. I show that my results are robust to this alternative specification of salience.

Table I.11: Support for Peaceful Settlement

	Dependent variable:		
	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Treatment x Dispute Salience	0.067**	0.066**	0.062**
	(0.027)	(0.030)	(0.029)
Treatment	−0.152	−0.125	−0.187*
	(0.105)	(0.119)	(0.114)
Dispute Salience	0.055**	0.114***	0.083***
	(0.024)	(0.027)	(0.026)
Dispute Concern	0.255***	0.170***	0.277***
	(0.027)	(0.031)	(0.030)
Gujarat	−0.014	−0.064	−0.505***
	(0.081)	(0.092)	(0.088)
Karnataka	−0.471***	−0.702***	−0.616***
	(0.080)	(0.091)	(0.087)
West Bengal	−0.329***	−0.577***	−0.824***
	(0.080)	(0.090)	(0.087)
Constant	2.992***	2.760***	2.961***
	(0.132)	(0.149)	(0.144)
Observations	2,254	2,274	2,250
Adjusted R^2	0.106	0.113	0.142

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table I.12: Support for Military Action

	Dependent variable:		
	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Treatment x Dispute Salience	−0.015	−0.045*	−0.026
	(0.024)	(0.026)	(0.025)
Treatment	0.048	0.156	0.071
	(0.093)	(0.101)	(0.096)
Dispute Salience	0.135***	0.159***	0.127***
	(0.021)	(0.023)	(0.022)
Dispute Concern	−0.006	−0.216***	−0.159***
	(0.024)	(0.027)	(0.025)
Gujarat	−0.345***	−0.136*	−0.404***
	(0.072)	(0.079)	(0.075)
Karnataka	−0.284***	−0.110	−0.357***
	(0.072)	(0.078)	(0.075)
West Bengal	−0.301***	0.100	−0.145**
	(0.071)	(0.077)	(0.074)
Constant	3.672***	3.971***	4.168***
	(0.119)	(0.128)	(0.122)
Observations	2,268	2,291	2,273
Adjusted R^2	0.062	0.094	0.071

Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table I.13: Support for Pursuing Compromise

	Dependent variable:		
	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Treatment x Dispute Salience	0.097***	0.044	0.064**
	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.027)
Treatment	−0.323***	−0.092	−0.121
	(0.103)	(0.108)	(0.102)
Dispute Salience	0.057**	0.128***	0.114***
	(0.024)	(0.025)	(0.024)
Dispute Concern	0.344***	0.261***	0.340***
	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.028)
Gujarat	−0.048	0.143	−0.135
	(0.085)	(0.089)	(0.085)
Karnataka	−0.408***	−0.516***	−0.567***
	(0.085)	(0.089)	(0.084)
West Bengal	−0.757***	−0.849***	−1.092***
	(0.082)	(0.085)	(0.081)
Constant	2.678***	2.438***	2.551***
	(0.134)	(0.139)	(0.133)
Observations	2,408	2,433	2,407
Adjusted R^2	0.218	0.207	0.279

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

I.4.2 Weighted Dispute Salience Models

To adjust for the possibility that some disputes are inherently more important than others, I include an alternative measure of dispute salience. Rather than totaling the number of disputes each respondent finds important, I construct an index that accounts for the relative importance of each dispute. I calculate the proportion of respondents who indicated that each disputed territory was important. I then weigh each dispute by this proportion before totaling the number of disputed items important to each respondent. The table below shows the relative importance of each dispute.

Table I.14: Dispute Importance by Proportion of Respondents

Disputed Region	Control	Treatment
Kashmir	0.66	0.65
Sir Creek River Boundary	0.45	0.44
Junagadh District	0.45	0.43
Siachen Glacier	0.42	0.41
Ladakh	0.53	0.51
Arunachal Pradesh	0.43	0.40

The average dispute salience before weighting is 2.85, with a maximum of 6. The average after weighting is 1.40 with a maximum of 2.85. This helps adjust for the salience of Kashmir relative to other disputes. After estimating the models again, my results do not change.

Table I.15: Support for Peaceful Settlement (Weighted Salience)

	Dependent variable:		
	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Treatment x Dispute Salience	0.144**	0.138**	0.129**
	(0.057)	(0.065)	(0.062)
Treatment	−0.165	−0.134	−0.191
	(0.108)	(0.122)	(0.117)
Dispute Salience	0.124**	0.250***	0.187***
	(0.051)	(0.058)	(0.055)
Dispute Concern	0.252***	0.166***	0.274***
	(0.027)	(0.031)	(0.030)
Gujarat	−0.010	−0.053	−0.497***
	(0.081)	(0.091)	(0.088)
Karnataka	−0.472***	−0.700***	−0.615***
	(0.080)	(0.091)	(0.087)
West Bengal	−0.330***	−0.572***	−0.821***
	(0.079)	(0.090)	(0.086)
Constant	2.983***	2.740***	2.942***
	(0.133)	(0.151)	(0.146)
Observations	2,254	2,274	2,250
Adjusted R^2	0.108	0.115	0.143

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table I.16: Support for Military Action (Weighted Salience)

	Dependent variable:		
	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Treatment x Dispute Salience	−0.030	−0.102*	−0.061
	(0.051)	(0.056)	(0.053)
Treatment	0.046	0.169	0.083
	(0.096)	(0.105)	(0.099)
Dispute Salience	0.289***	0.346***	0.276***
	(0.046)	(0.050)	(0.047)
Dispute Concern	−0.009	−0.219***	−0.160***
	(0.024)	(0.027)	(0.025)
Gujarat	−0.334***	−0.125	−0.394***
	(0.072)	(0.079)	(0.075)
Karnataka	−0.281***	−0.107	−0.354***
	(0.072)	(0.078)	(0.074)
West Bengal	−0.294***	0.106	−0.138*
	(0.071)	(0.077)	(0.074)
Constant	3.652***	3.939***	4.141***
	(0.120)	(0.130)	(0.124)
Observations	2,268	2,291	2,273
Adjusted R^2	0.062	0.095	0.071

Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table I.17: Support for Pursuing Compromise (Weighted Salience)

	Dependent variable:		
	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Treatment x Dispute Salience	0.208***	0.096	0.134**
	(0.057)	(0.060)	(0.057)
Treatment	−0.341***	−0.102	−0.128
	(0.106)	(0.111)	(0.105)
Dispute Salience	0.126**	0.273***	0.248***
	(0.052)	(0.054)	(0.051)
Dispute Concern	0.339***	0.257***	0.335***
	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.028)
Gujarat	−0.040	0.155*	−0.123
	(0.084)	(0.089)	(0.084)
Karnataka	−0.408***	−0.512***	−0.564***
	(0.084)	(0.088)	(0.084)
West Bengal	−0.751***	−0.838***	−1.081***
	(0.081)	(0.085)	(0.081)
Constant	2.672***	2.424***	2.533***
	(0.135)	(0.141)	(0.134)
Observations	2,408	2,433	2,407
Adjusted R^2	0.220	0.208	0.280

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

J Study 2 Tables

Below I report the full tables for the figures from study two. I show how the onset of violence dramatically reduces support for peaceful settlements and compromise but increases support for military action. I also show how it decreases trust in adversary states.

J.1 Post Attack Tables

Table J.1: Support for Peaceful Settlement (Post Attack)

	Dependent variable:			
	Any Country	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Treatment	0.130	0.172	0.272**	0.162
	(0.100)	(0.111)	(0.117)	(0.108)
Post Attack	−0.539***	−0.782***	−1.285***	−0.819***
	(0.082)	(0.091)	(0.097)	(0.089)
Dispute Concern	0.159***	0.146***	−0.088*	0.108**
	(0.043)	(0.047)	(0.050)	(0.046)
Constant	3.787***	3.295***	3.589***	3.488***
	(0.169)	(0.187)	(0.198)	(0.185)
Observations	1,101	1,078	1,099	1,082
Adjusted R^2	0.041	0.064	0.148	0.071

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table J.2: Support for Military Action (Post Attack)

	Dependent variable:			
	Any Country	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Treatment	0.003	0.153*	0.148	0.188**
	(0.073)	(0.088)	(0.095)	(0.081)
Post Attack	0.313***	0.374***	0.958***	0.506***
	(0.060)	(0.072)	(0.079)	(0.067)
Dispute Concern	0.199***	0.036	−0.076*	0.046
	(0.031)	(0.038)	(0.040)	(0.035)
Constant	3.660***	3.704***	3.780***	3.640***
	(0.124)	(0.151)	(0.159)	(0.138)
Observations	1,095	1,088	1,090	1,085
Adjusted R^2	0.068	0.029	0.124	0.061
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table J.3: Support for Pursuing Compromise (Post Attack)

	Dependent variable:			
	Any Country	Bangladesh	Pakistan	China
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Treatment	0.124	−0.010	0.335***	0.219**
	(0.093)	(0.107)	(0.115)	(0.108)
Post Attack	−0.096	−0.378***	−1.144***	−0.494***
	(0.077)	(0.088)	(0.095)	(0.089)
Dispute Concern	0.146***	0.199***	−0.070	0.191***
	(0.040)	(0.046)	(0.049)	(0.046)
Constant	3.554***	3.148***	3.467***	3.081***
	(0.158)	(0.182)	(0.194)	(0.184)
Observations	1,101	1,085	1,106	1,081
Adjusted R^2	0.011	0.026	0.126	0.035
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

J.2 Trust Tables

Table J.4: Trust for Negotiating Partners

	Dependent variable:		
	Trust Bangladesh	Trust Pakistan	Trust China
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Treatment	−0.130	0.064	−0.035
	(0.104)	(0.073)	(0.100)
Post Attack	−0.200**	−1.027***	−0.545***
	(0.086)	(0.064)	(0.085)
Dispute Concern	0.428***	0.156***	0.327***
	(0.036)	(0.033)	(0.043)
Constant	1.061***	1.598***	1.623***
	(0.149)	(0.132)	(0.172)
Observations	1,073	1,077	1,067
Adjusted R^2	0.078	0.216	0.072

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

K   Ethical Considerations

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the author's home institution. This included review by local context experts to ensure the questions and content of the survey were appropriate for the sample population. Each respondent was prompted with a consent form that informed them what the study was about and whether they would voluntarily participate. This was particularly relevant for respondents in study two who might not have wanted to engage with a politically sensitive topic.

Throughout the design and implementation of the study, I took great care to ensure respondents would feel comfortable answering questions. No personal information was collected so that all respondents felt secure in answering honestly. Furthermore, surveys were administered in local languages with local enumerators to ensure comfort and ease of facilitation. The design and implementation were also reviewed and approved by the survey firm (Quest Research and Development) before fielding.

No information in this survey contains false or manipulated information. Therefore, there were no concerns about misinformation or post-survey debriefs to correct any manipulations. Furthermore, all information presented to respondents is publicly available and accessible. There were no concerns about exposing respondents to sensitive or misleading information.

Following the attacks in Kashmir, I met with the local research team to ensure the enumerators felt comfortable interviewing respondents. The team was careful to notify respondents of the content before starting the survey to allow respondents the chance to refuse. Given that the survey was fielded in Delhi, there was little concern of exposing respondents to traumatic information or triggering reactions to the violence. Still, the local team gave their approval before proceeding with the second study.

L   Survey Instrument

Study Overview: You are invited to participate in a research study examining the attitudes and beliefs that people hold about territorial disputes. You must be at least 18 years of age and live in India. If you choose to participate, you will answer some questions about territorial disputes and your views on international politics. The study is expected to take approximately 20 minutes.

Potential Risks and Benefits: It is unlikely that you will experience any risks or discomforts beyond what would be experienced in everyday life by participating. There are no specific benefits associated with participating.

Confidentiality: The data collected in this study is anonymous. No personal information will be collected. Results from this study can be published or presented at research conferences. The anonymous data may be shared with other researchers through an online data repository called the Harvard Dataverse. The data in this repository will be widely available to researchers and to any member of the general public and can be used for any purpose. There are no permissions needed for anyone to use the data. There are no monitors or controls placed on who can access and download these data.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may choose to not participate or end your participation at any time without penalty.

Consent: I have read and understand the above information sheet. I certify that I am 18 years old or older. By clicking the "Next" button to enter the survey, I indicate my willingness to voluntarily take part in this study.

L.1   Pre-Treatment Questions

1. *Political Interests:* How often do you follow political news?
   (a) Less than once a month
   (b) Once a month
   (c) Once a week
   (d) Once every few days
   (e) Once a day or more
2. *Social Media:* How long do you spend on social media a day (including WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter/X)?
   (a) Less than half an hour
   (b) Half an hour to an hour
   (c) 1-2 hours
   (d) 2-3 hours
   (e) 3+ hours a day
3. How concerned are you with the threat of border disputes with India's neighbors?
   (a) No concern

(b) Not very concerned

(c) Somewhat concerned

(d) Very concerned

4. Are you or someone you know personally affected by border disputes with India's neighbors?

(a) Not affected

(b) Not very affected

(c) Somewhat affected

(d) Very affected

5. Which of the following disputed regions is important to you? Select all that apply. Select none if you do not consider any of them important.

(a) Kashmir

(b) Sir Creek River Boundary

(c) Junagadh District

(d) Ladakh

(e) Arunachal Pradesh

(f) Siachen Glacier

(g) Never heard of these

(h) None

6. In your opinion, what is the biggest threat facing your country?

(a) Struggling Economy

(b) Domestic Terrorism

(c) International War

(d) Corruption

(e) Other:

7. What is your opinion of China?

(a) Very favorable

(b) Somewhat favorable

(c) Neither favorable nor unfavorable

(d) Somewhat unfavorable

(e) Very unfavorable

8. What is your opinion of Bangladesh?

(a) Very favorable

(b) Somewhat favorable

(c) Neither favorable nor unfavorable

(d) Somewhat unfavorable

(e) Very unfavorable

9. What is your opinion of Pakistan?

(a) Very favorable

(b) Somewhat favorable

(c) Neither favorable nor unfavorable

(d) Somewhat unfavorable

(e) Very unfavorable

L.2 Treatment

Peaceful Resolution
[RANDOMLY SHOW THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH]

The border between India and Muslim-Majority Bangladesh has been poorly defined since both countries' independence. Recently, the Indian and Bangladeshi Governments signed a treaty to peacefully resolve the dispute. This settlement resolved a 70-year-old dispute between the states. The Prime Ministers of both countries praised the compromise. They emphasized that it could lead to more cooperation in future disputes with other countries.

Peaceful Resolution - Territorial Indivisibility
[RANDOMLY SHOW THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH]

The border between India and Muslim-Majority Bangladesh has been poorly defined since both countries' independence. Recently, the Indian and Bangladeshi Governments signed a treaty to peacefully resolve the dispute. This settlement resolved a 70-year-old dispute between the states. Despite previous concerns that India's land could not be divided, the land was distributed between the two states without damaging the homeland. Indians and Bangladeshis were free to choose which country they would have citizenship in. The Prime Ministers of both countries praised the compromise. They emphasized that it could lead to more cooperation in future disputes with other countries.

Peaceful Resolution - Security Benefits
[RANDOMLY SHOW THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH]

The border between India and Muslim-Majority Bangladesh has been poorly defined since both countries' independence. Recently, the Indian and Bangladeshi Governments signed a treaty to peacefully resolve the dispute. This settlement resolved a 70-year-old dispute between the states. Many published studies have suggested that settling border disputes is beneficial for reducing terrorism and preventing wars. Both countries are optimistic that this agreement will begin a new era of cooperation to improve border security and promote peace. The Prime Ministers of both countries praised the compromise. They emphasized that it could lead to more cooperation in future disputes with other countries.

Peaceful Resolution - Economic Benefits
[RANDOMLY SHOW THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH]

The border between India and Muslim-Majority Bangladesh has been poorly defined since both countries' independence. Recently, the Indian and Bangladeshi Governments signed a treaty to peacefully resolve the dispute. This settlement resolved a 70-year-old dispute between the states. The deal was accompanied by a series of economic agreements that invested more than Rs. 40,000 crore into joint electric infrastructure. This was in addition to the establishment of a new joint economic zone to increase trade between the two nations. The Prime Ministers of both countries praised the compromise. They emphasized that it could lead to more cooperation in future disputes with other countries.

Control
[RANDOMLY SHOW NEITHER PARAGRAPH]

L.3   DV: Support for Peaceful Settlements

1. India should peacefully resolve another one of its territorial disputes.
   (a) Strongly Agree
   (b) Somewhat Agree
   (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   (d) Somewhat Disagree
   (e) Strongly Disagree
2. India should resolve another one of its territorial disputes with Bangladesh.
   (a) Strongly Agree
   (b) Somewhat Agree
   (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   (d) Somewhat Disagree
   (e) Strongly Disagree
3. India should peacefully resolve one of its territorial disputes with Pakistan.
   (a) Strongly Agree
   (b) Somewhat Agree
   (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   (d) Somewhat Disagree
   (e) Strongly Disagree
4. India should peacefully resolve one of its territorial disputes with China.
   (a) Strongly Agree
   (b) Somewhat Agree
   (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   (d) Somewhat Disagree
   (e) Strongly Disagree
5. How likely is it that India will peacefully resolve each of the following disputes with Pakistan? Please indicate your response from 1 (least likely) to 5 (most likely).
   (a) Kashmir
   (b) Sir Creek River Boundary
   (c) Junagadh District
   (d) Siachen Glacier
6. How likely is it that India will peacefully resolve each of the following disputes with China? Please indicate your response from 1 (Least likely) to 5 (most likely).
   (a) Ladakh
   (b) Arunachal Pradesh

L.4   DV: Support for Use of Military Force

1. India should rely on military action to resolve any of its territorial disputes.
   (a) Strongly Agree
   (b) Somewhat Agree
   (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   (d) Somewhat Disagree
   (e) Strongly Disagree

2. India should rely on military action to resolve its territorial disputes with Pakistan.
   (a) Strongly Agree
   (b) Somewhat Agree
   (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   (d) Somewhat Disagree
   (e) Strongly Disagree
3. India should rely on military action to resolve its territorial disputes with China.
   (a) Strongly Agree
   (b) Somewhat Agree
   (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   (d) Somewhat Disagree
   (e) Strongly Disagree
4. India should rely on military action to resolve its territorial disputes with Bangladesh.
   (a) Strongly Agree
   (b) Somewhat Agree
   (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   (d) Somewhat Disagree
   (e) Strongly Disagree
5. To what extent do you agree that it is necessary for India to use military action to resolve the following disputes with Pakistan. Please indicate your response from 1 (least likely) to 5 (most likely).
   (a) Kashmir
   (b) Sir Creek River Boundary
   (c) Junagadh District
   (d) Siachen Glacier
6. To what extent do you agree that it is necessary for India to use military action to resolve the following disputes with China. Please indicate your response from 1 (least likely) to 5 (most likely).
   (a) Ladakh
   (b) Arunachal Pradesh

L.5   DV: Support for Compromise

1. I would support India proposing a compromise over any of its territorial disputes.
   (a) Strongly Agree
   (b) Somewhat Agree
   (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   (d) Somewhat Disagree
   (e) Strongly Disagree
2. I would support India proposing a compromise with China over any of its territorial disputes.
   (a) Strongly Agree
   (b) Somewhat Agree
   (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   (d) Somewhat Disagree

(e) Strongly Disagree
3. I would support India proposing a compromise with Pakistan over any of its territorial disputes.
    (a) Strongly Agree
    (b) Somewhat Agree
    (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
    (d) Somewhat Disagree
    (e) Strongly Disagree
4. I would support India proposing a compromise with Bangladesh over any of its territorial disputes.
    (a) Strongly Agree
    (b) Somewhat Agree
    (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
    (d) Somewhat Disagree
    (e) Strongly Disagree
5. To what extent would you support India compromising with Pakistan over the following disputes? Please indicate your response from 1 (least likely) to 5 (most likely).
    (a) Kashmir
    (b) Sir Creek River Boundary
    (c) Junagadh District
    (d) Siachen Glacier
6. To what extent would you support India compromising with China over the following disputes? Please indicate your response from 1 (least likely) to 5 (most likely).
    (a) Ladakh
    (b) Arunachal Pradesh

L.6   Mechanisms

1. *Economic Benefits:* Settling territorial disputes with neighboring countries positively affects my country's economic development.
    (a) Strongly Agree
    (b) Somewhat Agree
    (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
    (d) Somewhat Disagree
    (e) Strongly Disagree
2. *Economic Benefits:* Settling territorial disputes with neighboring countries is good for trade.
    (a) Strongly Agree
    (b) Somewhat Agree
    (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
    (d) Somewhat Disagree
    (e) Strongly Disagree
3. *Security Benefits:* Settling territorial disputes with neighboring countries makes my country safer from wars with neighbors.
    (a) Strongly Agree

(b) Somewhat Agree

(c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree

(d) Somewhat Disagree

(e) Strongly Disagree

4. *Security Benefits:* Settling territorial disputes with neighboring countries will make my country safer from terrorism.

(a) Strongly Agree

(b) Somewhat Agree

(c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree

(d) Somewhat Disagree

(e) Strongly Disagree

5. *Security Benefits:* Settling territorial disputes with neighboring countries helps secure my country's borders.

(a) Strongly Agree

(b) Somewhat Agree

(c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree

(d) Somewhat Disagree

(e) Strongly Disagree

6. *State Trust:* I trust the Pakistani government in future negotiations over disputed territories.

(a) Strongly Agree

(b) Somewhat Agree

(c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree

(d) Somewhat Disagree

(e) Strongly Disagree

7. *State Trust:* I trust the Bangladeshi government in future negotiations over disputed territories.

(a) Strongly Agree

(b) Somewhat Agree

(c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree

(d) Somewhat Disagree

(e) Strongly Disagree

8. *State Trust:* I trust the Chinese government in future negotiations over disputed territories.

(a) Strongly Agree

(b) Somewhat Agree

(c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree

(d) Somewhat Disagree

(e) Strongly Disagree

9. *State Trust:* I trust the Indian government in future negotiations over disputed territories.

(a) Strongly Agree

(b) Somewhat Agree

(c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree

(d) Somewhat Disagree

(e) Strongly Disagree
10. *Territorial Indivisibility:* It is possible to settle territorial disputes by dividing the land between countries.
    (a) Strongly Agree
    (b) Somewhat Agree
    (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
    (d) Somewhat Disagree
    (e) Strongly Disagree
11. *Territorial Indivisibility:* Dividing land in disputed regions does not damage the homeland.
    (a) Strongly Agree
    (b) Somewhat Agree
    (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
    (d) Somewhat Disagree
    (e) Strongly Disagree
12. *Territorial Indivisibility:* India should negotiate a settlement that divides the territory in the following disputes.
    (a) Kashmir
    (b) Sir Creek River Boundary
    (c) Junagadh District
    (d) Ladakh
    (e) Arunachal Pradesh

L.7 Favorability

1. What is your opinion of China?
   (a) Very favorable
   (b) Somewhat favorable
   (c) Neither favorable nor unfavorable
   (d) Somewhat unfavorable
   (e) Very unfavorable
2. What is your opinion of Bangladesh?
   (a) Very favorable
   (b) Somewhat favorable
   (c) Neither favorable nor unfavorable
   (d) Somewhat unfavorable
   (e) Very unfavorable
3. What is your opinion of Pakistan?
   (a) Very favorable
   (b) Somewhat favorable
   (c) Neither favorable nor unfavorable
   (d) Somewhat unfavorable
   (e) Very unfavorable

L.8   Political Tolerance

1. India is a Hindu Nation
   - (a) Strongly Agree
   - (b) Somewhat Agree
   - (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   - (d) Somewhat Disagree
   - (e) Strongly Disagree
2. Hindi should be the national language of India
   - (a) Strongly Agree
   - (b) Somewhat Agree
   - (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   - (d) Somewhat Disagree
   - (e) Strongly Disagree
3. Muslims face discrimination in India
   - (a) Strongly Agree
   - (b) Somewhat Agree
   - (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   - (d) Somewhat Disagree
   - (e) Strongly Disagree
4. Islamic values are compatible with Indian values
   - (a) Strongly Agree
   - (b) Somewhat Agree
   - (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   - (d) Somewhat Disagree
   - (e) Strongly Disagree
5. The Citizenship Amendment Act of 2019 was good for my country.
   - (a) Strongly Agree
   - (b) Somewhat Agree
   - (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   - (d) Somewhat Disagree
   - (e) Strongly Disagree
6. I support the construction and opening of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya.
   - (a) Strongly Agree
   - (b) Somewhat Agree
   - (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree
   - (d) Somewhat Disagree
   - (e) Strongly Disagree

L.9   Demographic Information

1. Did you know that India settled a border dispute with Bangladesh in 2016 before taking this survey?
   - (a) Yes
   - (b) No

2. Who was the Indian Prime Minister in 2016?
3. Who was the Bangladeshi Prime Minister in 2016?
4. What is your sex?
   (a) Female
   (b) Male
   (c) Non-binary
   (d) Other
5. What is your age?
   (a) 18 - 24
   (b) 25 - 34
   (c) 35 - 44
   (d) 45 - 54
   (e) 55 - 64
   (f) Above 65
6. What is your religion?
   (a) Hindu
   (b) Muslim
   (c) Christian
   (d) Sikh
   (e) Buddhist
   (f) Jain
   (g) Other
7. What language do you speak at home?
   (a) Hindi
   (b) Gujarati
   (c) Punjabi
   (d) Bengali
   (e) Kannada
   (f) Other (Please Specify:)
8. What is your highest level of education?
   (a) Primary School
   (b) Secondary School
   (c) Some College
   (d) Bachelor's Degree
   (e) Post-graduate Degree
   (f) None
9. What is your monthly income?
10. Which political party did you vote for in the last election?
   (a) BJP
   (b) INC
   (c) Other
   (d) None