

## Relationship between Democracy and Peace: Perception of University Students



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**Abstract:** *It is commonly perceived that democracy and peace are interdependent. A truly democratic society can have an everlasting peace. This paper explores the relationship between democracy and peace by exploring the behaviour of democratic state. Different kinds of democracy and peace are discussed in this paper. The research is being conducted to inspect that democracy leads to peace or peace leads to democracy. Democratic Peace Theory and its critics are discussed in detail in this paper. This paper explores the opinion of Mix method is used to conduct this study. Convenient sampling technique is used to conduct this research from a sample of 300 students of BS and MPhil level students of Political Science from Multan. The paper concludes that democratic states are more peaceful in resolving conflicts particularly with other democratic states. The role of individual leaders is very vital in the actions of democratic states.*

**Keywords:** Peace, Democracy, Democratic Peace Theory

### Democracy:

Democracy, derived from the Greek term meaning “rule by the people,” refers to a system of governance where citizens hold power to change their leaders peacefully, and the government derives its authority from people. In a democratic society, individuals can establish independent organizations like political parties and interest groups. Elected leaders enjoy the freedom to exercise their powers without fearing retaliation. It indicates that power fundamentally rests in the hands of the people in a democratic system. In a democracy, the ultimate power is entrusted to people, who exercise it directly or indirectly through a representation system, often through free elections. In a democratic society, citizens are superior and can control

government's decisions and actions. Even though democracy may have some flaws yet it remains preferable to dictatorship due to its peaceful nature. Participation of citizens, equality, accountability, Transparency, political tolerance, multi-party system, control over the abuse of power, freedom of economy, bill of rights, human rights, free and fair elections, free courts, accepting election results and rule of all are some of the basic principles of democracy (Day, 2022). A real democratic society can be established only if these elements exist.

### Different types of democracy:-

There are many types of democracy but the following four types of democracy are very important to understand;

1. Direct democracy
2. Representative democracy
3. Constitutional democracy
4. Monitory democracy

**Direct democracy:-** In direct democracy, individuals are encouraged to participate in all political decisions actively. This earlier form of democracy involved continuous citizen involvement in power practice, with decision-making relying on the rule of plurality.

**Representative democracy:-** In Representative democracy, individuals elected by the people serve as representatives, acting on their behalf, making decisions, and passing laws in their best interest, for example Australia.

**Constitutional democracy:-** Constitutional democracy refers to a governmental system where political power is disciplined and guided by a constitution., ensuring the protection of individual rights and the separation of powers; for example, Australia.

**Monitory democracy:-** According to a political scientist, there seems to be a new type of democracy emerging, wherein a broad network of public and private entities, commissions, and regulatory systems constantly monitors the government's exercise of power.

#### **Peace:**

Peace is a state where people unite without violence, fighting, or fear of brutality. It means living in harmony and having good relationships with others close to home and worldwide. Peace also means doing well socially and economically, treating everyone equally, and having a fair and effective system of government that cares about everyone's needs. Peace requires positive and constructive effort in our relationships and how we respond to situations. It is not about ignoring ourselves but about finding a state of calmness. Peace is built on respect, kindness, and understanding among people, and it emerges from both our hearts and minds. Showing compassion and empathy is a powerful way to counter violence. Maintaining a balance of power is an important step in

supporting international peace. It means preventing any state or group from becoming too powerful, as it could potentially threaten global peace. International law is crucial in preventing conflicts and promoting peace in the modern world. While some may see international law as relatively weak, it has been acknowledged and accepted by most civilized nations through their membership in international Organizations. These organizations provide essential frameworks for upholding international peace and security. There are many components of peace but the following components are very vital to understand peace.

•**Peace is an outcome:** The non-existence of violence is used as a standard to determine the existence of peace. However, peace is a complex concept that involves various features.

•**Peace is a process:** Peace is an active process that involves peace building efforts to create social connections within and between different groups of people to achieve freedom from violence.

•**Peace is a human disposition:** Peace is also a human disposition that involves personal and social attitudes towards promoting freedom from distress and the ability to take action. It is rooted in basic principles of freedom and respect for all individuals.

•**Peace is a culture:** Peace is a way of living that helps people avoid violence and promotes unity for a peaceful world (Leckman, J.F., Brick, C., & Salah, R., 2014).

#### **Types of peace:**

- **Internal Peace:** Inner peace, or feeling calm and peaceful inside, is attained by overcoming negative thoughts and emotions like anxiety, worry, greed, and hatred. It is an emotional state of being that leads to a peaceful way of living.
- **External peace:** External peace is about living together peacefully in society, countries, and the world. It means being in harmony with each other and with nature. Peace goes beyond simply the absence of violence; there are types of external peace. **Negative peace** is when there is no violence

or fear of violence, while **positive peace** is about having the right attitudes and organizations that promote peaceful societies.

- **Intrapersonal peace:** It refers to two distinct states: the first being the absence of conflict within an individual's mind, and the second being the absence of conflict between individuals, where there are no conflicts between them.
- **Intragroup peace:** The state of peace can manifest in two ways regarding groups: firstly, it refers to the absence of conflicts within a group, and secondly, it refers to the absence of conflicts between different groups, where there are no conflicts among them.
- **Interracial peace:** The state of peaceful coexistence among different races, characterized by the absence of inter-racial disputes.
- **International peace:** Peace is when a country and other nations have no conflicts or fights with each other. It is a state of calm and harmony. World peace: peace in the world.

### **Literature Review:**

Gries et. al. (2020) are of the opinion that there is strong relationship between peace and democracy. They are of the opinion that actual reason of peace between democratic societies is economic factors such as trade. The paper emphasises on Immanuel Kant's point that citizens of democratic states do not see other democratic states as threatening so they do not like to go for war against such states. However, citizens of democratic states feel enmity towards dictatorial regime so the chances of war with them may be increasing.

Braumoller (1997) in his article elaborates the attitude of masses and elites in democratic society with special reference of Soviet successor states. The paper explores that liberalism is more concerned about conflict resolution through nonviolent means. The author states that democratic peace is necessary to secure national issues. Authoritarian regimes

are more conflict prone as compare to democratic regimes.

Schafer and Walker (2006) have studied the role of democratic leaders in peace. They have studies the Tony Blair and Bill Clinton to explore their role in peace. The paper explores how the beliefs and attitude of leaders of democratic states matter in maintaining and establishing the democratic peace. This research explores whether "one size fits all" or not in different circumstances in a democratic states particularly with special reference to individual leaders of democratic states. The paper concludes that two leaders have different styles of management in resolving the conflict.

Rosato (2003) expresses his concerns about Democratic Peace Theory. He opines that democratic states do not respect or trust other states, without any discrimination between democratic or non-democratic states, in case of clashes of interests. The author has criticised the phenomenon of absence of violence between two democratic states because this would challenge the existing realist paradigm on one side and security competition on the other side. The research explores that many authors have attempted to challenge this relationship. Ray (1998) also shares the same view. He argues that common interests were mainly responsible for maintaining peace among democratic states during the Cold War era.

Thapa and Sharma (2009) explore the details of relationship between peace and democracy in Nepal. The paper points out that after the end of monarchical regime in Nepal, Maoist insurgency has almost finished due to establishment of a federal democratic republic in Nepal. The article mentions the challenges being faced by Nepal during transformation from insurgent society to a democratic and peaceful nation.

Mousseau (2013) opines that there is no correlation between peace and democracy in contemporary era rather economic factors are important for economic peace in modern world. The author explains that contract-intensive economy is the new factor in democratic peace research program in recent years. The paper

explains the detail of different economic factors such as obtaining income, services and goods in maintain peace in modern democratic world.

### **Peace and Democracy:**

Peace is essential at all levels, including inner peace for personal well-being and world peace to live a joyful life. When there is peace among all religions, it promotes unity among all races and creates a state of perfect happiness and freedom among people and countries. According to Lao Tzu's famous saying:

“If there is to be peace in the world, there must be peace in the nations. If there is to be peace in the nations, there must be peace in the cities. If there is to be peace in the cities, there must be peace between neighbours. If there is to be peace between neighbours’, there must be peace in the home. If there is to be peace in the home, there must be peace in the heart.” (goodreads, n.d)

Peace and democracy are two basic values that are interrelated. Dean Babst (1972) was amongst the founder proponents regarding exploration of relation between peace and democracy. It may be the most complex question whether democracy is inevitable for maintaining peace or peaceful environment may lead to democracy. Both the concepts of peace and democracy are internal and domestically driven phenomenon so it purely depends upon local actors not on foreign or external elements (Mross, 2019). Thomas Paine claimed that monarchical regime use to go for war to get more power and to enrich themselves but democratic states leads towards lasting peace (Paine, 1985, 169). Immanuel Kant in his Theory of Democratic peace suggests that democratic regimes are less likely to be engaged in the conflict (Cordenillo, 2018). Dan Reiter also agrees with this notion by claiming that democracy and peace are interrelated as he points out that democratic pairs of states experience less violent conflict and war as compared to non-democratic pairs of states (Reiter, 2017). Similarly Russett and Oneal (2001) claim that democratic states avoid conflict with other democratic states whereas sometimes democratic states involve in conflict with non-democratic states. This notion is further strengthen by this fact that the two

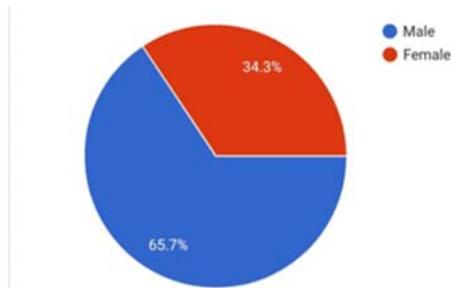
mature democratic states have rarely experienced the war since the emergence of modern democracy in 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Many other scholars such as Gleditsch (2002) and Mitchell et al. (1999) also highlight that democratic regions are more peaceful regions. It is stable democratic political institutions that culminate into peaceful environment in the state. Moreover, democratic culture promotes the basic principles of democratic norms such as rule of law, free and fair election, human rights, accountability and transparency etc. that helps in maintain peace among the population and so as in the state. The absence of one puts the other at risk. These values are essential for the development and growth of nations, but they are not easily attained. Rather, they require hard work, careful planning, and the creation of strong institutions and laws. Powerful countries are established by having strong groups and fair laws that protect the rights and duties of the people. Democratic values with respect to avoid war are so strong that President Woodrow had to explain the public that United States had to enter in World War I for democratization of Germany and to help its allies for a long term peace. (Reiter, 2017,5). Even during Obama's reign, Arab Spring was seen as a transition of Middle East towards democracy that can eventually lead towards stabilization and peace in the region. (Strauss, 2012). Whereas Worley (2012) claims that it is not the regime type that maintain peace between democracies rather it is geographic factor that helps in maintain peace among democratic states. However a detailed analysis shows that at initial level democratic states produces war but with higher level of democratization may reduce the chances of war (Gleditsch and Hegre, 1997). Similarly Mansfield and Snyder (2005) points that transitional time towards democratic structure may also cause conflict due to increased nationalism. Moreover, limited democracies, due to weaker political regime, are more likely to be involved in civil wars (Fearon and Laitin, 2003). It is very obvious that that it is very difficult for democratic governments to initiate the war as they have to look for the consent of the electorate. Moreover, democratic governments are reluctant to go for wars because

if they will lose the war, it will end their power (Baliga, Lucca and Sjostrom, 2011). General public in this nuclear era do not want war as both the winning and losing states suffer in such kind of war in contemporary global world. Immanuel Kant also claimed that, “if the ‘the consent of the citizens is required to decide whether or not war is to be declared, it is very natural that they will have great hesitation in embarking on so dangerous an enterprise” (Obydenkova and Paffenholz, 2021, 1). Baliga, Lucca and Sjostrom (2011) claim that although citizens of a democratic state want peace yet they support aggressive behaviour and violent action against hostile enemies.

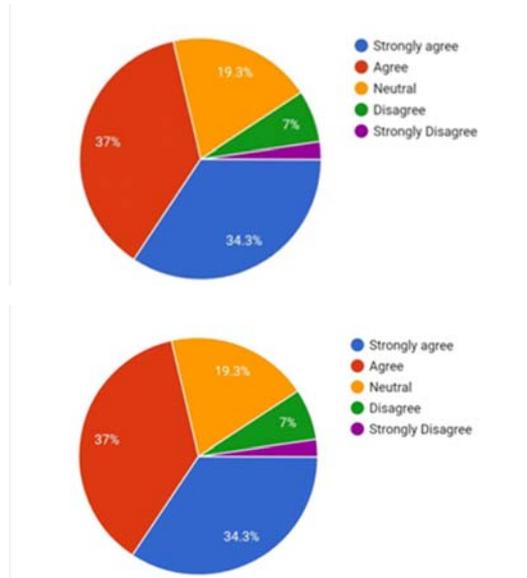
**Data Analysis**

A survey has been conducted from the students of BS and MPhil level from Multan to know their perception about relationship between democracy and peace.

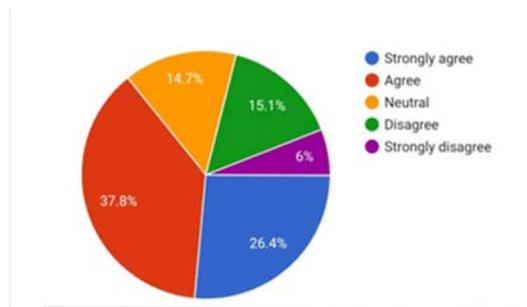
65.7% of people are Males in this survey. 34.3% participated people are Females in this survey.



In response to a question that the democratic government is more peaceful than other forms of government, 71.3% respondents are agreed with this statement, while 19.3% respondents are neutral, and 7% respondents are disagreed with this statement that democratic government is more peaceful than other forms of government. This shows that the respondents believe that a democratic government is more peaceful because people can elect their representatives according to their choice, and rights are given to people according to their needs because democracy improves the quality of decision-making. It provides peaceful methods for dealing with differences and disputes. It is a more responsible form of government because the executive is answerable to Parliament.

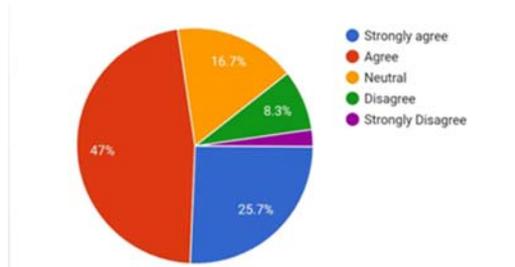


In response to a question that Democratic nations do not declare war on any other country, 64.2% respondents agree with this statement, while 14.7% respondents are neutral, and 21.1% respondents disagree with this statement that democratic nations do not declare war on any other country. The democratic countries prefer to stay in peace, follow the laws, and protect the rights of citizens. Institutional checks and balances and accountability of leaders to the public and Parliament make it hard for democratic leaders or countries to go to war. But sometimes, they go to war when their national interests and security are at risk.

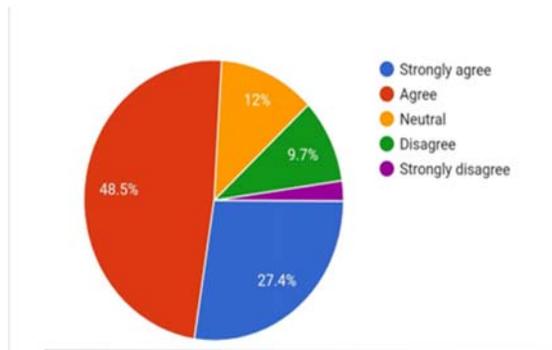


In response to a question that Democratic states are generally more peaceful than any other types of states in their foreign relations, 72.7% respondents agree with this statement, while 16.7% respondents are neutral, and 8.3% respondents disagree with this statement that democratic states are more peaceful than any other types of states in their foreign relations. Democratic states follow and respect their foreign relations because peace is their basic

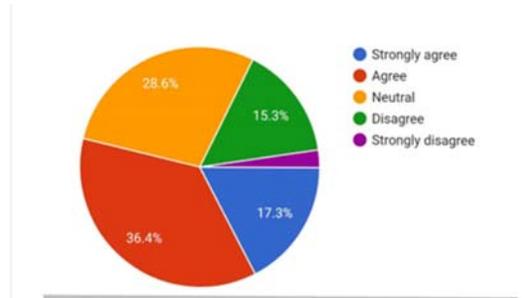
priority in maintaining their foreign affairs and agreements.



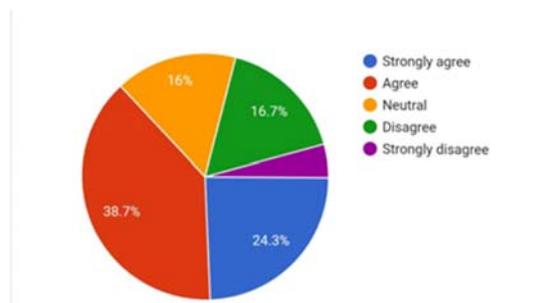
In response to question that the democratic process makes people naturally more inclined to peace and moral behaviour, 75.9% respondents agree with this statement, while 12% respondents are neutral, and 9.7% respondents disagree with this statement that democratic process makes people more inclined towards peace and moral behaviour. Democracy is where people rule. Everyone wants peace. So everyone behaves well and in a manner full way to maintain peace.



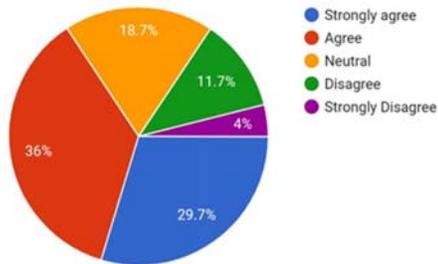
In response to a question whether autocratic countries are more likely to go to war with other autocratic countries, 53.7% respondents agree with this statement, while 28.6% respondents are neutral, and 15.3% respondents disagree with this statement that autocratic countries go to war with autocratic countries. Autocratic countries are more inclined towards power than peace. They mostly try to gain more power from wars because they prefer one man's power. After all, public opinion doesn't matter. For example Hitler – Stalin (Hitler aimed to destroy what he perceived as Stalin's 'Jewish Bolshevik' government and sought to establish Nazi dominance.



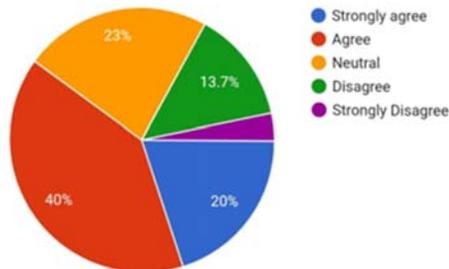
In response to a question Countries with democratic government are less likely to go to war with other democratic countries, 63% respondents agree with this statement, while 16% respondents are neutral, and 16.7% respondents disagree with this statement that democratic countries go less towards war with democratic countries. The democratic government follows the rules and regulations according to their signed agreements. Democratic government satisfies the rights of citizens and does not want war because it wants to maintain peace in its country.



In response to a question Democratic countries that respect the rights of their citizens tend to be less willing to send their citizens to war, 65.7% respondents agree with this statement, while 18.7% respondents are neutral, and 15.7% respondents disagree with this statement that democratic countries respect the rights of citizens and less willing to send them to wars. Democratic countries' basic rule is to maintain peace. They respect their citizens' rights. So they do not prefer sending their citizens to conflict or war. They are answerable and accountable for every action.

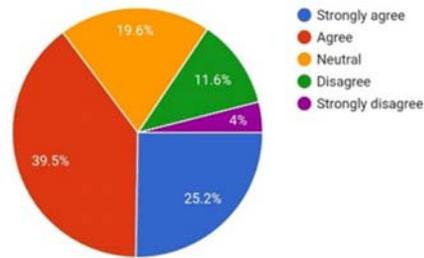


In response to a question that Democratic countries are less likely to go to war than their Autocratic peers, 60% respondents agree with this statement, while 23% respondents are neutral, and 13.7% respondents disagree with this statement that democratic countries less likely to go to war with autocratic countries. Democratic countries tend more towards peace to satisfy the rights of citizens in their country. While autocracy strives for power, the public has no right to involve itself in political activities, and the rights of people are decided by only one absolute power according to the leader's will. So democratic countries are less inclined towards wars with autocratic people.

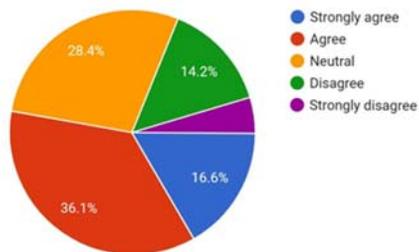


In response to a question that a democratic superpower creates a safer world around than an autocratic superpower, 64.7% respondents agree with this statement, while 19.6% respondents are neutral, and 15.6% respondents disagree with this statement that democratic superpower creates a safer world around than Autocratic superpower. Democratic superpowers are more inclined towards peace and to protect their alliances. They help and protect mostly their alliances with Soft power and become stronger. While Autocratic superpower mostly uses Hard power to gain power. So it does not create a much safer world as democratic superpowers do. Democratic US used Soft power to enhance its influence in global world such as US Policy of

economic rehabilitation, US policy of economic Assistance through Marshall Plan in which US gave aid to Britain, Europe, France and West Germany for reconstruction of Europe, US gave aid to Berlin through Airlift during Berlin crisis 1948. Whereas dictatorial regime of Hitler used hard power to increase its influence such as Hitler attack on Austria in 1938, Czechoslovakia in 1938, Poland in 1939, Denmark and Norway in 1940, Greece in 1941, Yugoslavia in 1941, The Soviet Union in 1941, Italy in 1943, Ukraine in 1941, and Hungary in 1944.

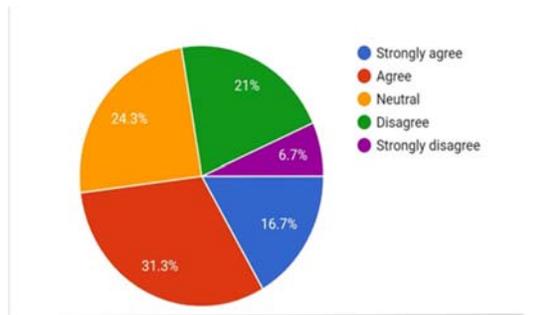


In response to a question that non-democratic countries are likely to instigate wars with democratic countries, 52.7% respondents agree with this statement, while 28.4% respondents are neutral, and 18.9% respondents disagree with this statement that non-democratic countries are more towards wars than democratic countries. Non-democratic countries strive for power. So they instigate wars with democratic countries because their basic purpose is to gain more power, not peace.

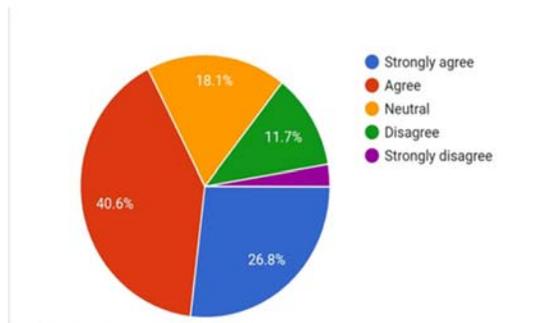


In response to a question that Democracies never have conflicting interests, 48% respondents agree with this statement, while 24.3% respondents are neutral, and 27.7% respondents disagree with this statement that Democracies never have conflicting interests. Democracies sometimes have conflicting interests. But agreements bind them, and they must follow these agreements to maintain peace in their

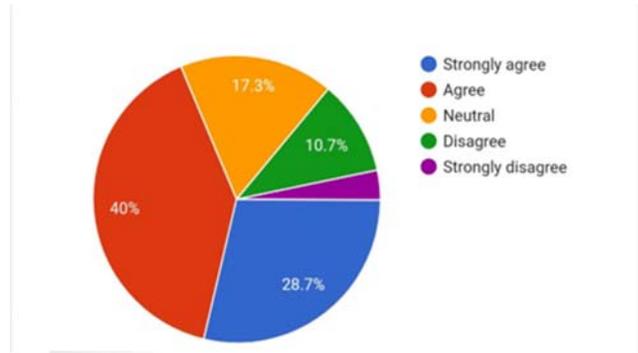
country. They make new agreements to ignore the conflict and maintain peace.



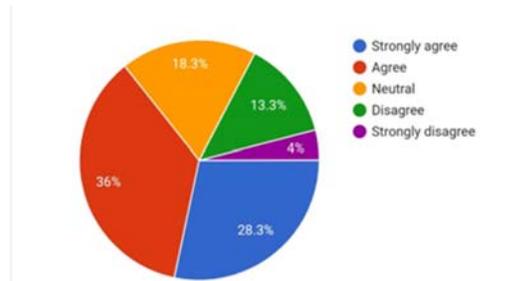
In response to a question that Democratic peace is a viable option in today's World, 67.4% respondents agree with this statement, while 18.1% respondents are neutral, and 11.7% respondents disagree with this statement that democratic peace is the viable option in today's world. Everyone wants peace today. Democracy maintains peace, resolves conflict in the country and satisfies the rights of citizens. So, democracy can be the best option in today's world.



In response to a question that a lasting peace helps building democracy, 68.7% respondents agree with this statement, while 17.3% respondents are neutral, and 10.7% respondents disagree with this statement that lasting peace helps building democracy. When there is peace in a country or government, democracy performs well because peace is the main ingredient to maintaining or building a democracy.



In response to a question that Peace is a democratic idea, 64.3% respondents agree with this statement, while 18.3% respondents are neutral, and 17.3% respondents disagree with this statement that peace is a democratic idea. Democracy gives citizens the right to live according to their will within the laws in the Constitution. So, peace can be maintained if they live properly according to the laws.



In response to a question that only democratic government have been able to reach the idea of international security arrangements, 60.2% respondents agree with this statement, while 23.7% respondents are neutral, and 11.7% respondents disagree with this statement that only democratic government have been able to reached idea of international security arrangements. Democratic countries make security agreements because security is the basic and main need of every country/ nation. Every arrangement that leads to security and that helps to maintain peace is followed by democratic countries. **NATO** (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). It was created in 1949. 31 countries are involved in NATO. It's purpose is to provide shelter and security.

**Conclusion:-**

In conclusion, many scholars have debated whether democracy and peace are connected, but research suggests that countries with

democratic governments are generally more peaceful than countries with non-democratic governments. Two democratic states avoid conflict with each other however a democratic state can go for violent behaviour in case of conflict with dictatorial regime. Economic factor is also very important in modern global world that helps in maintain peace among democratic states. One reason is that democracies have systems and organisations that can help solve problems peacefully. The perception of students in Pakistan also shows that democracy leads towards peaceful environment. The data analysis shows that peace is a democratic idea and democratic states can help each other in making collective security. Responses of the survey confirm the findings of different studies regarding the relationship between democratic states and peace. So if the global world wants to maintain global order and peace, increasing the number of the democratic states can be one of the good solutions with the increased trade and economic interdependence. In this nuclear world, only democratic states can promote peaceful relations to avoid catastrophic effect of war. Moreover, it is essential for both democratic studies and peace studies to find a peaceful solution of the conflicts in the contemporary global turbulent environment.

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