



Role of Pakistan in the Great Power Competition

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Abstract: Since the Global War on Terrorism, world politics has changed significantly because China and Russia have become more powerful. The United States wants regional allies capable of assisting it with its global agenda. This goal has increased Washington's dissatisfaction with Islamabad, a former Cold War partner. Washington wants to elevate India to the region's top partner status. Americans are becoming closer to India; which casts doubt on the future of the US-Pakistan alliance. Because of this, Pakistan has tried to find more reliable allies. This has led analysts to have different ideas about Pakistan's role in this multipolar system. This study looks at Pakistan's actions during the Cold War, the Global War on Terrorism, and now to see how likely it is that Pakistan will try to balance the big powers against each other to get the most out of its interests.

Keywords: Pakistan, Global War, Terrorism, Great Powers, and Multipolar World.

1.Introduction

The rise of China and the recurrence of Russia are putting the USA's dominance and the liberal international order under threat. This is a new age of great power competition (GPC). The rise of these two great nations transformed the world, transforming it from a world of a single power to a world of many. At the end of 2017, the Trump administration unveiled its National Security Strategy (NSS), demonstrating that the GPC was back (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2020). Academics and policymakers have stated that this new rivalry would be centered on Asia. U.S. leaders have said that the country needs to end the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) and "pivot" its foreign policy toward Asia to stay competitive in the world (Financial Times, 2016). According to a senior political scientist at the RAND Corporation, the GPC's primary objective in the past was to govern Europe. Excellent power supremacy is about gaining and using more power to rule Asia (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2020).

As Asia becomes the center of the new multipolar world, the people of the South Asian region become more important. It is partially because the USA wants to establish strategic cooperation with India. Due to its post-

GWOT strategic view and the end of U.S. military operations in Afghanistan, the U.S. no longer needs to have a strong strategic alliance with Pakistan (White House, 2017). Also, Pakistan is getting closer to China, so the USA is less important to Pakistan from a strategic point of view. The U.S.'s dislike for Pakistan has grown because of how the Pakistani government handles U.S. foreign aid and because Pakistan is a haven for terrorist groups. Lastly, Pakistan's leaders are getting more worried about the U.S.'s plans to strengthen ties with India, which could put Pakistan's security at risk (Moeed, 2018).

The relationship between the U.S. and Pakistan has worsened, making it easier for other countries to start or strengthen ties with Pakistan. This casts doubt on Pakistan's future in the new GPC framework. India wants to be on the same level as China in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), so the U.S. and India are working toward the same goal in their GPC talks with China (Suzelle, 2019). The ties between India and the U.S. are stronger, making Russia uncertain about its relationship with its old partner, India. Because of this insecurity, China and Russia may look to Pakistan as a way to balance out the United States' growing presence in Asia. Pakistan has always interacted with all three of the world's most powerful nations and will do so in the emerging multipolar world. This article looks at whether China and Russia might better meet Pakistan's needs for stability and security in a world that is becoming more multipolar.

1.1 Research Question

How has Pakistan become a part of the strategic goals of major countries, and how has it tried to protect its interests in these changing geopolitical relationships?

1.2 Significance of Study

India is at the center of building alliances in Asia, no matter whether big countries want to work with it or against it in the new multipolar world. On the other hand, the literature doesn't pay enough attention to how Pakistan's strategic position as a nuclear state and India's enemy fits into the bigger picture of Asia as a whole. While most academics now concentrate on how great powers' contacts with India have impacted their ties with Pakistan, few consider how Pakistan now plays a more significant role in the struggle between the world's most powerful nations.

1.3 Hypothesis

Pakistan will strengthen ties with China and Russia to weaken the USA. As the U.S. gets closer to India, the ties between Russia and India worsen.

2. Literature Review

When governments face competition from more considerable powers, they have two main options: cede sovereignty and join forces with the competing powers or defend their sovereignty by forging alliances with larger countries to counterbalance the rival powers. Experts are not always clear on the strategic interests of small nations. Most argue that since nations want maximum security and autonomy, they are more likely to strike a balance. According to Stephen Walt (1985), a well-known realist researcher, most governments choose to balance rather than bandwagon because they gain more power by balancing formidable competitors than by ceding power. He says that hegemony and other powerful countries scare weaker countries into making alliances.

On the other hand, other analysts believe that states like participating. Robert S. Ross wrote in 2006 that smaller countries tend to join forces with growing powers instead of going up against them. This is because states are "vulnerable to local variation" in the abilities to grow powers close by. Critics of bandwagoning assert that only a few governments do it out of need. Walt (1985) concurs that bandwagoning makes sense in these instances. He believes that governments cannot afford to be vulnerable and are unlikely to contribute much to a balanced coalition, which is why bandwagoning makes sense. In some instances, bandwagoning may be preferable to balance, but only if the choice is solely based on war or peace. He draws this conclusion from Winston Churchill's statement that, although balance is desirable in peacetime, governments prefer to unite during conflict (Walt, 1987). It is predicated on the desire of smaller nations to "share the spoils of triumph" that are mainly enjoyed by large

power states.

While many other variables are at play, most experts believe that Pakistan's instability has been the primary reason it has sought assistance from significant powers in the past and in the new multipolar system that is currently emerging. Ian Talbot wrote in 2009 that Pakistan's short history can be summed up by its "fruitless desire for stability." It has resulted in an insecurity complex, which has increased its risk. As Khan (2012) points out, this uncertainty has strengthened Pakistan's connections with major nations. Pakistan is stuck in a never-ending cycle of trouble because it depends on big countries.

According to Sinnott (2009), all great powers need to know about Pakistan's complicated and troubled past and should consider it when deciding how to work with Pakistan. Indeed, some material supports the notion that when Pakistan seeks to collaborate with other nations, it promotes its military, political, and economic fears.

Pakistan's volatility has played a significant role in developing US-Pakistani ties. Robert McMahon (1994) examines the Cold War to comprehend how this partnership came about, as Pakistan needed assistance from the USA to recover from three wars with India in its early history. Hussain (2013) examines Pakistan's difficult connection with the U.S. throughout the GWOT (Touqir, 2005). He asserts that providing money to Pakistan and lifting sanctions were the bedrock of Pakistan's relationship with the USA during unipolar power distribution.

Due to China disliking India, relations between China and Pakistan have stayed the same since the war between India and China in 1962. Umbreen Javaid (2015) believes that the "Afghanistan dilemma" will provide another incentive for their connection to deepen in the future. He says that China will keep helping Pakistan stay stable because Beijing needs help to stop the Taliban and other extremist groups from destabilizing China by supporting Chinese Muslim separatist parties. People who write about Sino-Pakistani ties, like those who write about US-Pakistani relations, do not discuss what Russia's expanding influence in Pakistan implies for the GPC.

While Pakistan does not have a long history of cordial ties with Russia, some scholars suggest that Russia may be able to assist Pakistan if US-Pakistan relations remain fragile. Even though there isn't much written about this topic, researchers who support this relation give reasons that are just as strong as those who support Pakistan's ties with other major powers. According to Almas Naqvi and Masood (2017), no nation has ever been at odds with another. Rather than that, they assert, each state worked 'against the other' to "indirectly" harm the other's interests in "pursuit of each others geopolitical aims and security imperatives." They say that even though Russia doesn't have a clear plan for the area, there are still a few things that Pakistan and Russia might agree on right now. It allows Pakistan to benefit from another significant power alliance it previously lacked. Kaura (2018) disagrees because he thinks that Russia is working on a big plan that would give Pakistan more power in making a possible alliance. Additionally, Akram (2016) is pleased that both nations have been proactive. She says that every country knows the political and economic benefits of working together, especially Pakistan, which can benefit from working together in the energy sector.

3. Research Methodology

It uses primary and secondary sources to look at how Pakistan built relationships in the GPC under different levels of polarity. Additionally, the article examines Pakistan's current activities in the multipolar globe. The data was collected from several books, news stories, reports from the government and think tanks, academic journals, and other sources. Additionally, this article offers personal stories of how the ideas in this study came to be, government policy papers, official transcripts, and other work by political scientists that contribute to the analytic viewpoint.

4. Pakistan's Role in the Cold War

Since 1947, when British India's colonial authority ended and the South Asian subcontinent was partitioned, ideological and geopolitical considerations have dominated Pakistan's foreign policy. Pakistan was seen as a conduit between the oil-rich Persian Gulf and the West and a gateway to "the Muslim World" (Arya, 1966). Pakistan hasn't been able to solve its security problem since it was founded because of unresolved territorial disputes with India, incompatible claims to national identity, a lack of trade within the region, and weak democratic

institutions. Throughout the Cold War, the USA significantly influenced Pakistan's foreign policy. The "war against the Soviet Union" in Afghanistan, which served as Pakistan's first test as a frontline partner of the USA, and the ongoing struggle against terrorism should not be neglected. However, ties between the USA and Pakistan have been described as "a tale of false hopes, unfulfilled promises, and tragic misunderstandings" (Husain, 2013). There have been friction and distrust between both nations in this love-hate relationship.

Additionally, there have been instances of military and economic assistance and collaboration. Haqqani said that the USA had different motivations for wanting to engage with Pakistan than Pakistan had. Consequently, Pakistan has been frustrated that the United States does not share its concerns over Indian subcontinental hegemony. At the same time, Washington has anticipated a more significant role for Pakistan in the fight against terrorism and communism rather than diverting military and economic assistance to address India's complex power capabilities. After the subcontinent's partition, Truman sought to establish "the most productive bilateral relationship" with Pakistan and India (Robert, 1994). Washington hoped that assuming the region remained under British control, the new states would be interdependent, stable, aligned with the West, and resistant to internal and external communist threats. On the other side, Jawaharlal Nehru's non-alignment policies diminished the U.S.'s enthusiasm for India.

Experts in Washington said Pakistan was a "potentially important strategic asset" that the U.S. couldn't lose. Pakistan and the U.S. interacted extensively rather than forging an alliance based on similar ideals. Pakistan needed a counterweight to India, while the U.S. wanted to keep the Soviet Union out. According to the Pakistani military, the country's relationship with the U.S. during the Cold War was tense. Pakistani society is resentful and distrustful of the USA. Many individuals believe their nation has been treated unjustly, even though they are strong U.S. allies in South Asia. Washington failed to assist Pakistan during the 1965 war with India when it most needed assistance from the USA (Amal and Jayshree, 2010). Following the Afghan war, the USA abandoned Pakistan when it was no longer required to assist the USA in achieving its regional objectives. Nuclear sanctions imposed by the USA also harmed Pakistan's economy and wrought devastation on its people.

Even though Pakistan respected U.S. security interests in the area, the U.S. was unwilling to give Pakistan enough diplomatic support when it was at war with India. The U.S. didn't want to upset India at the expense of Pakistan, which it thought was important to counter China from getting too much power. After Pakistan and the U.S. signed military agreements, some Pakistanis had doubts about whether or not the U.S. could be trusted. Whenever the Soviet Union posed a danger to U.S. interests in the area, there was debate about whether the U.S. should depend on Pakistan to secure its interests (Robert, 2003). However, the two sides minimized their disagreements and continued collaborating for various reasons. During the early years of the relationship between Pakistan and the U.S., many senior Pakistani military members who went to school in the U.S. were very important. They liked the U.S. because they thought it was better regarding technology, economics, and helping its friends, which they thought would be good for Pakistan in the long run.

When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, the USA considered Pakistan a frontline ally. Pakistan, like many other Cold War allies, got a lot of help from Washington in exchange for keeping the Soviet Union from getting too big. Both sides want to avoid further involvement in Afghanistan. However, the USA lost interest in Afghanistan's difficulties shortly after the Soviets withdrew. It sparked a new conflict with Pakistan over nuclear proliferation. The U.S. ceased funding Pakistan during their last days of cooperation in Afghanistan. It contributed to Pakistan's perception of it as an "unreliable ally" (Khan, 1999). It is critical to strengthen Pakistan's government accountability, which can only be accomplished through education and improved living circumstances.

4.1 Pakistan's Role in War on Terrorism

Pakistan decided to join the global war on terrorism (GWOT) because of geostrategic concerns and pressure from the U.S. While the international community has traditionally seen Pakistan's contribution to the battle against terrorism through the prism of Afghanistan, they have ignored the GWOT's impact on Pakistan's domestic economy and security. Pakistan's internal security began to deteriorate in 2002 when Islamist militants rose to prominence and expanded their terrorist actions across the nation and other areas of the world. However, Pakistan's counterterrorism measures have resulted in a decline in regional terrorism. This article looks at Pakistan's efforts to

stop terrorism in light of the 2019 U.S. Terrorism Report. Instead of advising Pakistan to "do more," it states that the world should applaud Pakistan's counterterrorism achievements (Adeel, 2021).

In North Waziristan, the Pakistani Army started its first military operation against a Wazir sub-clan. This sub-clan was part of al-Qaeda's attack on a nearby U.S. military base in 2003. In 2003, an operation killed 22 al-Qaeda militants and seven tribal members. In 2004, 63 terrorists from Uzbekistan and Chechnya were killed. Al-Qaida murdered 26 Pakistani army men during the operation. In 2005, the Shakai launched an offensive against the Mehsud clans. The government started going after people in North and South Waziristan and did so until 2008. The purpose of Operation Sherdil was to reclaim Bajaur Agency from the Taliban. It took place between 2008 and 2010. Operation Rah-e-Rast removed the TTP branch in Swat, Pakistan, and cleared the Malakand branch. This led to the arrest of Sufi Muhammad, the leader of the TSM. In 2009, Operation Bia Darghalam started to stop terrorists from attacking NATO supply trucks, and Operation Rah-e-Nijat killed 90% of terrorists in Dera Ismail Khan and Zhob. In 2011, 144 actions were conducted, killing 1,016 terrorists. In 2012, the people of North Waziristan were once again secure. In 2013, the Pakistan Rangers' actions assisted Baluchistan and Karachi in eliminating terrorists. In 2014, Operation Zarb-e-Azb killed 2,100 terrorists in North Waziristan. In Khyber Agency, FATA, there was a clash between the TTP and its ally, Lashkar-e-Islam. This operation started in 2015 to clear the Tirah valley from JamaatulAhrar, TTP, and Lashkar-e-Islam. Pakistani police took action against extremist organizations headed by the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) and Baloch extremist groups led by the TTP. In 2017, Operation Raddul Fasaad killed the last terrorists in the areas that used to be FATA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sehwan Sharif, and Lahore. In the middle of July 2017, Khyber IV cleared the Shawal and Rajgal valleys in Khyber Agency, which are all in Khyber. Terrorist activity in the country dropped by 59% from 2014 to 2018 because of Operation Raddul Fasaad (Safdar, 2019).

In its 2019 Country Report on Terrorism, the United States did not fully understand what Pakistan was doing to stop terrorism. Pakistan's foreign ministry said that the report's U.S. viewpoint was incorrect. The foreign ministry said, "On the other hand, Pakistan faces a threat of terrorism from groups outside the country funded by foreign governments" (Islamuddin, 2020). Additionally, the U.S. and the Taliban had positive negotiations in 2019. Pakistan's government also played a significant role in these 2019 discussions. The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), an international group, puts out a report called the "Global Terrorism Index" (GTI) every year (David, 2018). According to a study from the GTI 2020, Pakistan's ranking has risen from fifth (2019) to seventh (2020). For the first time since 2006, Pakistan's terror-related fatalities declined in 2019.

Additionally, the research states that since 2007, the number of people murdered by terrorists in Pakistan has decreased by 90%. Since 9/11, Pakistan has been the target of terrorist strikes. Over 80,000 people have been killed, and the country has lost more than \$ 102.5 billion.

Pakistan has spent considerable sums eliminating the danger of terrorism in the area. When people discuss how much Pakistan sacrificed in the GWOT, they seldom mention how many people died. Ex-President Trump announced to the globe that Pakistan had been awarded \$ 33 billion for its assistance with the GWOT. On the other hand, Pakistan spent over \$200 billion on the GWOT, including funds for roads and other infrastructure. A 2017 report from USAID substantiates this (IEP, 2020). Although the United States provided \$33.4 billion in aid, only \$14.6 billion was spent on coordinating and aviation assistance, or 44% of that amount. The remaining \$18.8 billion was utilized to address citizen and security concerns.

When it comes down to it, Pakistan chose to join the U.S. in the GWOT after September 11. Pakistan promised to assist with logistics and information sharing with coalition troops but did far more. Pakistan joined the alliance because it was in the global community's best interests to end regional terrorism. Pakistan was the nation that felt the brunt of the GWOT the most. Pakistan aided in the advancement of the Afghan peace process. It's not the only thing Pakistan has done to stop its society from becoming more radicalized. The country has also changed its educational system and other institutions, brought less developed areas into the mainstream, and merged the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Thus, Pakistan has made significant contributions to the GWOT. The international community, especially the United States, should take note of this and recognize Pakistan's efforts to fight terrorism in the area (Adeel, 2021).

4.2 Pakistan in Changing World Order

A seismic shift in the changing global order may be seen thought-out the American exit from Afghanistan and its transfer to the Indo-Pacific area. Other countries in the area should be on the lookout, carefully watch their policies, and plan a well-thought-out path to protect their national interests when a fading and wounded superpower finishes its unfinished business and moves its center of strategic focus to another area. In hindsight, Pakistan was most hurt by being in such a dangerous place in the 1990s, when the U.S. left the area after the violent fall of the huge Soviet Union. The effects of this time are still felt in Pakistan's political and security circles. Since the 1990s, the United States has been the only country to rule and shape the global order. Washington got this power after beating the Soviet Union in the Afghan War. At the time, communist China did not pose a serious threat to the U.S. because Beijing was working to strengthen its economic dominance at home and spread its soft power across the border (Abdul, 2019).

As a result, the United States did not feel compelled to consider Thucydides' Trap concerning China. The U.S. is worried about losing its status as "the only superpower" because China is becoming more important worldwide. When it worries about losing its unstoppable power, an arrogant superpower will likely do desperate things to hurt the safety of important parts of the world. Pakistan should thus prepare for a significant negative impact on its frail security and volatile economy from the continuous tug-of-war between the United States and China.

Any global order has always included the economy as a critical pillar. The neo-liberal international system, based on free trade, globalization, deregulation, and privatization, seems everywhere today. It is no secret that the U.S. is in charge of the eroding levers that govern the global economic system. Additionally, the U.S. has a growing influence over institutions that lend money, such as the IMF and the W.B. The IMF has strengthened its negotiating position with Pakistan by tightening its terms, which has put Pakistan's weak economy on a ventilator and caused inflation that is too high for the people to handle. Second, even though the U.S.'s "pivot to Asia" and "Indo-Pacific policy" are meant to slow down China's economic and military growth, these policies affect Pakistan. Washington has given India, Pakistan's biggest rival, a big part to play in making it hard for China to get stronger in East and South Asia. This is supported by giving India a strong position in the Quad Alliance. New Delhi has benefited from its alliance with the United States and the West by getting things like geospatial technology, Rafale aircraft, nuclear technology, and the newest surveillance drones from Israel. So, India, which racists run, has become dangerously sure of its ability to use force (Abdul, 2019).

In 2019, the Modi government thought it had the right to violate international law by carrying out disastrous surgical strikes on Pakistani soil. Fortunately, Pakistan maintained its composure and prevented a dangerous clash from developing. Interestingly, India is trying to put on a diplomatic show by inviting an NSA-level meeting to New Delhi to downplay its role as a spoiler in Afghanistan and make a comeback. The U.S. is supporting India in this endeavor.

Uncomfortably, a rising power led by a populist government is willing to get into more and more military misadventures with its enemy, even though the most powerful countries in the world are entirely behind it diplomatically. The fact that Indian submarines tried and failed to enter Pakistani waters is mostly a sign of how authoritarian the Modi government is on Pakistan.

Thirdly, the twenty-first century is, without a doubt, the century of multibillion-dollar economic corridors. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is one of the most critical projects to improve connectivity in South Asia (Abdul, 2019).

In recent months, the corridor has seen a wave of terrorist and insurgent assaults. After the United States and the Taliban signed an agreement at the beginning of 2019, these attacks worsened and happened more often. Because of the terrible attacks on Chinese engineers working on the Daso Hydro Power Project, some critical CPEC projects had to be put on hold. The attacks were linked to a militant group opposed to China. Washington did not take decisive steps to destroy this group's safe havens in Afghanistan while American operations were in full force.

Also, the U.S. will likely use the IMF bailout packages to stop Pakistan from paying off its debts to China. U.S. politicians have consistently ensured that Pakistan does not repay its obligations to China using IMF funds. India's

funding of the insurgency in Balochistan has made the area unstable, which makes the expected rise in attacks by insurgents on CPEC projects in Baluchistan even more worrying. Pakistan cannot hide its head in the sand and do nothing about these new threats caused by the changing global order.

Instead of using the whole government to deal with rising inflation and political instability caused by recent protests by a religious group, these urgent problems should be left to the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Finance. No one can argue that the country needs a team to develop aggressive and dynamic foreign policies on time and deal with the fast changes in regional and international politics. So, it is time to understand how the global order is changing and devise well-thought-out plans to deal with these changes. In order to win over hearts across the border, particularly across the Atlantic Ocean, the nation's foreign minister and his staff are expected to study and practice the art of soft power and diplomacy (Abdul, 2019).

5. Conclusion

Through various power distribution systems, this study examined how Pakistan fits into the battle between great powers and how Pakistan has used great powers to assist in maintaining its country's stability. Consequently, this article examined three periods in Pakistan's history: The Cold War, the Global War on Terror, and the emerging battle between big powers. This shows that Pakistan is important because of its colonial history, its location, the religious influence it has in the area, and its strong military. It has prompted several nations to include Pakistan in their strategic plans. It also found that Pakistan uses its security, political, and economic worries to get help from other countries to solve its problems. Pakistan will undoubtedly play a significant role in subsequent conflicts between the United States, China, and Russia.

In a multipolar world, many things have changed and will likely continue to change how Pakistan competes with other big countries. The study shows that Pakistan needs military and financial help from other countries. Both the United States and China are capable of doing so immediately. On the other hand, Russia might help Pakistan with its military but not with its economy. Second, since the beginning of the Cold War, many powerful countries have seen South Asia as an important place. Due to their conflicts, the major powers could not collaborate with Pakistan and India. They were unable to work together with both of them. So, it's unlikely that Pakistan will build a long-term relationship with a big country that it thinks would put its security at risk by making a strong alliance with India. It is the only big country that has always shared Pakistan's distrust of India and said it wants to stay away from a relationship with India. Third, although Pakistan can be an excellent military partner for large nations, it is ready to jeopardize its strategic objectives if it believes doing so would help it accomplish its own. Even if the world was once entirely one-sided, there are indicators that the U.S. will look beyond Pakistan's perceived betrayal and move on to other matters.

More than in the past, large countries' affiliations with Pakistan will be determined by their ability to cooperate with other South Asian governments. These dynamics will also influence the areas of concern for other nations in this emerging multipolar framework. China bolstered its ties with Pakistan to compete with the U.S. On the other hand, Russia has shifted its focus away from India and toward Pakistan, believing the U.S. to be its greatest danger. These responses are unsurprising, given that these emerging nations want to dethrone the United States as the world's leader. The strengthening partnership between India and the United States indicates that China is the primary source of worry for the United States. It redirected the new competition's attention away from Europe and Asia, where the U.S. was concerned about the Soviet Union's danger to Europe under the bipolar system (Russia). According to this analysis, Pakistan is unlikely to choose a side in the next clash of great powers. Rather than that, since Pakistan benefits from connections with all three big countries, it will probably want to develop relations with all three. China is the most acceptable partner for Pakistan in greater powers. China can now assist Pakistan in obtaining military and financial resources. It is in contrast to how power was allocated historically. Pakistan and China despise India, making them ideal strategic allies. It may be more critical than a relationship based on mutual benefits, such as the one with Russia.

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