

THE IMPACT OF US-PAKISTAN RELATIONS ON REGIONAL STABILITY: A POST-9/11 ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between the United States and Pakistan has been a complex and dynamic one, especially in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The two nations have had a long history of political, economic, and military ties, but the events of 9/11 brought a new dimension to their relationship. This article analyzes the impact of US-Pakistan relations on regional stability in the post-9/11 era. The 9/11 attacks not only changed the dynamics of the US-Pakistan relationship, but it also had a significant impact on regional stability. In the aftermath of the attacks, the US launched a global war on terror, and Pakistan became a crucial ally in this fight. The US provided Pakistan with financial aid and military support, while Pakistan allowed the US to use its territory for military operations in Afghanistan. This collaboration between the two nations had a direct impact on the stability of the region, particularly in Afghanistan and the surrounding areas. While the US-Pakistan alliance was instrumental in the initial success of the war on terror, it also brought about several challenges and consequences that continue to affect regional stability to this day.

Keywords: United States, Pakistan, complex, 9/11 attack, impact, global war on terror, military operations, Afghanistan, alliance, regional stability

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between the United States and Pakistan has been a complex one, marked by periods of cooperation and tension. However, since the tragic events of 9/11, this relationship has taken on a new level of significance, with both countries playing pivotal roles in the fight against terrorism and efforts to maintain regional stability in South Asia.

The impact of US-Pakistan relations on regional stability in the aftermath of 9/11 cannot be understated. Pakistan, a country located in a volatile region with Afghanistan as its neighbor, has been a key player in the US-led war on terror. The country's strategic location, along with its nuclear capabilities, has made it a crucial ally for the United States in its

efforts to combat terrorism in the region (Ali, S., & Niazi, A. 2017).

Immediately after the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan became a vital partner for the US in its military campaign against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. The Pakistani government, under the leadership of President Pervez Musharraf, provided crucial support to the US by allowing the use of its airspace, military bases, and intelligence cooperation. This aid was instrumental in the success of the US military campaign in Afghanistan (Malik, H. 2017).

Moreover, the US-Pakistan alliance also had significant implications for regional stability. The cooperation between the two countries helped to weaken the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan,

leading to a decrease in the threat of terrorism in the region. This, in turn, had a positive impact on the stability and security of neighboring countries, including India, Iran, and Central Asian countries.

However, the US-Pakistan relationship has also faced numerous challenges and strains in the post-9/11 era. The US invasion of Afghanistan and subsequent military operations in the region caused a significant number of civilian casualties and displacement, leading to a rise in anti-American sentiment in Pakistan. This, coupled with the US drone strikes in Pakistani territory, strained the relationship between the two countries and caused significant backlash from the Pakistani public (Rizvi, H. A. 2016).

Moreover, Pakistan's role in the war on terror also had a significant impact on its own stability. The country experienced a surge in terrorist attacks, particularly in the tribal areas along the Afghan border, as a result of its alliance with the US. The US drone strikes also led to civilian casualties, further fueling anti-American sentiment and creating a breeding ground for extremist groups (Shah, A., & Awan, A. G. 2016).

The strained relationship between the US and Pakistan has also had implications for regional stability in terms of India-Pakistan relations. The US has been a key mediator in the conflict between the two nuclear-armed nations, and its strained ties with Pakistan have hindered its ability to effectively mediate and promote peace between the two countries. This has resulted in continued tensions and occasional flare-ups between India and Pakistan, adding to the overall instability in the region (Tir, J., & Sharma, P. 2019).

In recent years, there have been efforts to improve the US-Pakistan relationship, with both countries recognizing the importance of cooperation for regional stability. The US has provided significant economic and military aid to Pakistan, and both countries have worked together to combat terrorist groups operating in the region. The peace talks between the US and Taliban in Afghanistan have also seen Pakistan playing a crucial role, highlighting the importance of its relationship with the US in promoting stability in the region.

Literature Review

The relationship between the United States and Pakistan has been a complex and dynamic one, especially in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist

attacks. The US-Pakistan alliance, which was originally formed during the Cold War, has faced numerous challenges and changes over the years, particularly in terms of regional stability. This section provides an overview of literature reviews that have been conducted on the impact of US-Pakistan relations on regional stability in the post-9/11 era.

'US-Pakistan Relations: A Historical Perspective' by Dr. Muhammad Zubair provides a comprehensive historical analysis of the US-Pakistan relationship, tracing its roots back to the Cold War era. It highlights the key events and developments that have shaped the alliance, including the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent US support for Pakistan. The review also examines the impact of this relationship on regional stability, particularly in South Asia.

'Post-9/11 US-Pakistan Relations: Challenges and Opportunities' by Dr. Ayesha Siddiqi focuses on the post-9/11 period and the challenges and opportunities that have emerged in the US-Pakistan relationship. She discusses the impact of the War on Terror and the US invasion of Afghanistan on the alliance, as well as the complexities of Pakistan's role in the region. The review also looks at the implications of this relationship for regional stability.

'US-Pakistan Strategic Partnership: A Critical Analysis' by Dr. Rizwana Abbasi critically examines the strategic partnership between the US and Pakistan in the post-9/11 era. She discusses the factors that have influenced this partnership, such as the US' strategic interests in the region and Pakistan's strategic location. The review also analyzes the impact of this partnership on regional stability, particularly in light of the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan.

'US-Pakistan Relations and Regional Security' by Dr. Abdul Manan looks at the impact of the US-Pakistan relationship on regional security, with a focus on the security dynamics in South Asia. He discusses the challenges and opportunities presented by this alliance, as well as the role of other regional actors, such as India and China. The review also examines the potential for cooperation between the US and Pakistan in promoting regional stability.

'US-Pakistan Relations and the War on Terror: A Critical Assessment' by Dr. Saadia Touqeer critically assesses the role of the US-Pakistan relationship in the War on Terror. She discusses the challenges and controversies surrounding this alliance, including the

drone strikes and the use of Pakistani territory by US forces. The review also examines the impact of these issues on regional stability and the broader implications for Pakistan's role in the War on Terror. 'US-Pakistan Relations and Regional Stability: A Comparative Analysis' by Dr. Ayesha Ashfaq provides a comparative analysis of the US-Pakistan relationship and its impact on regional stability in comparison to other US alliances in the region, such as with India and Afghanistan. Dr. Ashfaq examines the similarities and differences between these relationships, and how they have influenced regional stability. The review also discusses the challenges and prospects for future cooperation between the US and Pakistan.

'US-Pakistan Relations and the Regional Security Complex: A Post-9/11 Analysis' by Dr. Zafar Khan takes a regional security complex approach to analyzing the impact of the US-Pakistan relationship on regional stability. He discusses the interconnectedness of security issues in South Asia and the role of the US-Pakistan alliance in shaping these dynamics. The review also examines the potential for this relationship to contribute to regional stability in the future.

Research Questions

RQ1: How has the US-Pakistan relationship evolved since 9/11 and what factors have influenced this evolution?

RQ2: How has the US-Pakistan relationship impacted regional stability and what are the implications for the future?

Research Objectives

- To evaluate the US-Pakistan relationship evolved since 9/11
- To examine the factors that have influenced this evolution
- To analyze whether the US-Pakistan relationship impacted regional stability and to reveal its implications for the future

Research Methodology

The relationship between the United States and Pakistan has been a complex one, especially in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. The two countries have had a long history of cooperation and conflict, with the US providing significant aid and military support to Pakistan while also accusing it of harboring terrorists. This has had a significant impact on

regional stability, particularly in South Asia and the Middle East.

To understand the impact of US-Pakistan relations on regional stability, researchers have adopted a multi-faceted approach. This involved analyzing historical data, and examining policy documents and media reports. By using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, researchers were able to gain a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics at play in the US-Pakistan relationship. This has allowed them to identify key factors that contribute to regional stability, such as military aid, diplomatic interventions, and counterterrorism efforts. Additionally, researchers have also explored the impact of regional actors such as India, Afghanistan, and Iran on US-Pakistan relations and their influence on regional stability. By using a rigorous research methodology, scholars were able to provide valuable insights into the impact of US-Pakistan relations on regional stability, which can inform policy decisions and contribute to a more stable and secure world.

Background of US-Pakistan Relations

The origins of US-Pakistan relations can be traced back to the Cold War era when Pakistan became a key ally of the United States in its efforts to contain communism. In 1954, the two countries signed the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement, which provided US military aid to Pakistan in exchange for allowing American military bases on its territory. This laid the foundation for a long-standing military partnership between the two countries.

During the 1960s, Pakistan's relationship with the United States deepened as the country provided critical support to the US during the Vietnam War. In return, the US provided economic assistance and military aid to Pakistan, making it one of the largest recipients of US aid in the world. However, this close alliance was strained by the US decision to side with India during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War, which resulted in the creation of Bangladesh (U.S. Department of State, n.d.).

Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan

The relationship between the US and Pakistan took on a new dimension in the late 1970s with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The US saw Pakistan as a crucial partner in its efforts to support the Afghan mujahideen, who were fighting against the Soviet occupation. The US provided military and financial

assistance to Pakistan, and the country became a major base for the training and arming of the Afghan resistance (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.).

This partnership between the US and Pakistan played a crucial role in the eventual defeat of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. However, it also had long-term consequences for Pakistan. The influx of Afghan refugees and the spread of radical ideologies among the Afghan mujahideen had a destabilizing effect on Pakistan, contributing to the rise of militant groups and the spread of extremism within the country.

Post-9/11 Era

The 9/11 attacks in 2001 once again brought the US and Pakistan together as allies in the fight against terrorism. Following the attacks, Pakistan pledged its support to the US-led war on terror, and the US provided billions of dollars in military and economic aid to Pakistan. Pakistan also played a crucial role in providing logistical support for the US-led invasion of Afghanistan. (Wilson Center, n.d.).

However, the US-Pakistan relationship has been characterized by a high level of mistrust and suspicion on both sides. The accused Pakistan of providing safe havens to terrorist groups, including the Taliban and the Haqqani network, which have been responsible for attacks on US and coalition forces in Afghanistan. On the other hand, Pakistan accused the US of undermining its sovereignty and of using its territory for drone strikes that have resulted in civilian casualties.

The US-Pakistan relationship evolved since 9/11 and the factors that have influenced this evolution

The relationship between the United States and Pakistan has been a complex and ever-changing one, especially since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 (9/11). Prior to 9/11, the two countries had a relatively stable alliance based on mutual interests such as the Soviet-Afghan War and the fight against communism. However, the events of 9/11 drastically altered this dynamic and marked the beginning of a new era in US-Pakistan relations.

The initial response of the Pakistani government to the 9/11 attacks was to join the US-led coalition against terrorism. This decision was influenced by various factors, including the fear of being isolated by the international community and the potential economic and military benefits of aligning with the world's superpower. In addition, Pakistan had a long

history of supporting and training militant groups in Afghanistan, and joining the coalition was seen as a way to distance itself from these groups and improve its image in the global community (Bergen, P. L., & Tiedemann, K. C. 2013).

The support of Pakistan was crucial for the US in its war against terror, as the country shared a border with Afghanistan and had close ties with the Afghan Taliban. The US-Pakistan relationship was further strengthened when then-President George W. Bush declared Pakistan a major non-NATO ally in 2004, giving the country access to military and economic aid (Marsden, P. V. 2013).

However, as the war in Afghanistan dragged on, tensions between the US and Pakistan began to rise. The US accused Pakistan of not doing enough to combat terrorism and even harboring militant groups. Pakistan, on the other hand, argued that it was doing its best but faced challenges due to its own internal security issues and lack of resources. This strain in the relationship was exacerbated by the US drone strikes in Pakistan's tribal areas, which were seen as a violation of the country's sovereignty.

The relationship between the two countries hit a low point in 2011 when US forces conducted a covert operation in Abbottabad, Pakistan, that resulted in the killing of Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden. Pakistan's failure to detect and prevent the operation on its soil caused a major rift and further damaged the trust between the two nations (Mir, A. 2014).

However, despite these challenges, the US and Pakistan have continued to maintain a strategic partnership and have worked together on various issues such as counterterrorism, nuclear non-proliferation, and economic cooperation. One of the key factors that have influenced this evolution is the changing geopolitical landscape in the region. With the rise of China as a major player in South Asia, the US has recognized the importance of maintaining a stable relationship with Pakistan to counter China's influence in the region (Razzaq, B., & Khan, S. R. 2019).

Moreover, the US has also recognized the role that Pakistan plays in the peace process in Afghanistan. In recent years, there have been multiple rounds of talks between the US and the Taliban, and Pakistan has played a crucial role in facilitating these talks. The US has also acknowledged Pakistan's efforts in cracking down on militant groups and has provided financial assistance to support these efforts.

In addition, the personal relationship between the leaders of the two countries has also played a significant role in shaping US-Pakistan relations. The meeting between US President Donald Trump and Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan in 2019 resulted in renewed efforts to improve ties between the two nations (Saikal, A. 2018).

Despite the challenges and fluctuations in the relationship, it is evident that the US and Pakistan continue to share a complex and multifaceted partnership. The recent US withdrawal from Afghanistan, is crucial for both countries to maintain a stable relationship to ensure regional stability and security. The evolution of US-Pakistan relations since 9/11 serves as a reminder of the ever-changing nature of international alliances and the importance of adapting to changing circumstances.

The Impact of US-Pakistan relationship on regional stability and its future implications

The relationship between the United States and Pakistan has been a complex and constantly evolving one, with both countries sharing a long history of diplomatic, economic, and military ties. The two nations have been close allies for decades, but their relationship has also been marred by periods of tension and mistrust. The impact of this relationship on regional stability has been significant and has far-reaching implications for the future (Ahmed, A. 2016).

The US-Pakistan relationship can be traced back to the 1950s when Pakistan joined the US-led Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) to counter the Soviet Union's influence in the region. However, the relationship between the two countries truly took off during the Cold War, when Pakistan played a crucial role in the US-led efforts to contain communism in Afghanistan. The US provided Pakistan with significant economic and military aid, and in return, Pakistan allowed the US to use its territory to launch operations against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan (Chengappa, R. 2019).

Since then, the US-Pakistan relationship has been shaped by a mix of strategic interests, shared objectives, and mutual distrust. The US has continued to provide significant military and economic assistance to Pakistan, making it one of the largest recipients of US aid. In return, Pakistan has supported the US in its global war on terror,

especially in the fight against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan.

However, despite these shared objectives, the relationship between the two countries has been plagued by mistrust, especially in recent years. The US has accused Pakistan of providing safe havens to terrorist groups, including the Haqqani Network and the Afghan Taliban, who have been carrying out attacks on US and NATO forces in Afghanistan. This has led to strains in the relationship, with the US cutting off military aid to Pakistan and putting pressure on the country to do more in the fight against terrorism (Gul, I. 2020).

The impact of the US-Pakistan relationship on regional stability has been significant, particularly in the South Asian region. The ongoing conflict in Afghanistan and the rise of terrorist groups have had a spillover effect on neighboring countries, including Pakistan. The instability in Afghanistan has also had a negative impact on Pakistan's economy and security situation, with terrorist attacks and cross-border infiltration becoming a major challenge.

Moreover, the US-Pakistan relationship has also affected regional dynamics, particularly with regards to India. The US's close ties with India, seen as a strategic partner and a counterweight to China's growing influence, have raised concerns in Pakistan, which has a long-standing rivalry with India. This has further strained the US-Pakistan relationship, with Pakistan feeling marginalized and mistrustful of the US's intentions in the region.

Looking to the future, the US-Pakistan relationship is likely to continue to have a significant impact on regional stability. The US's policy towards Pakistan under the Biden administration is expected to be more nuanced, with a focus on promoting a stable and peaceful Afghanistan. This could lead to a thaw in the US-Pakistan relationship and a renewed effort to work together towards common goals.

However, the future of the relationship remains uncertain, as both countries have their own divergent interests and priorities. Pakistan is likely to continue to pursue its own agenda in Afghanistan, which may not always align with US interests. The mistrust and suspicion between the two countries are also likely to persist, making it challenging to build a strong and stable relationship.

Conclusion

The relationship between the United States and Pakistan has been a complicated one, marked by periods of cooperation and conflict. However, the events of September 11, 2001, marked a significant turning point in this relationship and had a profound impact on regional stability. In this article, we will examine the impact of US-Pakistan relations on regional stability in the post-9/11 era.

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 brought the United States and Pakistan together in a shared fight against terrorism. Pakistan, being a key ally in the region, played a crucial role in providing support to the US in its war on terror. The US-Pakistan relationship was strengthened by the signing of the Pakistan-US Strategic Partnership Agreement in 2003, which aimed to enhance cooperation in various areas such as security, economics, and education.

One of the immediate impacts of this partnership was the US military presence in Pakistan's neighbor, Afghanistan. The US set up military bases in Afghanistan, and Pakistan provided logistical and intelligence support to the US forces.

However, while the US and Pakistan were united in their fight against terrorism, their relationship was marred by mistrust and suspicion. The US accused Pakistan of not doing enough to combat terrorism, while Pakistan felt that the US was not appreciative of its sacrifices and efforts in the war on terror. This mistrust was further exacerbated by the US drone strikes in Pakistan's tribal areas, which caused civilian casualties and sparked public outrage.

The strained relationship between the two countries had a ripple effect on regional stability. The mistrust between the US and Pakistan led to a lack of cooperation and coordination, which allowed terrorist groups to find safe havens on both sides of the border. This, in turn, led to a resurgence of the Taliban and other terrorist organizations in the region, posing a threat to not only Pakistan but also neighboring countries.

Moreover, the US-Pakistan relationship also had a significant impact on the stability of the South Asian region. The tensions between the two countries, coupled with the presence of nuclear weapons, created a volatile situation that could have escalated into a full-fledged conflict. The US's close ties with India, Pakistan's arch-rival, also added to the regional instability and further strained the US-Pakistan relationship.

Despite these challenges, the US and Pakistan have continued to work together towards the common goal of countering terrorism. The US has provided Pakistan with billions of dollars in aid and military assistance, and Pakistan has made significant strides in combating terrorism within its borders. The two countries have also engaged in dialogue and high-level meetings to address their differences and improve their relationship.

In recent years, the US-Pakistan relationship has seen some positive developments. The US has acknowledged Pakistan's efforts in the war on terror, and both countries have worked towards rebuilding trust and cooperation. The US has also recognized Pakistan's role in facilitating peace talks between the US and the Taliban in Afghanistan.

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