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Pakistan and Afghanistan Relation: An Overview of Before and After the Government of Taliban

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ABSTRACT

Afghanistan and Pakistan have historically been close neighbours and share a wide range of characteristics, including geography, culture, ethnicity, and many more. Despite this, the two countries ties were never on a stable foundation. This study investigates if there have been better relations than the democratic government in Afghanistan ever since the Taliban took power in Afghanistan between 1996 and 2001. A number of national and international writers underlined the role that regional and international actors had in both sustaining and ultimately destroying the peace of the region. The main goal of this study is to examine the military, political, and social ties between Pakistan and Afghanistan as well as their effects on both countries. This research, which examined a variety of unresolved issues between the two nations, was based on analytical methodologies and employed primary and secondary sources. It is advised that the two nations work to improve their relations via diplomacy rather than engage in conflict.

Introduction

Pakistan and Afghanistan have had a strained and tense relationship for the duration of their existence together. Even though they are neighbours, this is the fact. After the Taliban administration in Afghanistan was toppled in 2001, the nature of the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan changed dramatically. The relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan has a lengthy history, most of which has been characterised by violent encounters between the two nations. When the Taliban administration was deposed in 2001, the situation in Pakistan started to worsen and got more perilous, On the other hand, Pakistan has been accused of supporting the Taliban and providing refuge for the group's leadership by Afghanistan, according to those accusations (Safdar, 2020).

The subject of this research is the events, occurrences, and problems of both nations as highlighted by their leaders on social media. It aims to demonstrate how top officials in politics and the executive branch of government use their platforms to highlight national events and developments. This study aims to raise people's knowledge of how our top politicians prioritise

certain problems to determine their agendas. Based on content analysis, this study. Due of our shared lifestyle, the paper aims to highlight the significance of both nations.

Both quantitative and qualitative components have been used. To analyse the data, it employs content analysis methods. Articles have been chosen by political players and political aims as the most preferred source platform. In addition, in accordance with the research approach, the study focused on the investigation of certain themes and attention spans. RQ1 is therefore based on two metrics: the level of interest in Pak-Afghan politicians' policies, the overall volume of their mutual support, and the degree to which politicians communicated their opinions and feelings on issues involving the two countries. RQ2 is addressed by examining the thematic frameworks used to describe the military cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan. RQ3 addresses how the alliance between Pakistan and Afghanistan affects the stability of the area. Furthermore, the argument is being established in the context of realism theory further following analytical and descriptive approaches. Thomas Hobbes, Hans Morgenthau, and Niccolo Machiavelli are proponents of realist approach (Villanueva, 1997). Realism is a theory in international relations that emphasizes the competitive and conflictual nature of global politics. It posits that states act primarily in pursuit of their national interests, often defined in terms of power and security, in an anarchic international system where no central authority exists to enforce rules. Applying realism to the Afghanistan-Pakistan relationship, both before and after the Taliban's rise to power, reveals a dynamic driven by concerns over security, influence, and regional power balance. Historically, Pakistan has sought to maintain a friendly or compliant regime in Afghanistan to secure strategic depth against its rival, India, and to prevent the rise of Pashtun nationalism that could threaten its territorial integrity. The Taliban government and its return have intensified this realist-driven approach, as Pakistan has navigated between supporting the Taliban to maintain influence and ensuring its own security against the spillover effects of instability and militancy from Afghanistan. This illustrates how realism shapes the policies and interactions of both countries, with each seeking to maximize their strategic interests in a complex and often volatile regional context.

History of Pakistan-Afghan Relations

The dynamics of the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan have been significantly influenced by the common histories, cultures, and geographical contexts of the two nations. The Durand Line, which was constructed by the British in 1893 and presently serves as the international border between the two nations, stretches across a distance of 2,640 km. The border between the two nations, however, has been a point of conflict for well over a century and has only become worse over time. By focusing on the key turning moments and occasions that helped shape the relationship between Pakistan & Afghanistan into what it is now, we shall examine the history of that relationship in this volume. We shall focus on the contribution of the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 to the current situation. The Durand Line's presence has directly contributed to an increase in the level of antagonism between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The border between British India and Afghanistan was drawn by a British official by the name of Sir Mortimer Durand. The border between Afghanistan and British India was marked by this line (Asfahan, 2023).

Abdur Rahman Khan, who was ruling Afghanistan at the time, and Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, who was British India's foreign minister at the time, signed the deal in 1893. As a direct result of Afghanistan's refusal to accept the Durand Line as a legal boundary delineating the border between the two countries, a number of territorial disputes and ethnic conflicts have developed between the two nations of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Because to the Durand Line, the Pashtun people, the biggest ethnic group in Afghanistan, are currently distributed over both Pakistan and Afghanistan. Afghanistan has started claiming authority over a region that is officially recognised as being part of Pakistan as a direct result of this circumstance (Muzzafar, 2021).

Pakistan, on the other hand, saw the Taliban as a way to keep their footing in Afghanistan and stop an anti-Pakistani government from attaining power. Pakistan used this reason as the basis for its support of the Taliban. The events of September 11, 2001, when the United States started an invasion of Afghanistan, can be linked to the beginning of the changes that have occurred in the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The commencement of the changes that have occurred was marked by these occurrences. Pakistan has decided to stop from aiding the Taliban in response to criticism from the United States and has instead enlisted in a global alliance to fight terrorism. Taking on cooperative energy and connectivity projects for improved economic integration, cooperating to bring peace to Afghanistan, The United States of America's decision to include Pakistan in its anti-terror coalition had a substantial and far-reaching impact on the region. As a direct result of the fighting, terrorist groups like the Taliban and Al Qaeda started attacking the two neighbouring nations of Afghanistan and Pakistan, which exacerbated the degree of bloodshed and instability in the area (Akhtar, 2008).

The 'Durand Line Agreement', a contract signed between the governments of Afghanistan and British India in 1893, was repudiated by the Afghan government at the time of the division of India. Afghanistan made a territorial claim, backed the Pakhtunistan issue, and was the sole nation to vote against Pakistan's membership in the UN. Particularly in the early 1970s, Sardar Mohammad Daud was a steadfast advocate of Pakhtunistan. In reaction to Daud's animosity, Prime Minister Z. A. Bhutto instituted the Forward Policy. But Daud realised this in 1976 and made an effort to normalise relations with Pakistan. Daud and Bhutto exchanged visits, which enhanced their relationship. This essay's main goal is to provide a concise history of Pakistani policy towards Afghanistan and the bilateral ties between the two nations from 1947 to 1977. The analysis of how the Durand Line and the Pakhtunistan problem came to dominate Pak-Afghan relations is of utmost importance (Ahmed, 2010).

Literature Review

The Paper's first chapter covered the topics of Pak-Afghan relations and their main politician's political agenda. The current chapter includes a survey of the body of knowledge on the subject, lays out the theoretical foundation for the investigation, and poses potential research issues. Analysing several research has allowed us to integrate all of these problems and give our idea some foundation. Similar to how the literature already written on similar situations aided us, our study ended up verifying our research questions.

Hussain and Latif (2012) analyses numerous difficulties in Pakistan-Afghanistan relations in the light of post-9/11 developments. It makes the case that maintaining security and pursuing different development goals (political and economic) for both Pakistan and Afghanistan significantly depends on friendly and cooperative ties between these two close neighbours. However, there remains a trust gap, and the fight on terrorism is becoming a significant source of tension between the two nations. While Pakistan frequently refutes these allegations and holds the Afghan government directly accountable for its inability to stop cross-border incursions and the reconstruction of the Afghan nation-state, Afghanistan calls on Pakistan to do more to combat and stop the claimed extremist infiltrations into Afghan territory. Her relationships with Pakistan have been greatly impacted by foreign interference in Afghan domestic matters, particularly that of India. Some observers claim that the situation has gotten so bad that it has hurt long-term national interests, particularly in the years after 9/11. According to this analysis, Pakistan and Afghanistan are of indisputable importance to one another. It is imperative for both nations to establish friendly ties in order to advance their individual interests and the wider cause of peace in the regional and global context for geostrategic, political, economic, and other reasons. The two prospective South Asian states can overcome and eliminate a number of problems. However, if the leadership of both nations fails to resolve all lingering problems in their bilateral relationship, external powers would neutralise such a scenario.

Javid (2016) examines that despite their geographical proximity and shared long-standing sociocultural and religious heritage, Pakistan and Afghanistan have a history of sporadic mistrust, which has been underlined by numerous academics in historical narratives. The disparate impressions that political dynasties in Afghanistan formed along with their disdain for the subcontinent as a result of colonial rulers' practises continue to plague literature discussing both nations' foreign relations. The position for both nations is made more difficult by the involvement of superpowers and regional forces in Afghanistan. The continuing rebuilding in Afghanistan and Pakistan's determination to dismantle networks of religious extremists give the world—and not just the participants in the region—profound optimism. This paper carefully examines the history of bilateral relations in order to show how they developed from colonial times to the post-9/11 contemporary South Asian context, which is full of opportunities to deepen understanding and cooperation between the two nations.

Results and Findings

The current study is based on a content analysis of materials from both countries' official news sources as well as websites, newspapers, and books. It is quite difficult to draw conclusions about the links between the two countries in a single research because this one includes the time before and after the Taliban regime. The paper has aims to answer the questions listed above below. The analysis is further focused on the problems with the nation's appearance in the chosen resources. In addition, this study conducts a content analysis of the numerous topics covered by prominent politicians in their public forums. The character of politicians from their assemblies is also contrasted. The basic objectives of this chapter are to provide the findings and outcomes of the interaction between the two nations while keeping in mind the main research

topics. The combined results appear to be in the chapter's first section, while research issues are covered in the second.

Diplomatic Relations

It is possible to describe the political and diplomatic ties between Pakistan and Afghanistan as cooperative and tense at the same time. The most appropriate approach to describe the nature of their relationship is through this dichotomy. The two countries are united by centuries-old historical, ethnic, and philosophical bonds. These connections have been passed down through the generations. On the other side, worldwide events and wars like the Cold War, the Soviet Union's occupation of Afghanistan, and the War on Terror have had an influence on the relationship between these two nations. Pakistan made a substantial contribution to the process of installing a new administration in Afghanistan after the Taliban rule was overthrown. Pakistan lent the newly-installed Afghan government both financial and political support once it was recognised by the international community. Pakistan further provided Afghanistan with diplomatic assistance. By signing a variety of agreements aimed at achieving this goal, the two countries collaborated to deepen their economic and commercial connections (mustafa, 2020).

In addition, the issue of transnational terrorism has contributed to a climate of mistrust and stress in the ties between the two nations. One of the biggest barriers to the growth of amicable ties between the two nations is the existence of terrorist organisations along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. The number of deadly incidents that have recently occurred in both Pakistan and Afghanistan has exacerbated already-existing tensions between the two nations. Each country has charged the other with supporting numerous terrorist organisations. While Pakistan has charged Afghanistan of not doing enough to thwart assaults by the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) across the border, Afghanistan has accused Pakistan of providing a safe haven for the Taliban and other terrorist organisations. In terms of Pakistan and Afghanistan's political and diplomatic ties, there have been a number of hopeful developments during the past several years. Despite the fact that there have been many difficult challenges to overcome, this is the case (Rana, 2009).

Along with cooperating in the fight against terrorism and maintaining national security, Pakistan and Afghanistan have been attempting to strengthen their economic ties. For a while now, these initiatives have been ongoing. Pakistan has pledged to participate in many infrastructure development initiatives in Afghanistan. One of these initiatives is building a rail link between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Additionally, Pakistan and Afghanistan have recently reached a series of agreements that are meant to boost the amount of trade that occurs between the two nations. Despite these good advances, Pakistan and Afghanistan's ties with the rest of the world and their governments remain precarious (Harder, 2008).

Military Cooperation

Military cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan has been a difficult task that is usually filled with hostility. Over the course of their relationship, tension and conflict have been

caused by the two countries' porous and extensive border. Both Pakistan and Afghanistan have accused the other of supporting the militants after insurgent groups utilised the boundary to enter both nations and commit assaults. Shared blame for the state of affairs falls on both Pakistan and Afghanistan. The military alliance between the two nations is no longer conceivable, especially in terms of border protection. The existence of extremist groups on the two nations' shared border has proven to be one of the biggest obstacles to military cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan. As a result of multiple violent assaults that have happened in both countries, tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan have risen (Hanif, 2018) .

In spite of the difficulties, Pakistan and Afghanistan have made considerable progress in their military cooperation. In order to strengthen the goodwill between the two nations and to assure each other's safety, the military of the two nations have taken part in joint exercises. The two nations were able to strengthen their cooperation in the fight against terrorism and the defence of their borders by signing a bilateral security pact. These clauses were inserted in the agreement in order to increase cooperation in intelligence collecting and border patrols. The governments of these two nations have cooperated to aid in the facilitating of peace negotiations between the Taliban and the Afghani government. Despite this, there is still a lack of trust in the amount of military collaboration between Pakistan and Afghanistan. As long as the issue of transnational terrorism persists, it will be challenging to build a relationship between the two nations that is more stable and peaceful. Without first increasing trust and cooperating more closely between the military forces of the two nations, it is hard to find answers to the issue of militant organisations along the border (zingle, 2014).

Another aspect that makes military cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan more challenging is the presence of third-party governments. These two nations share borders with several other nations, such as Iran, India, and China, all of which have significant interests in the region. This has led to regional nations routinely using Afghanistan as a battlefield for their own objectives, escalating the hostilities that already existed between Pakistan and Afghanistan. In order to do this, the United States has been instrumental in facilitating Pakistan and Afghanistan's move into cooperating on their separate forces. Pakistan initially backed the Taliban but has subsequently joined the coalition led by the United States to fight terrorism as a direct result of the war on terrorism being fought by the United States. In order to improve the general level of security in the area, the United States has offered major military support to both Pakistan and Afghanistan (Safdar, 2020).

Pakistan and Afghanistan have a history of cooperative and antagonistic business relationships dating back to both the time before and after the 9/11 attacks. Although the long border between the two nations has benefited trade and economic activity, it has also presented difficulties for border security and control. During the Taliban era, both nations gained a greater understanding of the importance of bolstering their economic ties, and as a result, they have taken steps to increase their economic cooperation to reflect this newly acquired understanding. The possibility of Pakistan and Afghanistan engaging in business activity with one another is a crucial factor supporting the two nations' economic cooperation. Because Afghanistan is landlocked and has limited access to the sea, it is compelled to rely heavily on the trade and

economic activities of its neighbours. Pakistan is Afghanistan's most important commercial partner since it is the sole nation that may link the landlocked country to the Arabian Sea. Several limitations, including a weak infrastructure, security concerns, and political instability, have limited the potential for trade. Despite these obstacles, Pakistan and Afghanistan have been able to advance their economic cooperation throughout the aforementioned period. Numerous bilateral trade agreements have been signed as a consequence of the discussions between the two countries with the aim of lowering trade barriers and boosting economic cooperation. By creating a forum for companies from both countries to interact and work together, the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry has made a substantial contribution to the growth of commerce between the two nations (Muzzafar, 2021).

The numerous historical sites and locations in Afghanistan are generally referred to as the nation's cultural attractions, and they draw visitors from all over the world. Pakistan also has a lot of promise as a tourist destination because of the wealth of intriguing and unique sites and experiences it has to offer. Because of this, cooperation between the two nations in the tourist industry may be advantageous to the growth and improvement of both nations' economies. However, a number of challenges, including as political upheaval, concerns about personal safety, and a lack of required physical infrastructure, have impeded the growth of the tourism business in both nations. In the recent years, efforts have been made to reduce the detrimental consequences (Rehman, 2019).

Regional Impact

Over a long period of time, the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan has had an impact on the stability of the region. Both nations are located in an unstable part of the world that is prone to periodic conflicts and political upheaval. Numerous variables, including as shared history, shared political and economic interests, and shared security concerns, to mention a few, have shaped Pakistan's and Afghanistan's relationship. These things have directly changed the nature of their bond, and the safety of the environment surrounding them, considerably. The expansion of violence and instability brought on by the situation between those two nations is one of the most obvious repercussions that Pakistan and Afghanistan's relationship has had on the security of the surrounding area (Muzaffar, Yaseen, & Afzal, 2021; Umar, Jan, Rab & Ramzan, 2022). If it is not handled, unrest and instability in one country can quickly spread to those in the region. Another example of how this situation has interfered with the peace and security of the regions around is the fighting in Afghanistan. Millions of Afghans have been forced to escape their homes as a result of the violence, and many of them have sought sanctuary in Pakistan, a neighbouring nation. Pakistan's resources are under a great deal of stress as a result of the refugee inflow, which has a detrimental effect on the sociological and financial stability of the nation. Tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan have increased as a result of the refugee crisis, with Pakistan accusing Afghanistan of not doing enough to address the issue while Afghanistan denies Pakistan's claims. The involvement of entities from outside the area in the war that is occurring there is another element that has led to the destabilisation of the Pakistan-Afghanistan relationship.

Russia, China, and the United States have all expressed concern about the situations in Pakistan and Afghanistan, respectively. In order to further their own political and economic objectives, these nations' top leaders have played a significant role in influencing international relations. Due to a wide range of players, this has frequently resulted in a war with several fronts and an unstable regional environment. Both Pakistan and Afghanistan have blamed external players for the resulting lack of confidence in each other as a result of claims made against one other that they were harbouring militant groups and providing assistance to terrorist organisations. Due to the lack of trust between the two nations, it has been challenging to establish lasting peace and stability in the region.

External Influences

The complexity of the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan has been significantly influenced by outside parties, particularly the United States and India, who have both played key roles in this process. Recent years have seen a particularly notable impact from this effect. Since the Taliban were removed from power in 2001, foreign forces have had a greater impact on the politics and security of the area. Shortly after the Taliban's demise, this pattern started. Particularly, both India and the United States of America contribute significantly to this connection. The different ways in which their presence has changed the existing connections between Pakistan and Afghanistan will be examined in this paper, along with what those changes signify for the overall peace and security of the area. Since the 1980s, when it first started supporting the Mujahideen in their conflict with Soviet forces in Afghanistan, the United States has played a crucial role in the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The United States has significantly contributed to Afghanistan's rehabilitation and stabilisation after the Taliban administration was overthrown in 2001.

These contributions were made in the years after the Taliban government was overthrown. Tens of billions of dollars have been invested, and the US has maintained a sizable military presence in Afghanistan. They have also invested a substantial sum of money in programmes to reconstruct the nation and provide humanitarian help. The United States of America has contributed to the ongoing endeavour in Afghanistan to promote a climate of peace and harmony together with a number of other countries. The United States of America and the Taliban have been in negotiations in an effort to use diplomacy to find a peaceful settlement to the war. The United States of America has already exerted pressure on Pakistan to do more to combat terrorism in the area, particularly by pressing Pakistan to crack down on terrorist organisations that are based on its territory. To entice Pakistan to assist the United States of America in its endeavours, this has been done. This specific objective has been at the forefront of the United States' efforts. The United States' role in the administration and security of Afghanistan has been a point of disagreement between Pakistan and the United States. Despite Pakistan's attempts to combat terrorism, it believes that the United States unfairly blames it for the situation in Afghanistan. This is true even though Pakistan has been working to resolve the problem. Pakistan continues to assert its rights despite the fact that it has previously taken steps to resolve the issue.

The multibillion-dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which is now under construction, is an illustration of China's ambitions to increase its economic and political influence in the area. Over a variety of problems, notably India's resistance to the project and claims that China is aiming to surround India, Pakistan and India have been at odds with one another throughout the endeavour. One of the main causes of conflict between the two nations is India's objection to the project.

Refugees

Although the government is planning to send them back to Afghanistan due to some political reasons, but over the last forty years, Pakistan has welcomed millions of Afghan refugees. In Pakistan, there are presently over 2.8 million Afghan refugees amongst which almost 800000 are undocumented (Roshan, 2024). Under different UN strategies (SSAR), Pakistan is collaborating with Afghanistan and international organisations such as UNHCR and IOM to ensure their safe, dignified, sustainable, and voluntary return to their country of origin.

Conclusion

A long history of shared cultural, geographic, religious, social, and border relationships between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Although there are many parallels between the two states, there are also many differences and decorations between them. Their relationships fluctuated over time and from one administration to the next, demonstrating the many beneficial and bad effects on both countries. This research demonstrates the Pakistan and Afghanistan relations before and after the emergence of the War on Terror in Afghanistan and consequences on Pakistan Afghanistan and how the both countries paid its prices. This study thoroughly shed light on the diplomatic, economic, military, political, and social relations between both countries.

Prior to their rise to power in Afghanistan, Pakistan aided the Afghan mujahedeen while they fought the Soviet Union there. In 1996, they established their own government in Kabul. Therefore, during the aforementioned period, political, economic, social, and military relations between the two states improved. However, immediately after the establishment of WOR, these relations deteriorated quickly. Since the founding of WOT, Pakistan has supported the US cause in Afghanistan and let the US to set up bases there. As a result, terrorists began retaliating against Pakistan, which had extremely serious repercussions. Along with a variety of other problems, outside forces like the USA, India, and other unseen parties contributed to both the establishment of and some of the detrimental causes that led to the destruction of the peace in the region.

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