

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-53102

Date: 04-08-2025

Title: REIMAGINING REGIONALISM: REVITALIZING SAARC FOR A PRAGMATIC SOUTH ASIAN INTEGRATION

Recommendation:

Accept as it is

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality			✓	
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity			✓	
Significance		✓		

Reviewer Name: Dr Abdul Hameed Shah

Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

Abstract Evaluation:

The abstract offers a comprehensive overview of the paper's scope, objectives, and central argument. It effectively frames regional integration as a widely recognized strategy for addressing economic and political challenges, situating SAARC within the broader global context of regional organizations. The discussion acknowledges SAARC's achievements—such as conventions on trafficking and terrorism, the South Asian University, and cultural exchange programs—while candidly addressing its limitations, including stagnation and political obstacles. The narrative positions the paper as a defense of SAARC's continued relevance, advocating for revitalization through pragmatic and depoliticized approaches rather than abandonment. The abstract's structure clearly links the historical role of SAARC, its shortcomings, and the potential pathways for renewal, concluding with a reaffirmation of its capacity to contribute to South Asian integration. Keywords are relevant and directly aligned with the thematic focus.

Introduction Evaluation:

The introduction begins with a contemporary reference to the SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu, setting a timely and relevant stage for the discussion. It provides historical context by tracing SAARC's origin to December 8, 1985, under the initiative of Bangladesh's President Zia ur Rehman, and outlines its foundational aims, such as promoting self-reliance, reducing trust deficits, and fostering socio-economic and technological cooperation. The text gives a detailed enumeration of SAARC's identified areas of collaboration, reflecting the breadth of its intended scope. It also balances recognition of initial achievements with an acknowledgment of more significant shortcomings, attributing much of the organization's stagnation to persistent political disputes, especially between India and Pakistan. The linkage between geopolitical tensions and the failure to prioritize socio-economic development is clearly articulated, establishing a solid analytical premise for the subsequent discussion.

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Overall Assessment:

The sections provided present a coherent, well-contextualized argument that situates SAARC within both historical and contemporary frameworks. The abstract and introduction maintain a logical progression from the organization's promise and achievements to its challenges, while setting up the rationale for examining revitalization strategies. The tone is academic and objective, combining factual detail with evaluative insight, and the material is clearly aligned with the paper's stated purpose of reimagining regionalism in South Asia.