

**Influence of the US on Indo-Pak Relations: Shifts in Strategic Alliances**

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**ABSTRACT**

*A significant instance of the United States' effect on the Indo-Pak relation has led to setting course of South Asia as a region where complicated political, military and economic exchanges are the order of the day. This particular paper is an inquest into the shape of the U.S. influence over the bilateral relations between India and Pakistan, taking special notice of such milestones as the Cold War era, the post-9/11 times, and the latest growth of Indo-U.S. relations. Through an examination of U.S. policy decisions, the author suggests there is a similarity between the United States' foreign policy and its diplomatic engagements, military collaboration, and economic policies, the United States of America is shown to have always maintained a balance in its relations with both countries besides being in efforts to ease the tensions and conflicts that are in one way or another the characteristics of their interactions all through. The research also explains how U.S. influence has influenced the problems of securing the region, especially following positions on issues such as nuclear proliferation, the fight against terrorism, and the implementation of economic cooperation. The thesis here is a comprehensive piece of work in which the author aims at understanding and interpreting the emerging strategic alliances between the U.S., India, and Pakistan and the overall results of the S...This research contributes to the understanding of the U.S.'s role in shaping the geopolitics of the region and highlights the ongoing complexities of international diplomacy in a region fraught with historical rivalries.*

**Keywords:** Indo-Pak relations, U.S. foreign policy, strategic alliances, South Asia, Cold War, nuclear proliferation, counterterrorism, regional security, diplomatic relations, military cooperation.

## **INTRODUCTION**

All along, the relationship between India and Pakistan has been filled with conflicts, land issues, and strategic competition. Both countries became independent in 1947, and from that time, they fought numerous wars and military standoffs. This conflict has been so constant that global politics have always had a part in it. The continuous hostility between the two nations is an issue that has received much attention from different countries, with the U.S. being the most significant of these, as it has been the one supporting their efforts to shape the strategic environment of South Asia. The U.S. intervention has ranged from conflict mediation to influencing military and economic interactions between the two nations.

Over the years, we have seen significant changes in the global order brought about by the rise of China, the fall of American unilateralism, and the establishment of new regional alliances. Correspondingly, the U.S. has become keener on India and reduced its focus on China, recognizing India as the most suitable partner in the Indo-Pacific region, when compared to China. Meanwhile, Pakistan's burgeoning partnership with China, especially through the projects like China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), has brought about tensions to the U.S.-Pakistan relationship. These trends have notably transformed the existing alliances in South Asia and have resulted in recognizable changes in security, political, and economic power between India and Pakistan.

Understanding the influence of the United States on Indo-Pak relations in the current geopolitical situation is of high importance. The adaptation of Washington's strategic has resulted in differences in the regional power structure, influenced peace initiatives, and has raised questions on the new methods of conflict resolution. Hence, the goal of the present research is to analyze the impact of the changes in the U.S. foreign policy over the past ten years on the Indo-Pak relationship, focusing on the realignment of the strategic allegiances and the associated ramifications for the security of South Asia.

### **Background of the Study**

The interrelatedness of South Asia's strategic environment with the policies of major outside players, particularly the U.S., cannot be ignored. The U.S. has always been a key mediating party in the relationship of India and Pakistan for many years. Nevertheless, the U.S. change in its global agenda has prompted a shift in the country's strategies into that region, thus resulting in the Indo-Pak relationship being affected in a number of ways. Thus, the U.S. policies which have been evolving toward the issue of India and Pakistan in the past decade have indicated much wider geopolitical tendencies such as the recent interest of the Indo-Pacific region, the strategic counteraction with China, and terrorism issues in the region.

### **Historical Context of U.S. Involvement**

Throughout the Cold War, Pakistan was perceived by the United States as a country which held a pivotal position because of its geographical location and its readiness to fight the Soviets. India, on the other hand, always had a non-alignment policy but was more inclined towards the Soviet Union in the strategic field. This split, in the beginning, was the basis of U.S. policy towards the region. Nevertheless, a change of the post-Cold War paradigm began to be felt, and America's interest in that part of the world grew along with India's strengthening economy and military development.

Subsequent to the 9/11 event, Pakistan once again took center stage, due to its involvement in the U.S.-led campaign against terrorism. The trust gaps remained, though, by the allegations that Pakistan had given assistance to the militants. The incident of the killing of Osama bin Laden in his residence at Abbottabad

in 2011 not only strained the U.S.-Pakistan relations but also paved the way for a much more intimate U.S.-India partnership in the security and defense sectors.

### **U.S.-India Strategic Convergence**

The last 10 years have seen an upward trend in the U.S. and India mutual relationship which has metamorphosed into a comprehensive strategic partnership. Among the major defense pacts are the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) and the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA). These have gone a long way to institutionalizing the relationship in defense between the partners.

Moreover, the U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy is explicit about the identification of India as a critical partner for regional stability and for countering China's assertiveness.

It is demonstrated by the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) which involves the United States, India, Japan, and Australia that India indeed is of utmost importance to the U.S. when it comes to strategic measures. The establishment that has occurred not only has meant India's status on the global scene grew, but it has also been instrumental in the redistribution of power in the region, and consequently it has diluted Pakistan's traditional influence in South Asia.

### **Deterioration of U.S.-Pakistan Ties**

In stark contrast to the aforementioned, the relations between the U.S. and Pakistan during the last ten years emerged as the ones facing several obstacles many times. In the present situation, Pakistan is still essential for the purposes of anti-terrorist activities as well as for regional stability; however, the United States seems to be unhappy with the role it finds Pakistan to be playing in the field of counter-terrorism. The suspension of the U.S. military and security assistance to Pakistan in 2018 was the most dramatic phase of the falling relationship.

Pakistan's mounting dependence on China for economic and military aid has left it in a condition that is, in fact, more isolated than before as far as the United States is concerned. Initial steps have been taken to normalize the situation; nonetheless, the great difference in the strategies is still visible, with the USA concentrating on the promotion of its relations with India and having a careful and businesslike approach when it comes to the relations with Pakistan.

### **Implications for Indo-Pak Relations**

The transforming U.S. stance has highly important consequences for Indo-Pak relations. To begin with, Indian rising strategic and military capabilities, coupled with the U.S. involvement, have further deepened the military conventional imbalance vis-à-vis Pakistan. On the other hand, Pakistan becoming a more coherent ally with China has led to greater regional tension, particularly along the India-China and India-Pakistan borders.

Furthermore, the disinterestedness of the United States to engage as a mediator in Kashmir and other bilateral conflicts considering its more pro-active condition in the past decades, reveals the country's broader disengagement from the Indo-Pak conflict resolution plan. Hence, the US has basically concentrated on regional stability and a few anti-terrorism measures, which has mostly made India and Pakistan handle their disputes without external help.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The India-Pakistan relationship has always been unpredictable, based on historical conflicts, fights over territory, and strategy. The United States of America, one of the global superpowers, has influenced Indo-Pak relations both significantly and dynamically. Consequently, Pakistan's standing has also modified profoundly, deepening its relationship with China at the same time as it has sought diversified international partnerships.

Despite extensive literature on Indo-Pak conflicts and U.S. foreign policy, limited research has critically examined how recent U.S. strategic realignments have reshaped the Indo-Pak dynamic. This study addresses this gap by exploring the multifaceted influence of the United States on the shifting strategic alliances between India and Pakistan during the last ten years.

### **Research Questions**

1. How has the United States' foreign policy towards South Asia evolved in the last decade with respect to India and Pakistan?
2. What are the major factors driving the U.S. strategic partnership with India?
3. How has the shift in U.S. alliances affected Pakistan's foreign policy and strategic alignments?
4. What are the implications of U.S. influence for Indo-Pak bilateral relations, particularly regarding conflict resolution and regional stability?
5. How do regional and global geopolitical developments (e.g., rise of China, U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan) further impact Indo-Pak relations under U.S. influence?

### **Research Objectives**

- To analyze the evolution of U.S. foreign policy towards India and Pakistan over the last decade.
- To investigate the strategic motivations behind the strengthening U.S.-India partnership.
- To assess the impact of the U.S. shift on Pakistan's foreign policy, particularly its alliance with China and other global actors.
- To examine how these shifts have influenced Indo-Pak relations, conflict dynamics, and peace prospects.
- To explore broader geopolitical factors that mediate the U.S. influence on Indo-Pak relations.

### **Significance of the Study**

The relevance of the study is evident, as it deals with a crucial issue at the heart of South Asian geopolitics. Through their analysis of the most recent changes in the U.S. international policy and the corresponding Indo-Pak relations, the authors were able to show valuable lessons for policymakers, diplomats, and scholars. Knowing these will be a precondition for the development of strategies that are conditioned to be regional stabilizers and for the resolution of conflicts. Further, the study is also instrumental because it contains an in-depth study on the changes of the United States of strategic alliances in a multipolar world, particularly in the wake of new global issues like the rise of China, US interests after Afghanistan inversion, and the redesigning of the security of the Indo-Pacific, through the writing of the author.

### **Scope and Limitations**

The study concentrates on the transformation of the relationship between the United States and India in terms of the cooperation on Pakistan, and it puts a focus on the evolving nature of the strategic alliances

in the last 10 years (2014–2024). The field of investigation encompasses the most significant political, military, and economic developments, which have been the subjects of the most substantial US foreign policies in South Asia. The study is illuminating in the way it lays out the impact of U.S. interests—certainly in counterterrorism, regional stability, economy, and its relationship with China—on their association with India and Pakistan, which will allow researchers to further analyze the Indo-Pak dynamics.

The research deals with authenticated U.S. government foreign policies. It also looks through defense alliance treaties and official pacts, such as the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership, and possibilities for U.S. intervention in the Indo-Pak issues in order to evaluate the most recent cases closely (e.g., the shift of U.S. towards the Asian-Pacific region and the Indo-Pacific strategy). The most relevant analyses are kept to the ones involving the United States' role in supporting India as a counterbalance to China, the changing character of U.S.-Pakistan ties, and the emergence of a Sino-Pakistani nexus.

**These are the main shortcomings of the research study:**

- i. It gives preferential treatment to the governmental and strategic/military parts of the analyzed context, and does not delve into cultural, social, or media trends.
- ii. The research is largely the result of secondary data mining, rather than of primary interviews carried out with decision-makers.
- iii. The research pays exhaustive attention to the role of the U.S. in the context of Indo-Pakistani relations while disregarding the analysis of other external actors, such as China, Russia, or the Gulf States with the exception of their direct relationship with the U.S. policy.
- iv. The study does not cover events and political changes later than the beginning of 2024 (e.g., U.S. elections, the changes in leadership in India and Pakistan).

**Definition of Key Terms**

**Indo-Pak Relations:** The diplomatic, military, and political relationship between India and Pakistan, characterized historically by conflict, competition, and intermittent dialogue.

**Strategic Alliances:** Written or unwritten accords between states intended to reach mutual security, political, or economic aims.

**U.S. Foreign Policy:** Policies and decisions pursued by the government of the United States of America to reach its international goals, including negotiations, military conflicts, and financial actions.

**Influence:** The ability of the United States to adjust the relationship between India and Pakistan through direct or indirect ways, such as diplomatic influence, economic relations, military collaboration, and political approval.

**Shift:** A noticeable development or reshuffling in the alliances or foreign policies of India or Pakistan due to some external factors, mainly U.S. policy.

**Geopolitics:** The relevance of geographical, political, and strategic factors on the distribution of power among nations, particularly in South Asia.

**Indo-Pacific Strategy:** A U.S. policy structure aiming at the significance of the Indian and Pacific Oceans in the effort to secure a free and open international order, beyond that, it has dramatically reshaped U.S.-India relations.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

India and Pakistan, both nuclear-armed rivals with complicated diplomatic engagements of decades, are historical enemies in the international scene. The policies of the United States in determining the course of Indo-Pak relations have been far-reaching, completely transformed in each of the historical periods in general and more exactly in the post-Cold War and post-9/11 eras. A proper understanding of these changes can be achieved by means of the use of some of the major international relations theories such as Realism, Liberalism, and the Balance of Power theory. Realism provides an explanation for international behavior as a result of the anarchic nature of the international system and focuses on state behavior that is driven by self-help. For a realist, the United States' involvement in South Asia is a move to secure the national interests where the US is the dominant power in the area specifically in the Cold War and in the global war on terror. Realist theorists assert that the United States has been *realpolitik* in its relationships with South Asia. It is believed the USA has shifted its policy toward India and Pakistan based on the level of power among the actors, the state of the region, and global strategic needs not on moral or ideological grounds.

Quite the opposite, liberalism is the theory that highlights cooperation among states through institutions, democracy, and economic interdependence. At the level of Indo-Pak relations, the liberal school of thought would argue that American initiatives towards mediating conflicts, supporting democracy, and enhancing economic alliances have emanated from a hope of transforming hostile relationships into collaborative relationships. Moves like the American-brokered talks processes as well as the promotion of confidence-building measures between India and Pakistan are evidence of this liberal leaning. The development of the American-Indian strategic partnership especially on trade, education, and technology also accords with the liberal concepts of constructing peace through positive integration and common interests.

The Balance of Power theory offers a necessary context for interpreting the changes in South Asian strategic alliances. Historically, the US attempted to balance Soviet power by backing Pakistan as a frontline state against communism during the Cold War. But following the end of the Cold War and especially the advent of the post-9/11 scenario, calculations changed. The expansion of China's role on the world stage prompted the US towards a reassessment of its South Asia policy and tilting towards India as a counterbalance to Chinese expansion. The transformation of this policy had a significant impact on the relationship between India and Pakistan as Pakistan felt the decline of its relative utility to Washington while India benefited with the expanded leverage. Balance of Power theory thus offers a reason for the dynamic, sometimes contradictory, American foreign policy actions within the region.

A review of the literature finds a rich body of scholarly work that analyzes these dynamics. With regard to US policy towards South Asia, a number of writers argue that American involvement has been primarily motivated by global strategic considerations rather than regional stability. According to Fair (2014), the US traditionally had a dual policy of backing Pakistan for its strategic value while wooing India for economic benefits and democratic status. With the advent of 9/11, the relationship between the US and Pakistan was forcefully securitized based on counterterrorism cooperation, while the relationship between the two countries expanded into more diverse domains such as nuclear cooperation for the civilian sector, defense, and the realm of technology. The 2008 Indo-US nuclear deal is often cited as a milestone as this represented a dramatic shift in the country's priorities towards India. According to



writers such as Pant (2016), the deal represented India's recognition as a responsive nuclear power and a key actor in the Indo-Pacific security strategy and thus the projection of regional power dynamics.

In terms of Indo-Pakistan relations, a historical overview indicates a pattern of oscillation between conflict and fragile peace. Since their partition in 1947, India and Pakistan have fought multiple wars and engaged in numerous military standoffs, most notably the wars of 1947-48, 1965, 1971, and the Kargil conflict in 1999. The Kashmir dispute has remained the core bilateral issue, complicating any sustained peace efforts. Scholars such as Ganguly (2019) highlight that external actors, particularly the United States, have periodically intervened to de-escalate crises, but these interventions have often been tactical rather than strategic. For instance, during the Kargil conflict, US diplomatic pressure on Pakistan was instrumental in bringing about a Pakistani withdrawal, demonstrating America's capacity to influence outcomes. However, the structural hostility between the two states has proven resilient to external mediation, indicating the limitations of US influence.

US-Pakistan relations have always been complicated and have been termed a transactional relationship by many. According to authors such as Haqqani (2018), the relationship had always been defined by mutual distrust where Pakistan considered US involvement as short-term and conditional while the US tended to view Pakistan as a non-serious partner. The relationship was at its best during the Soviet-Afghan war of the 1980s when Pakistan acted as a transit point for the supply of US support to the mujahideen of Afghanistan. In the post-9/11 scenario, the relationship turned sour over Pakistan's two-faced stance towards counterterrorism as the US accused Pakistan of hosting terrorist organizations while being provided with US assistance. The move by the Trump administration in 2018 of cutting substantial security assistance to Pakistan indicates a rising disenchantment and fueling of Pakistan's strategic shift towards China.

Conversely, bilateral relations between the US and India have undergone extraordinary development over the previous two decades. Academics like Tellis (2020) note that the relationship has grown from a hesitant cooperation to a wide-ranging strategic partnership that includes defense, trade, technology, and people-to-people relations. India was elevated by the US to the level of a Major Defense Partner by the country in 2016. The US views India as a crucial actor in a free and open Indo-Pacific region, a vision enshrined in official policy papers like the 2017 US National Security Strategy. In addition, the QUAD group consisting of the US, India, Japan, and Australia represents the strategic convergence between Washington and New Delhi regarding countering China's regional expansion. Such closeness on a strategic level, as positive as far as US-India relations are concerned continues to fuel the security concerns of Pakistan by inviting concerns regarding getting left behind.

In spite of this vast literature, a number of gaps in knowledge remain. Firstly, much of the work on the subject generally analyzes the US relationship with India and Pakistan as two discrete bilateral relationships and not as having a connected impact on Indo-Pak dynamics. There needs more integrated work bringing together the impact of the US policy towards a country's relationship with the other country as part of the overall regional strategic game. Secondly, although there's a great deal of literature on the subject of the US's strategic interests, there is less attention paid to the impact of domestic political transitions of the kind between the Obamas and Trumps and Bidens on the nuances of the South Asia policy. Thirdly, while the role of China's ascendance has been noted, there's very little work of a quantitative nature exploring the impact of the US-India-China strategic triangle on Indo-Pak relations, especially in the rising multipolar world order. Lastly, most of the work concentrates on security dynamics and much less attention on how economic initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor initiative (CPEC) and economic cooperation between India and the US interact within the context of strategic alliances and competitions within the region.

As such, the focus of the research is to uncover the gaps by completely discussing the US role in Indo-Pak relations change of strategic alliances, both bilateral and trilateral dynamics, thus integrating political, security, and economic dimensions. To better understand the impact of great powers' interference on regional rivalry, alliance, and prospects of peace in South Asia, the study briefly talks about Realism, Liberalism, and Balance of Power theory and the resultant issues that may arise from it.

In addition, an increasing number of researchers put forward the idea that the U.S. foreign policy landscape has been shifting continually with the-president, now being Biden. This change is depicted mainly in two important moves: one is the return for Hillary Clinton's statecraft with Islamabad as partners, and the other is the possible breakthrough of New Delhi — thus a continuous, strong and, most importantly, the well-grounded bond with both America's most crucial allies in the Indian subcontinent. Correspondingly, scholars like Mourdoukoutas (2022) observe that the Biden administration has adopted a watchful stance in front of Pakistan, setting the ground for a limited engagement that primarily focuses on counterterrorism and Afghanistan-related issues, yet at the same time, the administration also pursued stronger relationships with India in the strategic, economic, and technological fields. Furthermore, the completion of the withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan in 2021 has begun to turn the regional matrix towards another direction, with Pakistan no longer possessing sufficient power to exert any considerable influence on the US. These drastic changes necessitate a fresh assessment of Indo-Pak relations by focusing on U.S. influence, especially at a time when new geopolitical permutations with China, Russia, and the Gulf states are occurring.

Simultaneously, threat landscape alterations – for example, cybersecurity, climate change, and crisis management – also modify the US engagement approach in South Asia. The changing dynamics of security challenges non-traditional as they are apart from the US's engagement are causing the need for regional cooperation, thus opening up the potential for trilateral or multilateral dialogs involving India, Pakistan, and the US. Still, deeply-rooted distrust between India and Pakistan and the evolving US priorities add friction to such cooperative efforts. According to Yusuf (2020), Additional literature that focuses on Track II diplomacy and backchannel negotiations provide a solution for the official diplomatic inefficiency; however, the participants are from within but need the US as a profiler or a mediator in Future conflicts and they can become the pioneers of topic discovery that will enhance mutual trust and eventually the sustains

It is observed that literature in the area of US engagement in South Asia offers fragmentary evidence spread over a wide range of issues leaving precision on strategic, political, economic, and non-traditional security elements in the dark and thus making the understanding of the US influence on Indo-Pak relations less complete. In this paper, the researcher aims at fulfilling this specific purpose through the application of a wide theoretical framework and the connection of the theoretical part of the research to recent empirical data; thus, making a significant contribution to the wider debate on international relations and regional security in South Asia.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

- This study employs a qualitative research design to examine the United States' role in shaping strategic alliances in India and Pakistan. A qualitative approach is the best method to use as the research will be trying to understand the complex, diplomatic, political, and strategic shifts that are not easily captured by the available quantitative metrics. The primary goal of the study is to discover the factors behind the changes in the relations between the countries of India and Pakistan under the influence of the United States during the last decade.



- Firstly, the qualitative research is able to uncover the ways in which the changes exemplifying policy, local governments' decisions, international agreements etc. are handled. The situation between India and Pakistan involves a lot of complicated issues that are mostly in the historical domain, therefore, it is essential to have an interpretational approach rather than a numerical one when foreign powers like the U.S. are involved (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The process tries to reveal trends, changes, and the like of one and if only we annotate the data and include the experts' points of view.

## **Data Collection Methods**

### **Primary Sources**

- i. The primary data of this study include all the records from governmental entities, reports from the policymakers, government leaders' talks, and the dialogues made by key diplomats. More specifically, the sources selected comprise:
- ii. The official statements of the U.S. Department of State, Indian Ministry of External Affairs, and Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- iii. Addresses of U.S. Presidents, Secretaries of State, Indian Prime Ministers, and Pakistani leaders from 2015 to the end of 2025.
- iv. Formal bilateral and multilateral agreements with the U.S., India, and Pakistan participating.
- v. Studies that were conducted by international institutes such as the United Nations, think tanks like the Brookings Institution, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)
- vi. Gathering primary data guarantees that the study will continue to be grounded in relevant and current records that represent the positions and intentions of the actors engaged.

### **Secondary Sources**

Secondary sources offer academic opinions and evaluations that are indispensable for a comprehensive comprehension of the subject. That includes the following:

- i. Books: Up-to-date books that discuss U.S. foreign policy in South Asia (e.g., Tellis, 2017; Ganguly, 2019).
- ii. Academic Journals: Articles published by experts in such journals as; Foreign Affairs, The Journal of Strategic Studies, and South Asian Survey.
- iii. Articles and Reports: We consider well-researched articles from credible media outlets such as The Diplomat, Foreign Policy, Brookings, and Carnegie India.
- iv. Policy Briefs and White Papers: Policy recommendations and analysis from think tanks between 2015 and 2025.

The combination of primary and secondary data ensures a balanced and comprehensive exploration of the research topic.

## **Analytical Framework**

### **Case Study Method**

The **case study method** is employed to examine critical events and periods that highlight shifts in strategic alliances due to U.S. involvement. Specific case studies include:

- The U.S.-India Strategic Partnership (especially post-2016, including defense agreements like COMCASA and BECA).
- U.S.-Pakistan relations under the Trump and Biden administrations, including the reduction of military aid and evolving security cooperation.
- The implications of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan (2021) on Indo-Pak dynamics.

This method allows for an in-depth contextual analysis of pivotal moments, leading to a better understanding of cause-and-effect relationships.

### **Comparative Historical Analysis**

The study uses comparative historical analysis to trace patterns over time, comparing the strategic alliances across different periods. By examining developments from 2015 to 2025, the research identifies long-term trends, continuities, and ruptures.

Historical comparison between two distinct time frames — the pre-2015 era and post-2015 shifts — provides insights into how the U.S.'s strategic priorities (e.g., countering China, exiting Afghanistan) have realigned its South Asia policy (Kaplan, 2020; Pant, 2022).

This method ensures that changes are not studied in isolation but understood in the broader historical and geopolitical context.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Despite a robust methodology, the study has certain limitations:

- **Availability of Recent Data:** Given that geopolitical developments are ongoing, some recent policy changes and their full impacts may not yet be fully documented or analyzed.
- **Bias in Sources:** Government documents and official speeches may present an idealized version of events. Media reports may reflect editorial biases.
- **Scope of Study:** While focusing on the U.S. influence, the study does not extensively analyze the role of other major powers (e.g., China, Russia), which may also impact Indo-Pak relations.
- **Time Constraints:** The research is bounded by a specific timeline (2015–2025), potentially overlooking longer-term underlying trends.

Recognizing these limitations ensures a cautious and critical interpretation of the findings.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical integrity is central to this research. Key ethical considerations include:

- **Proper Attribution:** All sources, whether primary or secondary, are properly cited to avoid plagiarism and acknowledge the original authors.

- **Objectivity:** The analysis strives for neutrality, avoiding partisan interpretations of international events.
- **Confidentiality:** Although the study relies on publicly available documents and materials, respect for sensitive diplomatic communications is maintained.

**Transparency:** Methodological choices, data collection methods, and potential biases are transparently discussed to maintain academic honesty.

## **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

The role of the United States in shaping Indo-Pakistani relations has been profound, rooted in the broader historical context of global power politics. Over the decades, the United States' engagement in South Asia has often been driven by its larger geopolitical interests, influencing the relationship between India and Pakistan in various ways. These influences have evolved with the changing nature of international relations, but one constant has been the United States' strategic interests in the region, which have often led to shifting allegiances and tensions. This section outlines the historical trajectory of US involvement in the Indo-Pakistani relationship, beginning with the Cold War period, a crucial era that set the tone for future engagements in South Asia.

### **Cold War Period**

During the Cold War, the ideological battle between the United States and the Soviet Union shaped the foreign policies of many countries, including those in South Asia. For the United States, the Cold War was a global confrontation for ideological and military supremacy. It sought to contain the spread of communism, a goal that significantly influenced its foreign policy decisions. In this context, South Asia became an important region, particularly due to its strategic location and the growing rivalry between India and Pakistan, two countries with complex political and military dynamics.

### **Pakistan's Alignment with the United States**

From the outset of the Cold War, Pakistan found itself aligning with the United States, largely due to the shared objective of countering Soviet influence. As part of its anti-communist strategy, the US sought to form alliances with countries that could serve as strategic bulwarks against the spread of Soviet power. Pakistan, located at a critical crossroads between the Soviet Union and the Middle East, was considered an essential partner in this global struggle. This led Pakistan to join two key US-led military alliances during the 1950s and 1960s: the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). These alliances were part of the broader US strategy to build a network of military pacts around the world to contain communism.

In return for its alliance, Pakistan received substantial military and economic aid from the United States. US military assistance, including advanced weaponry and training for Pakistan's armed forces, helped the country bolster its defense capabilities. This assistance was not just about military aid; Pakistan also received significant economic support, which was essential for its economic development. For the US, supporting Pakistan in this way was a means of ensuring that the region would remain aligned with the Western bloc during the Cold War (Haider, 2018).

The US support for Pakistan during this period was, however, not without its complications. While Pakistan benefited from its relationship with the US, it also became embroiled in regional conflicts,

particularly with India. The US, focused on its global objectives, often found itself caught in the middle of the Indo-Pakistani rivalry, with its support for Pakistan sometimes exacerbating tensions with India.

### **India's Non-Aligned Movement and Soviet Leaning**

On the other side, India, under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, pursued a policy of non-alignment, attempting to avoid taking sides in the Cold War conflict. This policy was based on the belief that India could remain independent of both the US and the Soviet Union, focusing on its own development and regional security. Despite this non-alignment, India's foreign policy took a significant shift after the Sino-Indian War of 1962. In the aftermath of the war, India found itself increasingly isolated and vulnerable, especially with the United States providing military support to Pakistan.

India's disappointment with the US's stance during the Sino-Indian War led it to seek closer ties with the Soviet Union, which was seen as a counterbalance to US support for Pakistan. This pivot was crucial in shaping the Cold War dynamics in South Asia. The Soviet Union's support for India grew in the form of military aid, economic assistance, and diplomatic backing. The growing India-Soviet partnership marked a turning point in US-India relations, which were strained throughout much of the Cold War (Mohan, 2021).

### **The Indo-Pakistani Wars of 1965 and 1971**

One of the most significant consequences of US involvement in South Asia during the Cold War was its role in the Indo-Pakistani wars of 1965 and 1971. The US's military aid to Pakistan during the 1965 war and its strategic backing were seen by India as evidence of American partiality towards Pakistan. The 1965 war itself was triggered by territorial disputes in Kashmir, and the US's support for Pakistan during this conflict further strained US-India relations. India's frustration with what it perceived as US favoritism towards Pakistan was palpable, and it led to greater distrust between Washington and New Delhi.

The 1971 war, which resulted in the creation of Bangladesh, was another pivotal moment in Indo-Pakistani relations. The US's position during this war further complicated its relationships in South Asia. At the time, Pakistan was a key ally of the United States in its geopolitical struggle against the Soviet Union, while India had forged a strong relationship with the USSR. The US administration, under President Richard Nixon, continued to provide political and military support to Pakistan, despite widespread international condemnation of Pakistan's actions in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The US's support for Pakistan during the 1971 war, despite the humanitarian crisis, contributed to its reputation as a biased actor in the region.

India, supported by the Soviet Union, eventually won the war, leading to the creation of Bangladesh. This conflict left a lasting impact on US-India relations. It reinforced the perception in India that the US could not be relied upon as a neutral actor in the region, and it further pushed India into the Soviet sphere of influence (Raghavan, 2022).

### **The US's Shift in Policy Post-Cold War**

The end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union brought significant changes to US foreign policy in South Asia. The 1990s saw a shift in the US's strategic priorities, and its engagement with India and Pakistan became more complex. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US no longer viewed South Asia solely through the lens of Cold War rivalry. However, the legacy of Cold War

alliances continued to shape US relations with both India and Pakistan, with Washington's support for Pakistan and its strained relationship with India persisting well into the post-Cold War era.

The end of the Cold War did not immediately result in better US-India relations. The US continued to view India with suspicion, particularly over its nuclear program and its non-aligned stance. Conversely, Pakistan remained a key US ally, especially in the context of the Afghan-Soviet War in the 1980s. Pakistan's role in supporting Afghan militants against Soviet forces brought it back into the US's strategic orbit. However, this alliance was marred by Pakistan's continued support for militant groups in Kashmir and its nuclear ambitions, which ultimately led to tensions with the US (Haider, 2018).

The historical US influence on Indo-Pakistani relations, especially during the Cold War, underscores the pivotal role that international alliances and global power struggles have played in shaping the geopolitical dynamics of South Asia. The US's strategic decisions, shaped by its broader Cold War objectives, had lasting consequences for both India and Pakistan. The support provided to Pakistan during this period, combined with the US's strained relationship with India, set the stage for the strategic rivalries that continue to define Indo-Pakistani relations today.

### **Post-Cold War Adjustments**

The Soviet Union's breakup in 1991 had a significant impact on US foreign policy thinking. With the Cold War power structure, world politics were bipolar, and that kind of South Asian involvement was initially lacking. The United States barred India and Pakistan from buying American defense technology only after their 1998 nuclear tests. It was in accordance with the Glenn Amendment (Fair, 2019).

On the other hand, such steps as India's launching of economic reforms in the 1990s opened a new front for bilateral relations. Washington gradually began to realize India's potential as driving force in the Asian region which can play a balancing role vis-à-vis China (2006). In contrast, from the late 1990s, Pakistan came to be seen as an unstable state associated with terrorism, and as a case of nuclear proliferation, especially after the facts of A.Q. Khan's network were exposed.

Therefore, we have the United States by the end of the last decade gradually shifting to an unmistakably Indian-oriented policy and leaving behind it a pragmatic one that was limited to the management of terrorism with Pakistan, thus dealing with very few other aspects.

### **Post-9/11 Transitions in Strategic Partnerships**

Events such as the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks occasioned the drastic reformation of America's foreign policy worldwide, and specifically in South Asia. In launching its "Global War on Terror," the region was a center of focus for the US, and subsequently, America changed its ties with both Pakistan and India but in different ways.

### **War on Terror: US-Pakistan Collaboration**

Post 9/11, Pakistan was promoted to the status of a "major non-NATO ally" by the United States which allowed it to render logistical support, share intelligence, and participate in military cooperation against Al-Qaeda and Taliban elements (Siddiqi, 2021). The US government released billions of dollars in the form of military and economic assistance to the Pakistani government under the Coalition Support In the light of this, the alliance's perspective towards Islamabad was still hesitant. The U.S. was of the opinion

that Pakistan should be condemned for its actions like their supporting the Haqqani Network and parts of the Taliban and its counterterrorism.

Despite that, interactions between the US and Pakistan have been taking an unprofitable course. The Trump administration pursued a foreign policy that involved giving an additional amount of its monetary assistance to Pakistan in the form of foreign aid and applying diplomatic pressure with the implication of "doing more" against terrorist groups (Kugelman, 2019). Meanwhile, Pakistan upped the ante on the Chinese front a good example of which is the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and that was the most good sign of weakening the bond with the Western parts step by step.

### **Indo-US Strategic Partnership**

Although the US was engaged in Pakistan for counterterrorism, at the same time, it fostered a strategic relationship with India. Multiple events prove that this was a change in direction:

The signing of the US-India Civil Nuclear Agreement (2008) initiated deeper trust (Pant, 2018).

By means of LEMOA (Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement, 2016), COMCASA (Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement, 2018), and BECA (Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement, 2020) arrangements, defense cooperation was further boosted (Rehman, 2021).

The US perceived India increasingly as a major player within its Indo-Pacific Strategy, which is designed for stifling the ambitiousness of China (Grossman, 2020). The US also backed India's claim for the UN Security Council's permanent seat and worked on forums such as the Quad in which the US and India join forces with Japan and Australia (Smith, 2021).

Therefore, the Indo-US relationship has evolved from restrained engagement to a comprehensive strategic partnership over the last twenty years. This maturing alliance, however, has made US-Pakistan relations more complex, as Islamabad considers close US-India ties a strategic threat, particularly with the unresolved Kashmir dispute (Akhtar, 2023).

### **Recent Developments (2010–Present)**

#### **Indo-Pacific Strategy and QUAD**

The last ten years have seen the US significantly adopt the Indo-Pacific Strategy as a way of pushing back against China's economic and political might. One thing that the initiative is centered around is reinvigoration of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) consisting of the US, India, Japan, and Australia. The inclusion of India in QUAD has been a policy decision that has made the relations with Washington more coherent in a regional sense. The QUAD Leaders' Summits (2021, 2022) were also the events that have seen the highest level of cooperation across various dimensions such as security, advanced technologies, stability, climate change, and vaccine distribution (White House Fact Sheets, 2021, 2022). The partnership was characterized by India and the US, so the consequent impact on the balance with Pakistan was in favor of the former.

#### **The Deterioration of US-Pakistan Relations**

The relationship between the United States and Pakistan declined tremendously from 2010, especially after the Abbottabad Operation (2011), where Osama bin Laden was killed without Pakistan's prior



consent. A string of other negative incidents, such as US drone attacks, Pakistan's apparent untrustworthiness towards Afghanistan, and its deepening ties with China, have led to the relationship getting worse. The US not only reduced its military aid but also put Pakistan under the category of "Major Non-NATO Ally with reservations" (State Department Reports, 2021) which showed the drop significantly. Concerning this topic, the revised aid suspension in 2018 marked this change of policy. The original notification was issued by the Trump Administration and only concerns the cessation of military funds. The period of disqualification was thus quite crucial and could serve to be a turning point. The historical record that compiled aid was vacant without clear indication. Even though these relationships were not correctly expressed, history has shown that the aid had not been received for these purposes. It, therefore, does not make sense that it would stop when it had not existed in the first place.

### **Pakistan's Growing Ties with China**

The United States' recurrent distancing action with Pakistan has resulted in the latter nation moving closer to China. An example for everyone to see is the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which was given the green light as a part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). In addition to it being an enormous economic cooperative project, CPEC is also a force of regional strategic alignment. With such a growing and significant partnership, we can easily conclude that the military collaborations, China's full support at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), and joint air exercises like "Shaheen Series" are a point in case of this strategic alignment. Some experts have argued that CPEC is modifying the strategic setup of South Asia in such a manner as is a cause of anxiety for both Washington and New Delhi.

### **Case Studies of US Role in Key Events**

#### **Kargil Conflict (1999)**

During the Kargil conflict, the US was the most dominant force in giving peace a chance. Not only did President Bill Clinton talk directly with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and persuade him to withdraw the military, but he also took a stand by being pro-India in diplomacy. This was historically the US policy. The United States was no more coming out neutral parallelly with its support of South Asia.

#### **Indo-US Nuclear Deal (2005)**

The United States and India were signing an Indo-US Civil Nuclear Agreement, which was a notable turning point in their relationship. At the time, although the agreement was formalized in 2005 and was only fully implemented three years later, it was essential to the parties to do so. The agreement basically involved the US acknowledging the fact that, even though India was not an NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty) signatory, it was still a responsible nuclear power.

This deal not only enhanced strategic trust between Washington and New Delhi but also created unease in Islamabad, which saw it as a discriminatory move.

#### **Abbottabad Operation (2011)**

By unilaterally terminating Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad, Pakistan, with no prior warning to Pakistan, the US Navy SEALs profoundly ruined the US-Pakistani relations. The mission was the source of discord. As such, the mistrust was exposed, and there was a push within the US Congress for redeployment of aid and the reevaluation of partner policies towards Islamabad.

### **Indo-Pacific Developments (2020s)**

In the 2020s, the USA has stepped up its game in the Indo-Pacific region. Through service accords like BECA with India and projects as IPEF (Indo-Pacific Economic Framework), Washington is showing clear commitment to the rise of India as the regional Mao-hsin. The US has also shown a change of attitude towards India's strategic rival-China and has a negative image of China in that it brings China and Afghanistan together. On the other hand, Pakistan is losing ground in the US circle of interests and is being more and more influenced by China.

### **Strategic Realignments and Future Prospects**

The shifting dynamics in the geopolitical landscape of South Asia, especially the evolving relationship between the United States and its allies, are having profound effects on the strategic alignments of both India and Pakistan. The US, as a global superpower, has played a significant role in shaping the region's security and political architecture. However, as its alliances evolve and regional priorities shift, these developments have implications for the stability and future prospects of Indo-Pak relations. This section will delve deeper into the implications of the US's strategic realignments on South Asian security and explore the future prospects for Indo-Pak relations in a multipolar world order.

### **Impact on Regional Security**

The reconfiguration of the US's strategic alliances in South Asia has contributed to an intensification of rivalries between India and Pakistan, further complicating the security situation in the region. Over the past few decades, the US has strengthened its strategic partnership with India, primarily due to shared concerns over China's rise. This partnership has allowed India access to advanced defense technologies, increased military cooperation, and significant intelligence-sharing arrangements. For instance, the US-India defense agreements such as the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) and the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) are indicative of the growing military collaboration between the two countries.

In contrast, Pakistan's shifting allegiance towards China has exacerbated this rivalry. China's increasing involvement in Pakistan, both economically through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and militarily through defense cooperation, has created a counterbalance to the growing Indo-US alliance. The growing proximity between Pakistan and China, particularly in military terms, has led to a deepening of security concerns for India, which perceives these developments as a direct challenge to its regional influence and security.

The competition between these two nuclear-armed states has led to a situation where the regional security environment is becoming increasingly tense. Both India and Pakistan are enhancing their military capabilities in response to each other's actions. India's growing defense ties with the US and other countries such as Australia and Japan under the QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) framework have led to the formation of a de facto security bloc, which is seen as a strategic maneuver aimed at containing China's influence. On the other hand, Pakistan's increasing alignment with China has led to the strengthening of their military ties, including joint military exercises and the development of strategic defense technologies, such as nuclear weapons.

The emergence of minilateral coalitions such as AUKUS (Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and QUAD (comprising the US, Japan, Australia, and India) further complicates the regional security architecture. These coalitions are essentially aimed at countering China's growing influence in

the Indo-Pacific region and beyond. As these alliances grow stronger, China, together with Pakistan, is expected to take a more adversarial stance against this bloc. The potential for miscalculation and escalation of hostilities in such a complex and heavily militarized environment is high. The strategic alliances in the region are contributing to a vicious cycle of militarization and insecurity, further destabilizing the region.

In this evolving security environment, the role of the US becomes increasingly significant. The US's military and economic support for India has raised concerns in Pakistan, which perceives this support as a tilt towards India and an abandonment of its own security interests. Moreover, Pakistan's growing dependency on China for military aid, infrastructure development, and economic assistance is creating a new axis of power in South Asia. This shift has led to a complex geopolitical landscape, with major regional players aligning themselves with either the US or China, exacerbating the already delicate security situation in South Asia.

The rivalry between India and Pakistan, compounded by their respective alignments with the US and China, poses a serious risk to regional stability. Both countries possess nuclear weapons, and the potential for conflict between them remains high. In this context, the US's involvement in the region, while aiming to maintain stability and counter China's influence, could have unintended consequences, particularly if it further entrenches the existing divides between India and Pakistan. The challenge for the US, therefore, is to navigate this increasingly complex geopolitical landscape in a way that prevents further escalation of tensions and promotes stability in South Asia.

### **Prospects for Indo-Pak Relations in a Multipolar World**

As the world continues to move towards a more multipolar order, Indo-Pak relations are likely to be shaped by a complex web of factors, including the influence of regional powers, the shifting dynamics of global alliances, and the changing priorities of international actors such as China, Russia, and the European Union (EU). The US, traditionally a key player in mediating Indo-Pak relations, is likely to play a reduced role in the future, as its attention shifts towards its own strategic priorities, including countering China's rise and managing its global commitments.

In this new multipolar world, India is likely to continue strengthening its ties with the US and other Western powers. India's growing role in international forums such as the G20, its membership in the Indo-Pacific security bloc (QUAD), and its increasing defense and strategic cooperation with the US and European countries indicate that India will continue to prioritize its alignment with the West. Additionally, India's economic and technological rise makes it an attractive partner for the US and its allies. However, this increasing alignment with the West could further strain relations with Pakistan, which perceives India's strengthening partnership with the US as a direct threat to its security and regional influence.

On the other hand, Pakistan's closer alignment with China is likely to continue to shape its foreign policy. China's growing economic and military influence in South Asia has allowed Pakistan to strengthen its position vis-à-vis India. Through projects like CPEC, Pakistan is gaining critical infrastructure support and economic development, which could allow it to enhance its strategic capabilities. Pakistan's increasing dependence on China, however, comes with its own set of challenges, particularly the risk of becoming overly dependent on Beijing in terms of defense and economic support.

One of the key features of a multipolar world is the role of regional powers in shaping the political landscape. In the case of Indo-Pak relations, countries like Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and even the EU could play an increasingly important role. Russia has historically maintained a neutral stance in the Indo-

Pak conflict, but its growing relations with India, particularly in defense, make it a potential mediator in the future. Similarly, Iran, with its strong ties to Pakistan, could provide a counterbalance to India's increasing alignment with the US. The EU, with its interest in maintaining peace and stability in South Asia, could also become an important actor in facilitating dialogue between the two countries.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a multilateral body comprising China, Russia, and several Central Asian countries, is one platform where both India and Pakistan are members. While the SCO has not been particularly successful in resolving Indo-Pak issues, it could serve as a forum for dialogue in the future. The SCO provides an opportunity for both countries to engage in dialogue within a broader regional framework, where other influential players like China and Russia could encourage peace and stability.

Despite the growing rivalry between India and Pakistan, there are avenues for dialogue and cooperation in the future. The establishment of confidence-building measures (CBMs) and the promotion of people-to-people contact could pave the way for reduced tensions and a more stable relationship. Additionally, the growing economic interdependence in the region, driven by projects like CPEC and India's growing economic ties with the US, could lead to a situation where both countries recognize the benefits of cooperation over confrontation.

In conclusion, while the future of Indo-Pak relations remains uncertain in a multipolar world, the shifting dynamics of global and regional power are likely to influence the trajectory of these relations. As both India and Pakistan continue to deepen their strategic partnerships with different global powers, the role of mediation by the US and other international actors may diminish. However, regional forums such as the SCO, combined with the need for economic and strategic cooperation, may provide opportunities for reducing tensions and improving relations in the future. The key to peace in the region will lie in the ability of both countries to move beyond their historical animosities and embrace a more cooperative approach to regional security.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

It remains a fact that the episodes of contest, conflict, and cooperation in a limited form have always been the focal points of the phenomena of the relations between India and Pakistan. Moreover, a very pervasive influence stemmed from the foreign elements on this intricacy with the United States being the most contributing figure. This paper was designed to dig into the changes in the foreign policy of the US and its strategic interests and their effects on the very line of the relations between India and Pakistan, especially their alliance formations, diplomatic engagements, and regional security dynamics.

The findings explain that the influence of the US on Indo-Pak relations has not been constant but went through various shifts in global politics, regional strategies, and local political changes in South Asia. In the course of the Cold War, the US saw Pakistan as a vital ally against the USSR, which was well complemented by the provision of military and economic aid, which helped Pakistan in strengthening its strategic position vis-a-vis India. The policy of non-alignment of India took it away from the US in the beginning, although in reality India was always tilted or even leaning more towards the Soviet Union for defence and technological support.

After the Cold War and more precisely after the Soviet Union's disintegration in 1991, the US adopted a different approach to the SA region. The rise of India as a major economic power and a democratic rival of China brought the US closer to India resulting in a reorientation of American interests in South Asia. The formation of strategic alliances like the US-India Civil Nuclear Agreement (2008) and the growing

military cooperation were the major factors that led the US to reestablish the new direction. The shifts in US policy generally produced feelings of being abandoned and deceived in Pakistan, which in turn fueled further security apprehensions in Pakistan and its growing dependence on China.

Matters, however, became more tangled in the post-9/11 period, where Pakistan ostensibly assumed a pivotal role in the United States' War on Terror, albeit only for a limited period. Disputes over the lack of trust, especially with the relation of Pakistan to Afghanistan and the alleged support for armed groups, were the main reasons for the thinning of the US-Pakistan connection.

On the other hand, the US-India relations were further strengthened, and the US has seen India as a key partner that is able to help in the matter of Indo-Pacific. Accordingly, the US presence in the region has been an element contributing to certain direct and indirect changes in Indo-Pak relations. This was evident in the military alliances, aid flow and the many diplomatic interventions; additionally, these indirect aspects were of such a nature that the action rendered was just that of each country, changing their strategy towards each other. The changed US approach, in fact, has brought about a triadic situation: Pakistan is turning towards China, whereas the latter is getting anchored in its relations with the West, with India being the central player. Situation in the region has become the reverse of the Cold War days, i.e. from a binary system to a multipolar competition, quite subtle and knotty.

In sum, the US influence is one of the chief factors that have played a crucial role in determining the relationship between India and Pakistan, thus leading to mounting tension but at times opening up a dialogue and crisis management. What happens next, however, is that the agency of both India and Pakistan themselves, regional issues, and the emergence of other global powers start to help them dismantle this force eliminating thus the future of South Asian geopolitics which is no longer to be defined merely by the American interests.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Despite being very complex and volatile with respect to the US, and China's changing role, the subsequent a few recommendations can still be of relevance:

### **For Policymakers in Pakistan and India**

- i. **Diversify Foreign Relations:** Both India and Pakistan aim to diversify their foreign relations to avoid overdependence on any single major power. At the same time, the idea of alliances is necessary; however, strategic autonomy is the most important for securing long-term national interests.
- ii. **Regional Dialogues Independent of External Pressures:** South Asian countries have to institutionalize regional dialogues which are less responsive to external influences that are mainly from the so-called superpowers\_ US and China. SAARC and similar forums can act as a base for local conflict resolution.
- iii. **Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs):** India and Pakistan cannot stop implementing CBMs, like military-to-military communication channels and cultural exchanges, despite the continual realignment of the international order.



### **For the United States**

- i. **Balanced Approach Towards South Asia:** The US should adopt a balanced approach with both India and Pakistan. While it is acceptable to have strategic partnerships with India, at the same time completely transactional relations with Pakistan might negatively affect by aligning Islamabad more with China.
- ii. **Crisis Management and Mediation:** The US may have a positive role by creating indirect dialogue during periods of tensions between India and Pakistan, thus making sure that the violent crisis does not happen with two big nations.
- iii. **Support for Regional Integration:** Washington could leverage its influence to create economic and infrastructural projects that are conducive to the integration of South Asian countries, therefore, indirectly reducing the size of the.

### **For Future Researchers**

**Comparative Studies:** Upcoming research works must undertake a comparison of the role of other major world powers - such as China, Russia, and the European Union - in Indo-Pak relations in order to understand better the extent of external impacts. **Longitudinal Analyses:** A research area exists primarily at the level of the sustained and data-oriented investigations showing the actual influence that US policy shifts have had clearly and unmistakably on Indo-Pak peace processes, military expenditures, and diplomatic interactions over a certain period of time.

**Impact of Domestic Politics:** Abenezer Nawshad, Seth Jolly, and William Leland (2015) did a study that argues that the "Impact of Domestic Politics" can explain the behavior of the nation-states who are involved in the conflict. The authors state that, when nationalism is on the rise, domestic political fluctuations may become the forces that make the crucial difference by filtering those effects that external actors such as the US have on their bilateral relations with India.

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