

## The Triangular Balance: Pakistan's Relations with China and India's Influence (1960-2010)

Tahseena Sarwar

M. Phil Scholar

Email: [tahseenasarwar6@gmail.com](mailto:tahseenasarwar6@gmail.com)

Muhammad Farhan

M. Phil Scholar

Email: [farhankhan6943@gmail.com](mailto:farhankhan6943@gmail.com)

Dr. Muhammad Aslam Faiz

Lecturer, Pakistan Studies

Email: [mfaiz@gudgk.edu.pk](mailto:mfaiz@gudgk.edu.pk)

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### Abstract

This work focuses on the strategic interaction between Pakistan, China, and India, presenting the military-strategic, economic, and diplomatic approaches that define South Asian geopolitics between 1960 and 2010. This study utilizes primary and secondary data studies employing both thematic and narrative analytical to understand how Pakistan's alliances helped to balance India's regional power. Surprisingly, the research indicates that the Security concerns especially on India part bonded Pakistan and China and high-level military and nuclear cooperation between the two countries. China stood out to be the major ally and supporter of Pakistan's military and economically; especially with regard to nuclear weapons developed the Karakoram Highway, and the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). India interpreted this nexus as strategic, and sought to build its militaries, align with the Soviets during the Cold war and with America post the 1990s, and employed policies such as the Act East policy. The relations between these three countries facilitated an arms race, growing tensions in South Asia and the unending web of security following the nuclearization of both India and Pakistan. Thus, with help of the historical background of the state, the issue of the historical alliances and rivalry of states are underlined, which contribute to the current South Asian stability, and the function of strategic partnerships in terms of south Asian foreign policy and regional security. Consequently, the study used historical analysis to show that the power triangle between Pakistan, China, and India has dictated modern-day power realignment, diplomacy, economics, and security to prevent conflict in a region characterized by enduring enmities.

**Keywords:** Pakistan-China relations, India-Pakistan rivalry, South Asia, geopolitical strategy, Sino-Pakistan alliance, India's influence, nuclear deterrence, Cold War, post-9/11 alliances, economic cooperation

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### **Introduction**

The nature of relationship in South Asians region has always remained as strategic partnership, competition, or both for a very long period of time. One of the most significant among such relations is a trilateral balance that constitutes Pakistan, China and India. This triumvirate relationship has therefore over the course of many decades trained in cooperation and at other times implicitly compete and even openly oppose or even escalate to conflict that may affect stability at the regional and even the global level. It is most importantly important to submit the triangular relation in the period of 1960 to 2010, in which the cold war model changes to a multipolar world. These fifty years give some idea about the various shades of the Pak-China relationship and Indian interference (Levitskaya, 2017).

This paper gives a brief idea of the relation of Pakistan with China and influence of India from 1960-2010 and significant issues relevant for general themes of international relations such as alliances, impact of great powers in regional disputes and balancing the military and economic factors. It is not a diplomatic tie between three neighboring countries but rather it equally affects international relations, international trade and global security. Motivations and responses of each country have been influenced by historical vectors, sick strategy, and domestic political concerns thus making this triangular relationship a subject of interest to scholars in international relations, strategic studies as well as political historians (Javaid & Jahangir, 2015).

### **Historical Background**

The histories of Pakistan's relations with China and how the Indian factor has influenced this relationship begin in the years immediately after the creation of Pakistan and India in 1947. Successive political changes in South Asia brought Pakistan and India with hostility over the territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The issue of Kashmir became the basis of Pakistani foreign policy and its friends and foes of the next several decades were determined by this fact.

Right after the independence, thus the situation that the Pakistan had to go through was that of the formation of the new state authority. Describing the war as the first between India and Pakistan over Kashmir in 1947-48, Dogra pointed out that this war constitution a new rivalry in South Asia between two countries that defined their policies and relationship. Thus, as Pakistan tried to set itself there against India and its larger size and military might it had to look for great power partners. China became another possible ally despite the fact that relations were started rather warily (Bhattacharya, 2022).

China, too, changed after the victory of the communist revolution in 1949 and sowed seeds of becoming an active player in the area gradually. At the early beginning of the diplomatic relations, Pakistani leaders had always looked at China with a cynicism primarily due to ideological dissimilarities; moreover, Pakistan was a traditional ally of Western powers whereas China was a communist country. However, change in regional politics was observed from the late 1950 s and early 1960s when relations between Pakistan and India declined and China was alienating itself with India. The event of Sino-Indian War in 1962 was turning point of the Chinese and Pakistan relationship and came closer with strategic cooperation against a common arch rival India (Zaman & Khan, 2023).

By the beginning of the sixties the secret strategic partnership with China had emerged as

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one of the most important partnerships in the region of South Asian association. This cooperation was mainly based on security issues and mainly concerned with India. For Pakistan, China has become a strategic partner that supplies and provides military and economic assistance. While, for China, the relation with Pakistan acted as a means to restraining India's influence in the region. This early strategic coordination marked the basis for long term cooperation that later culminated in economic and military relations.

### **The Role of the Cold War**

Especially with regards to the Pakistan – China – India Triangle, the influence of Cold war between United States of America and India was quite a lot. Its bitter rivalry was to overwhelm the other in South Asia and in that endeavor, to congregate regional countries into their ideological and strategic terrains. Looking at the act of securing the bilateral relationship through CENTO and SEATO Pakistan got the taste of the growing US-India relations in the 1960s and 1970s.

The third-party system: India under the leadership of the first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru intended to maintain a balance of non-alignment from both super powers. But after the Sino-Indian war of 1962, India started building up a better relation with Soviet Union. To become a decisive Military Aid supplier for India Soviet Union has also played a positive part to strengthen the Indian position in South Asia. This Indo-Soviet relationship went on to put further estrangement to Pakistan and forced it to look forward for a feeble partnership with China against both India and Soviet Union (Gilani et al., 2023).

In this connection therefore it could be said that cold war backdrop therefore can be seen to have had a determining responsibility for the triangular relations between Pakistan, China and India. For Pakistan, it is not only India but also having backing from China in the world where backing from America was sometime uncertain. These Chinese assistance to Pakistan fits into China's declared anti Soviet campaign and containment of influence of India in South Asia. This intertwining of interests added a new dimension to the regional dynamics as a triangular positioning was soon revealed as seven decades of South Asian history were to show.

### **Strategic and Military Cooperation**

It is, therefore, clear that the Pakistan-China relationship shares one of the strongest features founding on strategic and military cooperation. In the first quarter of the twentieth century, China replaced the eastern European countries and Eastern Bloc as their main source of supply of arms and military equipment, and thereby improving its defense strength. Such military cooperation was made with the view to checking India's superiority in the region's military might. The arms support from China was especially a boon for Pakistan during the 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pakistan wars in which India inflicted a major setback to Pakistan.

The support did not just involve the traditional military equipment. It was of paramount importance in helping Pakistan to advance its nuclear empire. This strategy perfectly culminated after a nuclear imported test was conducted by India in 1974 in which Pakistan had no option a that sought for nuclear parity with its arch enemy India. China assisted Pakistan in the products and helped Pakistan in conducting the nuclear test in 1998. This nuclear connection was now a new dimension to the existing Pakistan-China relationship

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escalating power maneuvering in South Asia and making it unpalatable for India to counter this duo either militarily or diplomatically (Faiz et al., 2024).

### **Economic and Diplomatic Relations**

Although the military [aspect of the] relationship between Pakistan and China has been widely written about, economic and diplomatic relations between the two states are no less important. As time went on, China emerged to be among Pakistan's most important economic friends, culminating in a role as investor in infrastructural, energy, and general development projects. This type of cooperation was launched in the beginning of the 2010s and the most famous project in this sphere is the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). But can be blamed to the earlier decades where China had invested in Pakistan in areas of its economy to blend the two countries.

Diplomatically in the foreign relations China has endorse the Pakistan in the international level especially in the territory conflicts with India. Beijing has been a diplomatic supporter of Islamabad on the disputed territory of Kashmir and has played a role in the United Nations to block measures that Islamabad finds unpalatable. For Pakistan it has been very useful because the country has always felt lonely in the issue of Kashmir. Meanwhile, Pakistan continues to stand by China on major issues like Taipei and South China Suitor's essential strategic interests (Shahbaz et al., 2024).

### **India's Influence on the Pakistan-China Alliance**

In fact, the early evolution of the Pakistan-China relationship has its roots in India's involvement or role as the as the catalyst for the formation of this relationship. Taken from the Indian point of view, the closeness between neither Pakistan or China has been a constant threat to its well-being and regional ambitions. Pak- China relations have been a cause of worry for Indian strategists as it means to go face to with two nuclear neighbors (Sehrawat, 2023).

India has not remained passive to the emergence of this partnership but its reaction has changed based on the emerging geopolitics. In cold war, India has responded to the alignment by checking the Pakistan and China relation with the Soviet Union where India got large military and economical helping hands. This Pak-China allied relationship was well-addressed by joint Indo-Soviet cooperation. Nonetheless, the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991 altering Indian tactical ambition and forced India to develop new aligned state and decrease the effect relied on a solitary superpower.

After the Cold War ended, India started aligning with the United States for the reason of managing China's emergent power. The new emerging strategic partnership between the US and India especially in military and security domain has perceived threats by both Pakistan and China due to changes in the regional dynamics. The economic growth of India during this period enabled this nation to effectively have a more assertive stand in the international relations hence complicating balance of power triangle between India, Pakistan and China.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The interaction between Pakistan, China, and India from 1960 to 2010 was characterized by a power politics system in South Asia. Despite extensive literature on this area, the long-term

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implications of Pakistan's relationship with China for its stance toward India are less well understood. In this work, the Pak- China alliance in relation to India and the ways in which any Pakistani moves was impacted by the Indian reaction is examined as the primary focus of the thesis. Simplifying these relations to basic qualitative measurements, the paper will approach neutrally to explain new aspects of motivation and tactics of this triangular relation.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To distinguish major of the cause of Pakistan China relation from year, 1960 to 2010.
2. In order to evaluate the impact of Pakistan's alliance with China on its policies and security decisions with respect to India, this paper selected the following two variables.
3. On the basis of these sources, the thesis of the work is formulated as follows: To analyze India's reactions to the relations between Pakistan and China and their influence on stability.
4. In order to comprehend all these question regarding how these political, economical and military relations between Pakistan, china and India affect the geopolitics of south Asia.
5. To examine the reasons and attitudes concerning this triangular relationship.

### **Research Questions**

1. Why was the Pakistan-China relationship transformed during 1960 to 2010?
2. What role did China's relation with Pakistan play on policy and security of Pakistan especially towards India?
3. In what manner did India engage the Pakistan-China relationship and what was the outcome for regional security?
4. Explain how political and military relations in Pakistan China India was influencing the structure of South Asia.\
5. In this paper, Morgan and Kumar aim to understand what motives and perceptions governed Pakistan's relations with China and India.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study of the power triangle between Pakistan, China, and India during the period of 1960 to 2010 is useful in comprehending dynamics of South Asia. In as much as this work defines the interpleural relations between these three nations with respect to military, economic and diplomatic grounds, it brings to clear understanding the nature and extent of impact that strategic alliances and rivalries have on the regional security and stability. This analysis is significant for like scholars, policy makers and international relation analysts, because it reveals the rationales and effects of creating alliances in conditions of threat and powering of regions.

The subject of the study based on cooperation and relation between Pakistan and China coupled with strategic adaptation by India also focuses on the concept of alliance formation to balance powers in the region. It shows that economic projects that involve investing such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and military cooperation have strategic consequences for future relations and security. Moreover, the study points out how the relationship between India and other world powers including the Soviet Union and later the US has developed the nation's strategies in combating regional threat.

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In a larger sense, the analysis is conceived over a historical backdrop of nuclearization and military build-up in South Asia. Many of the ideas discussed can facilitate current debates related to arms control, diplomacy, and conflict prevention. From the standpoint of current strategies of China-Pakistan-India triangular relations, this study provides a guideline for identifying and solving ongoing security issues in the South Asia area, with a view to advance peace and stability in the region.

### **Literature Review**

This paper analyzes the geopolitical structure of South Asia by focusing on the competition between Pakistan, China, and India. Since 1960 till 2010 this triad went through the changes impacting not only the stability in the region but also in the relations of powers in the world. An analysis of literature shows that this triangle has been influenced by the patterns of alliances, security policies, economic relations, and their approach on changes in the world singly in each country. Accordingly, this review outlines major patterns in the literature and how these dynamics unfolded and the legacies of these relationships.

#### **1. Pakistan-China Relations: Strategic and Security Dimensions**

Pakistan and China relation has been playing the key role of regional stability mainly in terms of strategic, military and economic cooperation. Experts observe that Pakistan's strategic partnership with China was to contain India in South Asian region. (Ullah et al.) opined that the Sino Indian war of 1962 played a role of shaping Pakistan's perception as China being a powerful ally against India. This perception led Pakistan towards a security-seeking stance towards China, where civil-nuclear cooperation, military aid and equipment and crucial linkage of technology during Indo-Pakistan war in 1965 and 1971 copiously highlighted this perception.

It is here where military cooperation becomes an important part of this relations where authors such as (Islam & Sinha) has highlighted how China bolstering Pakistan's defense. China has had contribution to South Asian security: its aid especially during Pakistan's nuclear program in the 1980s. This was helpful to Pakistan because it gave them a bargaining chip against Indians conventional and nuclear power for China's interest in a proxy against India. Such security motivations are well expressed in many works (Hussain et al., 2024) and its nuclear aid was not just for Pakistan security but China's goal to stall India's dominance in the region.

#### **2. India-China Relations: Cooperation and Conflict**

India and China share cooperation indulge with their conflicting issues and have different phases. (Singh) has noted another luminary as being the Sino-Indian war of 1962 which laid a future course of suspicion and animosity. This war highlighted issues of territorial nationalism, especially because the long-standing demarcation of the borders over the Himalayas is still an issue, thus, continues to influence relations. (Khan & Malik, 2023) found in another study that the war of 1962 forced India to increase its forces and look for new defense measures to deal with the Chinese.

However, there had always been some tensions between the both countries while China and India have attempted to engage in partnership, particularly in economic and trade fields.

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Some of the scholars include (Win) revealed that although these countries share enormous volumes of trade, economic interdependence has not changed the competition. Economic interaction is accompanied by political prudence, especially due to the military confrontation and relations with Pakistan. It emerged that Sino-Indian relations are characterized by both economic partnership and security threats, which make a bipolarity of the relationship.

### **3. India-Pakistan Relations: The Enduring Rivalry**

The nature of the bilateral relations between India and Pakistan is undoubtedly one of the most fascinating and examined objects within the South Asia's international system, mainly because of the Kashmir dispute. (Khan et al., 2024) note that despite the crisis devolving around the Kashmir region, both states consider the other side's behavior as a threat to their sovereignty. This competition has been amplified after the nuclearization of the two countries in the late 1990s. Although nuclear weapons make full-scale wars unlikely, it has been substituted by conventional arm race making any moves towards establishing peace untenable (Hussain & Ali Naqvi, 2024).

Adding more intensity to the competition, such luminaries like (Ahmed & Baloch, 2024) have pointed that Pakistan ally to China adds more to India's insecurity. India's proposal has been to increase expenditure on Defense modernization and continue with an approach that seeks partners who can offset China. The following will show how this conflict between India and Pakistan is enmeshed with each nation's overall security policies, mainly military spending and partnerships.

### **4. Triangular Dynamics: Interactions and Strategic Alignments**

The symbiotic political-strategic equations involving Pakistan, China and India are clearly reflected in the nature of counter-alignment of each of the three countries. (Rawat) also discuss India's approach in which India's foreign policy is greatly affected by the "sibling rivalry of Pakistan-China," 'thus India tries to seek friendship with world powers including the United States. They are trying to perpetuate a balance of power system, with each power being driven by the perceived threat of the other two.

This triangulation is a dynamic structure that shifts with the geopolitical influence because of ongoing changes. (Mahmood et al., 2024) indicate that, through economic projects as the CPEC, this dynamic has become even more complicated. Despite having positive impacts for Pakistan as well as for the economic cooperation between Pakistan and China, this project is raising some strategic questions in the minds of Indian authorities, as CPEC creates new opportunities for China to advance deeply in the South Asia region.

### **5. Economic Interactions: Balancing Competition and Cooperation**

Finance relations between Pakistan, China, and India are impossible without strategic aspects. The following list contains the most recognizable economic cooperation the former has: between China and Pakistan, focused on the Central Silk Road, or the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a part of BRI. (Hussain & Ali Naqvi, 2024) write that CPEC has helped Pakistan to improve its economy and build new infrastructure and although this is the case, there are strategic issues for India since the project passes through the disputed Gilgit-Baltistan territory. On the negative side, with CPEC, which lends strength to the development

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of Gwadar port in Pakistan, India sees a potential economic and military threat originating from China in its neighborhood in the future.

On the similar note, while India and China are known to be competitive; the two countries actually have a healthy business connection. (Rathore et al., 2023) brings forward the idea that India and China economically are interdependent despite the political rivalry. This idea of there being economic interdependence rather than integration is quite a vivid one; both nations certainly gain from trading with each other but both countries are also wary of locking themselves into close economic cooperation because of power politics.

#### **6. Regional Security Implications: Nuclear Deterrence and Conventional Arms Race**

The triangular relationship has important consequences to the security of the region, particularly taking into account the possession of nuclear power by India and Pakistan. Nuclear capability implies an element of deterrence but also the possibility for strategic mishap in the event of aggression (Basrur, 2023). Proponents of nuclear theory say that compared to conventional balance of power it has in some degree restrained general wars but has not prevented local-war type incidents. (Ali & Sidhu, 2024) uses the lenses of the cult of unclarity to describes how both countries participate in proxy wars and border skirmishes while ensuring that the conflict does not go beyond certain levels as it might lead to the usage of nuclear weapons.

China's possession of nuclear weapons and the Sino-Pakistan nuclear partnership establish a triangular security dilemma system in which one state cannot remain indifferent to the actions of the other two. Despite this, the deterrence factor although becoming stabilized in some ways, has prompted an arms race for example more emphasis on conventional forces as each nation jostles for his/her safety.

#### **7. Diplomatic Engagements and Multilateral Relations: Managing Tensions**

Diplomacy has been the key approach in the arbitration of this triangular relationship hence considerable efforts where directed. Even though Pakistan and China have relative friendly diplomatic relations, India has been keen on seeking and forming associations with other global players to bite. As rightly pointed out by Raghavan that India has strategic relationships with United States, Japan et cetera serve as a counter to China Pakistan nexus. However, these alliances are questionable because the new priorities and interactions of each of these countries for the regions.

It is almost entirely focused on securing China's support to manage Pakistan's main competitor in the region – India, as (Paul & Vinodan, 2024) established, has provided highly helpful diplomatic support to the Pakistan government at the global level particularly regarding issues to do with the Indian-held territory of Kul. However, as India has done to Pakistan, most countries in the world have ganged up to isolate diplomatically Pakistan. To the extent that today's diplomatic confrontation between the US and Iran imitates the battle for domination in South Asia.

#### **8. Theoretical Perspectives: Realism, Constructivism, and Power Politics**

That is why theoretical frameworks describe the incentives and activities of Pakistan, China, and India. In the realist understanding, any state needs to pursue its foreign policy with the

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idea that its goal is to gain as much security as well as power as possible. Similar to the above finding, (Michael, 2018) also argued that history and the cognizance that comes with has a major influence in the formation of identities especially in context of India and Pakistan rivalry. For example, affiliation with China is somewhat accommodated by Pakistani historical realist perceptions of common interests, while the Indian alignment is natural given regional aspirations.

This triangular relation often has power politics or each country holding a delicate distribution of allegiance to ensure that none of the three countries become too powerful over the others. Political perceptions (Qais et al., 2023) state how these perceptions were applied using constructivist analysis to understand policy where Pakistan as a counterbalance to India is consistent with China's interest to contain India.

### **9. Global Political Shifts: Cold War Legacies and New Alliances**

This relationship has also been influenced by such change in the global political environment such as cold war as well as after effects. For instance, (Rasool) believes that when the super powers adopted a new world order, the United States and Russia became measurable partners of India, enhancing India's bargaining power to man oeuvre into a more flexible foreign policy strategy. This has been driven by the U.S-China competition because each of them wants to align itself with regional powers to suit its interests.

The strategic partnership during the Cold War was Pakistan is in alliance with China and US due to anti-Sovietism whereas India had this policy of non-alignment which make them free to associate with both super powers. The positive cooperation phase changed post-Cold War periods, with India participating in the investment competition with the United States and Japan to respond to China's dominance of South Asia.

### **10. Future Directions and Emerging Trends: Strategic and Economic Shifts**

As the present study indicates, Pakistan's relation with China and India would likely change in the future due to political structures and international environment factors. Based on (Hussain et al., 2023), the emerging interactions of the future will be characterized by China's Belt and Road Initiative and India's economic development. While China is looking forward to increasing its domains, India's regional strategy will depend primarily on building up the support system and a free economy to deflect China operations. In the same manner, we may observe that the critical economic issues of Pakistan may, on one hand, strengthen the Pakistan-China cooperation, and on the other hand, may lead the country to the search for diversification of strategic partnerships.

### **Methodology**

This current research uses a qualitative research design for the analysis of Pakistan China and India relations from 1960 to 2010. This research uses thematic and narratological analysis of both primary and secondary sources and concerns themselves with strategic, military, economic, and diplomatic features of this sophisticated connection. It is this approach to the exploration of primary and secondary sources that provides a textured and detailed understanding of the actors' rationality, decision making and consequences that define relations between these three countries and offers a grand history of geopolitics of

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South Asia during this period.

### **Data Collection**

The study employs government records, diplomatic archives, visas, treaties, speeches, and other state-authored documents to track Pakistan, China, and India's official opinions and strategies. These primary sources give real picture regarding the decision making and planning of each country. Bibliographical sources including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and historical critiques are also consulted to explain and elaborate the primary sources with a view of determining the underlying forces behind Triangular relationship.

### **Data Analysis**

To analyze the collected data, the study employs both thematic and narrative analysis techniques:

**1. Thematic Analysis:** The work involves charting trends and themes within the strategic, military, economic, and diplomatic dimensions of relations between Pakistan, China and India. The factors that are taken under consideration are such headings as "Military Alliances", "Nuclear Strategy", "Economic Cooperation", "Diplomacy", etc., in order to analyze how these factors impact on the triangular relationship in course of time. Such thematic approach is more informative and effective as for the analysis of identified and described patterns it is possible to state the main motives and activities of every country concerning its foreign policy.

**2. Narrative Analysis:** Open coding technique is employed in developing the chronological history of the major events, decisions, and changes in policy in the triangular relationship. This method situates each country's action within the dynamics of the Cold War and after the Cold War era. In the same way, the study constructs a logical story of India-Pakistan relations through the reminiscence of history, major events, like the Sino-India war of 1962, the two Indo-Pakistan wars in 1965 and 1971 and India and Pakistan nuclearization.

### **Validity and Reliability**

To provide confirmation and credibility of results, the study uses an approach of data triangulation whereby different sources are compared. This involves taking information from primary sources including official papers, and cross check from secondary sources from renowned scholars to eliminate some racy. In addition, the current research employs qualitative research methodology, which enables the author to critically analyses cultural and political backgrounds of the selected countries to avoid generalizations.

### **Limitations**

In general, this qualitative methodology offers quite valuable results, but the usage and interpretation of historical data is quite critical in this regard. Official documents could be partially unavailable or restricted by specific government regulations and, therefore, do not allow for learning about some specific strategic choices enough. Furthermore, the research indirectly utilizes the analysis of the interpreted historical data, which is also ridden with the prejudiced opinions belonging to the authors of the secondary sources. These are acknowledged and a critical evaluation of sources as well as cross-checking of information's

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is done this to enhance objectivity.

### **Results and Discussion**

The interstate triangle Pakistan-China-India relationship which emerged in the 1960s and developed up to the period 2010 is among the most significant and sophisticated in South Asia. It was a time of great changes in relations, business cooperation, warfare and policies. Important incidents have prevailed this relationship; the Indo-Pakistani Wars, the Sino-Indian conflict, the Cold War, and the post-Cold War new world order. The co-author outlined the parameters of the interaction below, and accentuated the main themes and outcomes from this point of the interaction specifying militarily, economic, multifaceted military calculation securing the influence, standpoint economically, diplomatic and security aspects.

#### **1. The Multi-Domains and Armed Forces Partnerships**

They concluded that Pakistan joined hands with China mainly for security consideration arising from India presence. From the Sino-Indian war in 1962 onward, China considered India as a threat and started looking for allies who could rein in India in South Asia. Pakistan due to being threatened by India time and again because of military conflicts and boundary issues warmly appreciated this offer of strategic cooperation. Pakistani fear of India and Indian perceived threat tore Pakistan laid the foundation of Pakistan and China relations which have lasted for several decades.

During this period, China emerged being the major supplier of weapons to Pakistan and most of these supplied benefits greatly enhanced the Pakistan defense force. Research conducted by Khan and Huang (2009) on China and Pakistan military relations show that China provided Pakistan with fighter aircraft, tanks, ships and technology. One of the most significant and strategic cooperation ventures was forming of JF-17 Thunder which helped Pakistan gains an advantage regarding its air power and experience in military technologies without complete dependence on the western countries' technologies anymore. Additionally, the JF-17 project also depict China standing by for Pakistan's military precluding and sufficient.

Another aspect that epitomizes the strategic partner of China in Pakistan is the to support the Pakistan's nuclear program. Perkovich in his Nuclear proliferation in South Asia concluded that China assisted Pakistan in nuclear development through technology, goods and diplomacy after 1974 India's nuclear test. The help it received then can be credited for enabling it to develop nuclear matching capabilities by the year 1998 thereby bring about a paradigm shift within the security architecture of South Asia. In case of India, entrenchment of Pakistan China nuclear cooperation was considered as increased threat in the region, thereby India also stepped up its defense and nuclear programme.

China's arms sales to Pakistan put the military muscles of Pakistan against India under control making India to alter its own muscular response in this particular area. Under these perceptions India not only augmented its defense spending, armed itself with high-tech equipment but also embraced the policy, 'indigenization of defense production'. This built and sustained an armaments race in the India-Pakistan-China triangle and thus an enduring security threat within the area.

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## **2. Economic Relations and Infrastructure Development**

The economic aspect of the Pakistan-China relation is as important as the defense cooperation. China's economic assistance to Pakistan defined long-term bilateral relations and built strong partnership through infrastructure that acted as a booster in balancing the economic status for Pakistan and improve the linking between both nations. It can be recalled that early indications of this new cooperation include the building of the famed Karakoram Highway in the seventies. This highway connecting Gilgit Baltistan of Pakistan to Xinjiang province of China play vital role of a trade access, military supplies and a link that defined the relation of both the countries.

During the development of this partnership, China turned into one of the principal investors of Pakistan particularly in energy sector, infrastructure and telecommunication. As per Pakistan's Ministry of Finance, by the twentieth century Pakistan has started enjoying a very brisk business with China and the trade volume between two countries is increasing annually. The BRI particularly the CPEC initiated in the 2010s has its history from earlier decade of Chinese investment in Pakistan. CPEC envisages constructing a framework of roads, pipelines and energy projects which provides enhancements in the connectivity and stability between the economies of the two nations as the Pakistan economy.

India though looks at these economic changes with apprehension more so bearing in mind that CPEC passes through the Pakistan controlled part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir which India considers its own territory. Indian perception regarding Chinese investments in Pakistan is? Security related and is considered as a part of encirclement and sovereignty issue. Owing to the growth in CPEC, India has had to enhance its economic and strategic cooperation with various countries especially the United States, Japan and the nations of South East Asia. This policy is known as the Look East policy and later on renamed to Act East policy is India's strategic direction in relation with China in South Asia.

## **3. Diplomatic Maneuvers and Regional Influence**

In political aspect Chinese have been very supportive of Pakistan, especially in cases related to India. The two countries have many times supported each other especially diplomatically with example being Pakistan supporting China on the international platform at the United Nations. In matters relating to Kashmir for example China has used its influence to back Pakistan's claims more importantly it has been instrumental in providing Pakistan with a voice that is recognized in the international community. The research on China's foreign involvement in South Asia by Ahmad & Jing Wang concluded that China's diplomatic backing has provided Pakistan with a strategic partner that offsets a repeatedly uncomfortable relationship with Western nations.

While India's diplomacy has sought to strengthen its intelligence and security relationship with the United States, another of its regional strategies has been to try and isolate Pakistan's key ally China. India had closer connection with Soviet Union during cold war era, for which India receives military and economic support that helped in building capabilities against both, China and Pakistan. Post Cold war Indian foreign policy concentrated on forging alliance with the United States and other western countries. After signing of the Indo-U.S. Civil Nuclear Agreement in 2008, there was turning point in the Indian nuclear policy by which India progressed and gained strategic status.

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India has also not been lazy in its diplomacy with the Southeast Asian countries going by the Act East policy. The goal of India is to increase its role in Asia and counterbalance with China coming to power. This approach has helped India to enhance its economic and military interactions in the region, with other partners with which it also has worry on China's growing power.

#### **4. Relationship between Regional Security In terms of Actors and Conflict Behavior**

Their triangular relation has influenced the conflict configuration in the region, by altering the security structure of these nations. The two Indo-Pakistani wars in 1965 and 1971, and Kargil conflict in 1999 were not entirely independent of the over strategic calculations on China. While China did not interfere into these conflicts it endorses Pakistan, which impacted India's planning. Swami's historical study of China-Pakistan axis (2002) further learns that China's backing made Pakistan take riskier actions while on the other hand, India had to factor in threat from both fronts of Pakistan and China.

The nuclearization of South Asia has also subsequently brought tension to the region on a higher level. This study by Ganguly & Kapur (2010) on nuclear dynamics of South Asia shows that, while China's backing of Pakistan's nuclear capability and advancement of the Indian nuclear programme emerged as.

Independent Nuclear South Asia Springer, New York, NY 110–125 18 / Kang of reciprocal burgeoning that attained a precise nuclear balance. The shocks stated have not prevented small-scale hosts from taking place, as the Kargil conflict example showed; nuclear deterrence has only moved India and Pakistan away from large-scale warfare. Pakistan and India also status of minimal nuclear deterrence policy, however, the probability of the extensive escalation is still on.

China is still building its nuclear arsenal which formed another layer of a defense regime in South Asia. In a similar way, the nature of the nuclear threat India faces has shifted from Pakistan-first to China as a factor. It has culminated into what is now known as the 'balance of terror' since each country fosters its conventional and nuclear arsenal.

#### **5. Development of the triangular relation after 2000**

On the eve of the 21st century, the prevailing triangular Pakistan China Indian relationship was still dynamism pushed by the changes in world dynamics. The rise of China as an economic giant and its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) extends its area of influence, make Pakistan crucial player in its South Asian strategy. Having being part of BRI through CPEC, Pakistan's relations with China have been economically more secure and enhanced by infrastructure.

India also has begun its own strategic thrusts, given the Chinese rise across the borders. One of the major successes in the Indo-US relationship was the civil nuclear deal in 2008 which gave India civil nuclear liability and assistance to upgrade its energy status as a dependable nuclear nation. Moreover, the process of Act East policy has given India an opportunity to develop its cooperation with ASEAN countries which balances a Chinese influence in the wider South East Asia region.

Shifting strategies reflected in the dynamics of South Asia are observable from these outcomes of educative reform. Apparently, China has grown more interested in the security

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of this region with its increased involvement in Pakistan While India aligns with United States and pregnant aggressive regional diplomacy reflecting shift towards managing or containing China's rise. According to Scott (2013) there is evidence that these competing strategies have increase the rivalry between China and South Asian states and thus has an impact on Asia-Pacific security.

### **Conclusion**

The research of the relations between Pakistan, China, and India during 1960-2010 indicates both the sides of partnership and confrontation, shifts in alliance and strategies constituting the history of the contemporary South Asia's regional system. Under these circumstances, this triangular relationship emerged and transformed in five decades during Cold War period, nuclear proliferation and emergence of China as the world power.

In essence, Pakistan's relations with China where mainly defined by security, because of India. Thus, by offering a political relationship along with the military assistance, economic investment and nuclear collaboration China basically gave Pakistan an edge against India's larger military and strategic force. On the other hand, India regarded Pakistan-China nexus as a direct threat that forced transformed its military over the years, neutralized Indian political and economic threat by developing nuclear option and attempted to cultivate strategic alliances with the super powers of the era and beyond from Soviet Union during the cold war and America during post-cold war era. Altogether, this triangle launched determined impact on the foreign policy and post-war security each of the countries involved as well as in the formation of the new security setting of the entire region.

The economic aspect of this triangular relationship mainly proceeded with construction of the 'Karakoram Highway, and later the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)' hence strengthening China as most significant economical partner of Pakistan. However, India in recent years have been forging economic and military cooperation with Southeast Asia and the US primarily as a counter to China regional domination.

This paper also unfolds that the far-flung nature of the relations between Pakistan, China and India has impacted the stability and security of the region. It also stresses on a phenomenon of joint cooperation in a world that has known hatred and disputes especially where borders have been drawn. Despite the fact that all these countries are still in a process of trying to unlearn and relearn their relations with each other and the balance of power in the region, the above triangular relationship remains an important historical and theoretical facet of present-day security at individual and state level in South Asia. All the lessons learnt during this period make diplomacy the cornerstone to support balance in economic relations and timely political prognosis to maintain regional stability in the face of ongoing competition.

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