

## Realigning Interests: Pakistan's Foreign Policy Adaptations in the Aftermath of the US Withdrawal from Afghanistan

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### ABSTRACT

This paper looks into how withdrawal of the United States in Afghanistan will affect the foreign policy behaviour of Pakistan especially towards Afghanistan and the United States. This paper discusses how Pakistan has adjusted its foreign policy strategies to protect its regional interests and balance a fine line between its alliances with the United States and Afghanistan. As a theoretical foundation of the proposed research, the concepts of realism and balance of power theory are used, which state that governments put their national interests and security as their highest priority. The approach applied in the research is qualitative, where a comprehensive review of the existing literature, government reports, and interviews with the experts was used to examine the foreign policy behaviour and decision-making mechanisms in Pakistan. The findings show that the US pullout has led to Pakistan becoming more independent and aggressive in pursuing its foreign policy. Pakistan wants to maintain its interest in Afghanistan and at the same time proliferate its relations with other regional and international powers. The diplomatic strategy of Pakistan has become more complex since it strives to regulate its relations with the United States, Afghanistan, China, and Russia. The findings of the research have significant implications to our understanding of the foreign policy objectives and activities of Pakistan insisting on the need to adopt a more exhaustive and case-specific method of learning about the role of this country in the regional and international politics.

**Key Words:** Foreign policy of Pakistan, Withdrawal of the US, Afghanistan, Balancing strategy, Security of the Regions.

### Introduction

The decision of the United States to leave Afghanistan in 2021 was an important event that shifted the political situation in the region, leading to a reorganization of geopolitical relationships and regional relations. The US pullout ending the twenty years military engagement has left a vacuum in power thus raising concerns of security and stability in the region. This major event has an immense implication not only on Afghanistan but also on its neighbours countries especially Pakistan which is playing a vital role in the Afghan war (The New York Times, 2021). The

fact that Pakistan is historically involved in Afghanistan has a significant influence on the country in terms of foreign policy and strategic behaviour because it has a close geographical proximity to Afghanistan. This paper aims to discuss the consequences of the withdrawal of the United States on the foreign policy behavior of Pakistan towards the United States and Afghanistan.

The relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have been of a historical maze with a few conflicts, characterized by shared ethnic ties, religious affiliations and a conflicting border line known as the Durand Line. The border is also one of the long sources of tension and mistrust between the two countries (Hussain, 2020). Pakistan also supported the Taliban regime in the 1990s with the view of establishing a friendly regime in Kabul that would provide strategic advantage against its arch rival India. This plan led to the rebuke of the country on the international front especially after the Taliban supported terrorist groups. Pakistan was able to strike a very thin balance between its collaboration with the US and safeguarding its national strategic interests in Afghanistan (Khan, 2011). The recent US withdrawal has raised some serious questions about the Pakistani future role in Afghanistan and its bilateral relations with the United States.

In recent studies, the importance of foreign policy of Pakistan in shaping regional forces has been brought to attention. As Ahmed (2020) notes, the implemented policy of strategic superiority and the desire to restrain the influence of India in the region significantly influence the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Pakistan has often used a form of strategic calculation when it supported certain elements of the Taliban in Afghanistan to ensure there was a friendly or at least a neutral regime in Kabul. In the same token, the research conducted by the International Crisis Group (2020) highlights the necessity to ensure that Pakistan carefully balances its relations with the United States and Afghanistan to avoid isolation and sustain stability in the region. This undertaking involves clever maneuvering of complex political environments, and competent management of its internal security concerns, and the taking care of economic interdependencies.

The project will help to explore the following research questions: The US pullout on Afghanistan has had a profound effect on the foreign policy behaviour of Pakistan to Afghanistan. Pakistan has employed other means of protecting its interests in the region. How will Pakistan protect this balance of its relations with the United States and Afghanistan following the US withdrawal and what has been the impact of this on the position of Pakistan in the region and the world in terms of its foreign policy objectives? In this paper, the researcher seeks to evaluate how the US withdrawal affected the foreign policy behavior of Pakistan towards Afghanistan. It also aims at examining how Pakistan tries to protect its interests in the region and how the withdrawal of the US will affect the balancing strategy of the country towards its relations with the US and Afghanistan.

In this research, a qualitative method will be employed, i.e., a comprehensive evaluation of existing literature, official documents, and interviews with the experts will be conducted. Such an approach will provide a full understanding of

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the foreign policy behavior of Pakistan and the decision-making processes. The research will be carried out using primary sources which may include government statements, policy documents, and official messages and secondary sources which may be scholarly articles, novels, and news reports. Interviews with experts would enrich the quality and background of the results due to the useful insights of policymakers, analysts, and researchers specializing in geopolitics of South Asia.

The study is founded on theories of realism and the theory of balance of power. Realism (Waltz, 1979) states that states do have their national interests and security as their highest priority, operating in an anarchic international system where state behaviour is dictated by the play of power. According to the balance of power theory, the countries would act to ensure that no one state could rise to the top to achieve supremacy thus guaranteeing stability through maintenance of equilibrium. It is expected that the motivations of Pakistan based on its desire to maintain regional power, oppose Indian presence and protect its security is likely to shape its foreign policy behaviour in this context. By applying these theoretical frameworks, the paper aims at carrying out an in-depth analysis of the strategic adaptations of Pakistan in the wake of the US exit out of Afghanistan.

### **Research Questions**

1. What impact has the US withdrawal in Afghanistan had on the foreign policy behaviour of Pakistan to Afghanistan and how has Pakistan tried to safeguard its interest in the region?
2. What are the consequences of the US withdrawal on the balancing approach held by Pakistan in regard to its relationship with the United States and Afghanistan and how has this affected the position of Pakistan in the region and the international system in terms of its foreign policy agenda?

### **Objectives**

1. To examine how the withdrawal of the US affected the foreign policy behavior of Pakistan to Afghanistan.
2. To discuss how Pakistan safeguards its interests in the region and also to discuss the effects of the US departure on the balancing act of Pakistan between its relations with the US and Afghanistan.

### **Significance of the Study**

The research is majorly relevant in the field of international relations and foreign policy analysis. This study aims to increase the understanding of the complex geopolitical processes in the region through the study of the foreign policy activities of Pakistan after the withdrawal of the US troops in Afghanistan. The findings of this paper will provide valuable insights to the policy makers,

researchers and practitioners interested in knowing and bargaining geopolitical situations in South Asia. Moreover, the study has sought to offer answers on the implications of major pullouts of power on the stability and security of a region and thus offer a worthy lesson on future wars and international intervention. This paper shall explore the Pakistan strategy of balancing between its relationship with the United States and Afghanistan. It will also help in the deliberation of the role of middle powers in the region. The primary aim of the study is to increase our knowledge about the complicated process of relations among great powers, Middle powers and regional actors in the formation of the international relations and world governance.

## **Literature Review**

In the article by Ahmed, entitled, *Pakistan Afghanistan Conundrum* (2020), the author gives a detailed examination of the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan, especially in their aspiration to have strategic advantage over one another and block Indian influence over the same. The author suggests that the support of Pakistan of the Taliban is driven by its own security concerns, and selfish interest in maintaining its domination in the region. Very important in contents of the essay is the explanation of the nature of relationship between the two countries with regard to the intentions and the actions by Pakistan in Afghanistan. In order to be on the same level as with the Pakistan foreign policy analysis illustrating the influence of the historical resentments, geopolitical and security prerogatives of the region on the foreign policy of Pakistan, strategic thinking process of the articulation and formulation of the foreign policy of Pakistan will be obtained. It is within this representation context that this in-depth review brings out the issues and complications surrounding the processing of the unstable power these in have in the South Asia region as well as bringing an in-depth view of what Pakistan has been doing about its western neighbour.

The recent *The International Crisis Group* (2020) publication *Pakistan and Afghanistan: The Rocky Road to Reconciliation* is rather skeptic about the problems of the countries of Pakistan and Afghanistan in their attempts to reconcile and strengthen the bilateral relations. The authors are convinced that the two nations can get over and must consider the issue of insecurity and insecurities as far as security is concerned. The current and the past problems are considered in the paper in the light of the fact that all these problems were triggered by the long history of mistrust and the chain of tensions surrounding the process of border demarcation, cross-border terrorism, and political loyalties, which have worsened the situation. The consequences of co-operation and dialogue as far as resolving such a set-backs are concerned have also been mentioned in the text to depict that unless something is done to understand one another and resolve one another security concerns, the regional peace and stability shall never be attained. What is more, the actors, as revealed in the paper, that go into the nature of Pakistan-Afghanistan relationships are external actors such as the

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United States and other nations in the region. This means that there is a need to put the thinking that one of these nations wins and the other one loses and the nations ought to engage in positive moves that would define the region as less of an explosive region. It points to the need to undertake actions to create trust, extend economic cooperation, and perform joint security measures to overcome mistrust, which has existed over a long period of time. There is a detailed analysis of the paper and the policy recommendations also give much insight into the complex nature of the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan. It focuses on the urgent need of the joint work in order to enhance reconciliation and peace in the region.

Khan (2011) in his article titled, *Pakistan Role in the Afghan Conflict*, examines the role that Pakistan has played in the Afghan conflict and how Pakistan has been supporting the Taliban and the core security concerns that Pakistan harbors. According to the author, the behavior of Pakistan is determined by its wish to retain its influence in the region and counteract the Indian influence in Afghanistan. It is a very important historical point of view highlighted in the paper as Pakistan has had a long-term interest in the region and also its geopolitical calculations. In his study, Khan shows that the behavior of Pakistan is determined by its geopolitical needs, historical grievances, the complex interplay of geopolitics in the region. This comprehensive examination is useful on its own to understand the motivating factors behind the Pakistani foreign policy decisions that emphasize the current challenges and strategic considerations that influence its participation in Afghanistan.

In his book, *The US-Pakistan Relationship: A Marriage of Convenience*, published in 2013, Haqqani explores the relationship between the United States and Pakistan in the context of its converging interests and conflicts that characterized their association. According to the author, the cooperation is mainly driven by convenience and not common beliefs or interests, and therefore the practical and often transactional nature of their alliance is emphasized. Ordinarily, the book has provided intricate interpretation of the heartaches and prospects that have characterized the United States and Pakistan relationship since time immemorial. It also looks into the role of influence of strategic imperative and also the influence of the geopolitics of their alliance. The essential factors which contribute to the current uncertainty and struggle are revealed in the work of Haqqani, allowing to get crucial insights into the intricacies of this bilateral relationship.

The book, entitled *Afghanistan and Pakistan: A Deadly Embrace*, by Coll published in 2018, deals with the difficult and complex relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan. It highlights how these two countries have had an intertwining relationship in a cyclical nature of killings and mistrust. This relationship, the author argues, is mainly fueled by deep rooted security issues and mistrust that perpetuates constant conflict and instability. Through such a perspective the book has been able to bring a useful perspective of the delicate

relations between the two nations and how historical resentments and geopolitical policies and insecurities of the region have trapped them into a seemingly inescapable loop of animosity and hostility. The study by Coll adds great value to the ongoing problems that describe the Afghanistan-Pakistan relations, reminding that an all-encompassing and collaborative approach is mandatory in order to break the cycle of this trend and establish stability in the region.

The 2017 book by Hussain is called *Pakistan foreign policy: A study of its relationship with Afghanistan and the United States* and examines the Pakistan foreign policy with a particular focus on its complex relations with Afghanistan and the United States. The author argues that the behavior is inspired by the ambitions of Pakistan to maintain regional leadership and oppose Indian power in the area. The book offers a detailed discussion of strategic and geopolitical impetuses behind which Pakistan moves in its decisions and selection. The article by Hussain provides valuable information concerning the complexity of the Pakistani foreign policy and the way it is shaped by the historical context, national security, and regional context in the sphere of its relations with Afghanistan and the United States. Pakistan is undergoing a lot of problems in trying to strike the right balance between its relations with these two countries in trying to pursue its strategic interests.

Equally, the article by Akhtar, 2020 titled *The Impact of US Withdrawal on Pakistan Foreign Policy* centers on the consequences of the withdrawal process of the United States in Afghanistan on the foreign policy in Pakistan. The author feels that the withdrawal has created a massive vacuum of power in these regions that Pakistan is negotiating hard to be in and even grab as a chance to enhance its influence over the region. Akhtar provides major insight into the changes made in Pakistan strategy towards the changing situation in Afghanistan, and explains the efforts of the country to change its policies and allegiances so as to defend its interests as the threats to its security grow in the region. The essay finds that the decision making in foreign policy of Pakistan is quite elaborated and the strategic influences of the decision making in Pakistan. It gives a current study on the effect of the change in international politics in its practices of diplomatic and security policies.

The writer of the article by Iqbal (2019) titled *Pakistan Balancing Act- Relations with the United States and Afghanistan* identifies the most inappropriate use of the Pakistan diplomacy to manage the relationship between the state and the United States and Afghanistan. The author argues out that Pakistan is playing a bad game of jugglery at the wrong time hoping to maintain friendly relations with the two nations, Pakistan is cultivating its strategic interests in the region. Iqbal addresses the problem of the convoluted character of the Pakistan foreign policy and the issues that would come with the conflicting disposition and geopolitical relations between the two cities of Washington and Kabul with a mature choice of words. The article sheds some light into the way Pakistan is attempting to leverage its favorable status so as to promote peace in the region and meanwhile take care of its domestic security issues as well as its vested economic interests. To

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conclude, it is possible to state that the work on Iqbal could be considered as useful and detailed in outlining the external affairs of Pakistan and the tactical composition of the formulation of its foreign policy.

In the article which bears the name *The Future of Pakistan-US Relations* (2020), authored by Siddiq, the history of the existing diplomatic relationships between the countries of Pakistan and the United States is mentioned and the prospects and the difficulties, as well as the opportunities, are drawn which existed in the way ahead. Having analyzed some cases of cooperation, the author is confident that the relation can be described by complexity and discordance mainly due to the development of strategic interests, the history of distrusts, and the element of the geopolitics. Siddiq also argues well on the problems that influence future of Pakistan-US relationship like regional security concerns, economics of dependency and the relations. The essay in the article gives a better understanding of how these factors are likely to influence the formation of the relationship with special emphasis on how the fact that the two nations have to be careful in what they do in regard to defeating the common problems and exploiting facilities of future cooperation is a major issue. The present geo-political environment with the multi-faceted complex of Pakistan-US relations makes us understand the study by Siddiq.

## **Methodology**

The research design picked is qualitative research design and the study will also discuss the foreign policy behavior of Pakistan on its response of withdrawal of the US in Afghanistan, the decision-making process. This already exists in the form of a body of literature, and it will comprise those official documents, those academic articles, those novels and those media accounts. This analysis of the position and the steps as related to the foreign policy of Pakistan shall be depicted through the analysis of the primary sources which are the statements of the government, its policy reports, and other official documents. Experts will also be interviewed on geo-politics of South Asia as policy makers, analysts and researchers. These interviews will be critical and will also make us put the findings into perspective. Through multi-faceted approach an elaborate and elaborate report was able to be obtained on how the foreign policy of Pakistan was behaving thereby too making its decision-making process. The methodology will offer the barest conception of the research questions and objectives thus making the study of the subject exhaustive. This has tried to analyze the dynamics of foreign policy of Pakistan in the region by trying to seek, making sense of the information that was available in most of the sources with the view of coming up with a vivid and reliable analysis.

## **Findings and Discussion:**

### **Implication of US Withdrawal on Pakistan Foreign policy towards Afghanistan**

US withdrawal in Afghanistan caused a significant impact on the foreign policy stance adopted by Pakistan on a western neighbour. The only other country that has been able to readjust itself in a very strategic way after eyeing the need to save its self-interests in the country is Pakistan and strike a very complex geopolitical environment.

Pakistan has been significant in the US spear-headed military war on terror and it is also providing military and intelligence to the US and her allies in the NATO. Ever since the US abandoned Pakistan, the Pakistani foreign policy has been getting increasingly independent and aggressive in its elicitation of decisions (Ahmed, 2020). The fact that Pakistan would always be mixing up with different bodies in Afghanistan, including the Taliban entity, is more or less a whisper on how the country is unable to keep its powers as well as security on the West side of its border (Hussain, 2017).

It is an interest of Pakistan, which is prompted by the desire to have a say on what is happening in Afghanistan, that is, at borders (Khan, 2011). This is observed particularly in the bid made by Pakistan to act as the broker between the Taliban and the Afghan government and as well as incorporating the Taliban to provide the army to the Taliban in some areas (Coll, 2018).

Pakistani attitude toward Afghanistan is predetermined by its desires to eliminate so-called risks that can occur in the country. It is important to state that Pakistan has been defined by the presence of such terrorist groups as Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Islamic state Khorasan province (ISKP) that have been involved in instances of terrorist attacks witnessed in the country (Raza, 2018). In an effort to reduce such menace, Pakistan has tried to improve its security relationship with Afghanistan where it includes establishment of a joint military commission which will coordinate the security activities between the various borders (The Express Tribune, 2020).

Not only has Pakistan been left behind in the security section but has also been trying to place itself in the queue as the mediator in the peace processes in this part of the world. This appears to be manifested by the fact that it helped to facilitate the negotiations between Talib leadership and the government of Afghanistan and involve other investor countries in the region such as China and Russia (Dawn, 2020). This can be attributed to the fact that Pakistan does not want to miss its influence in the region and risks losing its interests that are also featured in any coming peace settlement (The News, 2020).

And last but not least the American withdrawal in Afghanistan has been a very spectacular occurrence in the foreign policy of Pakistan to its western neighbour. The reaction of the Pakistani to the pullout is strategic repositioning of the nation in attempts of securing the geopolitical interest of the country and brokering of what is perceived to be the geopolitically messed world. The



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coordination and diplomacy with regards to security has allowed Pakistan to curbed the potential threats that might break out of Afghanistan and in that regard, Pakistan has acted as a key towards regional peace efforts.

### **Strategies by Pakistan to Protect Its Interests in the Region**

The strategy of Pakistan in the post-withdrawal of the US in Afghanistan is guided by a wide and vast-ranged plan of schemes that would help it sustain its interests by its own right. The report reveals that, Pakistan has undertaken more activities with regard to its economic and infrastructural relations with Afghanistan aiming to establish even more stability and relatedness. This is being done in the case of numerous projects such as China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), to give an example.

There is one eminent project of Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) known as China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) with an aim of developing the infrastructure of the transportation and energy focusing on connecting China with Middle East, Africa, and Europe. It is to be done through the creation of roads, railroads, ports and pipelines (China Daily, 2020). China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) represents a great part of the Pakistani idea of the further evolution of the economy. It has been pushing the project hard since it is one of the means of advancing the interconnectivity and stability of the region (Dawn, 2020). Pakistan, on its part, is ready to enhance the economic ties with Afghanistan, as the opportunity to reduce the risk of war and achieve a more stable and healthy regional environment should be relied upon (Hussain, 2017).

Pakistan has not only increased its operation field in economy but also enhanced geopolitical association with China and has widened its association with Russia and Iran (Askari, 2021). It is anticipated that such a diversification of regional alliance would restrict the Pakistan dependence on the historic western alliances would enhance its weight in the regional matters (Ahmed, 2020). The friendship that emerged between Pakistan and China is very crucial since it can be utilized to counter mounting presence of India in the country (Khan, 2011). Pakistan in cahoots with Russia and Iran should be considered a major variable as this is the case through which Pakistan will be able to access knowledge and experience that the latter possess in terms of fire power in areas like counter terrorism and energy security (Raza, 2018).

Moreover, Pakistan has also found an excellent balance of negotiating with the United States, successfully balancing competing interests and continuing to hold dialogue and discuss matters of common problems, including cooperation in counter-terrorist actions and ensuring stability in the region. Although Pakistan has criticized the US exit in Afghanistan, it has also realized the need to sustain a viable relationship with the US in addressing their common security issues (The Express Tribune, 2020). This is because Pakistan has to deal with the antagonist interests of various allies and partners and, at the same time, pursue its own regional interests. Finally, the country of Pakistan also utilizes a multipronged

strategy to protect its interests in the region that incorporates elements of both economic and infrastructural projects, the strategic partnerships, and wise foreign policies. Pakistan tries to minimize the impact of the long-standing Western coalitions and replaces them with their influence over the region.

### **Effects of US Withdrawal on Pakistan's Balancing Strategy**

U.S pullback to Afghanistan is having a grave impact on the balancing act adopted by the Pakistan against both relations that it has with the United States and Afghanistan. In this interest, the temptation to curb the Indian power in Afghanistan, to restore security in the western borders and protection on the economic and security borders has motivated Pakistan.

The motivation to create the concept of a way of balance strategy of Pakistan was grounded in the need to create an ideal balance between its relationship with the US and Afghanistan, on the one hand, and the process of defining its regional interests, on the other hand (Hussain, 2017). The strengthened relations and the advanced approach to diplomacy in the region have also forced Pakistan to implement the shifts in the policies that are desirable as the US withdraws (Ahmed, 2020).

The preconditioned approach to balance is chosen by Pakistan and this notion is primarily stimulated by the necessity to oppose the Indian influence in Afghanistan. Pakistan has lived in fear as there have been increased Indian interest in Afghanistan and some attempt to reduce the influence of the Indian in the region have been made (Khan, 2011). The withdrawal of the US has complicated the setting as it is also expected that India will be more consumed in the political process of Afghanistan as the days pass (Raza, 2018).

Going by the same line, Pakistan has been making efforts to improve its relations, and most importantly, in the aspect of trade and security with Afghanistan in efforts to counter the influence that is posed by the Indians (Dawn, 2020). Pakistan is also attempting to mend its relations with the rest of the people in the region such as China and Russia to be able to get the chance of creating a bigger group of partners (The Express Tribune, 2020).

The balancing behavior of Pakistan is inspired by its intentions to ensure stability at the western border. Pakistan has always shown its fear of the issue that the Afghan conflict could spread beyond its borders and has been trying to maintain the stable and secure border (Hussain, 2017). The departure of the United States has augmented the fears because it has increased the possibility of wars in Afghanistan (Coll, 2018).

Pakistan has been keen to ensure that its western border remains stable hence its strategic military presence in the area. Furthermore, Pakistan has been very active in engaging in diplomatic efforts in supporting peace and stability in Afghanistan (The News, 2020). Pakistan has very much been on the path of enhancing its relationship with other neighbours such as Iran and Turkey. This is

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to have a broader coalition of support to pursue its endeavors to enhance stability in the region (Dawn, 2020).

The balancing strategy pursued by Pakistan is not only motivated by the needs of the geopolitical interests of the country in question but is also encouraged by domestic interest. The foreign policy of Pakistan is established by the factors of geopolitical contributions and internal circumstances to include the role of military, the role of Islamist organizations, and the contribution of the opinion of the population as far as the engagement of Pakistan in the geopolitical alignment proves to be rather complicated (Ahmed, 2020).

And, finally, there are the humungous repercussions of United States pullout of Afghanistan in the affairs concerning Pakistan as it has tried to balance itself between the United States and Afghanistan beautifully. It is strategically important to Pakistan to take actions against the presence of the Indians in Afghanistan, stability on the western border and economic and security interests which has also compelled the Pakistani to exploit this fragile situation. It is stated that Pakistan has decided to pursue the foreign policy based on the geopolitical attractions as well as the domestic motives as they aspire to expand their connected friends and to establish an adult behavior towards the region.

### **Impact on Pakistan's Regional and Global Standing**

These analyses imply that the move that Pakistan would take in response to the withdrawal of the US in Afghanistan has been very significant in regard to the regional and the international image. The Free policy whether to the foreign policy and the establishment of close relationships with the neighbours have made Pakistan raise its position as an important entity in the geopolitics of south Asia.

Pakistan has played a significant role in relation with China, Russia and other players in the region in enhancing prosperity of economic integration and security aspects in the region. Since the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project is among the larger-scale projects of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects, it has helped in the implementation of economic relations between both states of Pakistan and China (China Daily, 2020). As the years go by, the Pakistan Russia relationship is progressively becoming closer as far as diplomatic ties are concerned especially in the diplomatic relations within defence and energy (The Express Tribune, 2020).

The enthusiasm of promoting stability and safety in the region has taken a step forward on the objective of Pakistan to build the economic integration and security cooperation of the region. Another aspect Pakistan is working towards is the improvement of its relationship with the neighbours to make the environment of the region stable and sound, this is what matters most to the economy and security of Pakistan (Hussain, 2017).

However, Pakistan continues to experience difficulty of managing with the United States caused by the contrast of interests and expectations. The American pullout in Afghanistan leaves a vacant state where there is no definite authority

and control in the region. This has cast more light into the role that is being played by the Pakistani country in providing both security in the region (Coll, 2018). Pakistan has attempted to make sure there is working relationship with the United States. Nevertheless, the differences in the priority and the expectation produced tension in the alliance (The News, 2020).

However, these issues did not impact adversely on the image of Pakistan because the reaction to the US departure has been more favorable. The capability of the state to transform according to the new realities has been proven by the success of Pakistan in adjusting to the changing situation in the region and pursuing its interest in the manner of foreign policies and enhancement of relations with regional neighbours in the changing face of foreign policy (Ahmed, 2020).

Finally, the expected outcome shows that there have been far reaching consequences so far as regional, and international image of Pakistan as a country is concerned due to withdrawal of the US in Afghanistan. The development of the economic integration in South Asia and security cooperation has raised the status of the Pakistan as one of the high-ranking actors of the South Asian geopolitics. However, the challenges concerning sustenance of relationship with the United States will persist to occur owing to mismatch of goals and expectations.

## **Conclusion**

Lastly, the conclusion of this research also corresponds to the style in which the Pakistan foreign policy changed itself astonishingly to cope with the withdrawal of the US in Afghanistan. The changed strategy in Pakistan suggests the conditions of its attempts to be considered stable territory, economic integration, and establish its forces in Afghanistan and in the other states.

The outcomes of the investigation lead to the fact that Pakistan is finding it difficult to crawl out of tricky relations with US, Afghanistan, and other countries in the region. The ability of Pakistan toward its capability to be neutral to all these players will affect the foreign policy desires of the country and the relationship in the area. The details that the foreign policy behavior of Pakistan is predetermined by the necessity to provide the stability in the region, economic integration and the operation under the influence of the region are stated as the conclusions of the paper.

One may argue that the findings of the research are worth attention because it has highlighted the fact that the foreign policy behaviour of Pakistan has to be dealt with as far as several specificities are concerned. Their observation does point out that the Pakistan foreign policy behaviour is not that which is resolvable as the issue of the specific policy as it is, rather it must be looked into at the plane of the larger spaces and the larger world. The policy makers or the ones in practice are also son due to the result of the study. The review shows that the metrics of the foreign policy which have been pursued by Pakistan are intended to ensure that the region is peaceful and economically integrated. It is thus the concern of the policy makers and practitioners to ensure they visit the Pakistan and other stakeholders in

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the region to institute stability in the region and strengthening the economic integration thereof.

Similarly, the findings of the study imply that there is a need to consider the views of all the local stakeholders of any upcoming peace deal in Afghanistan. This is attributable to the fact that the discussion on the behavior of the Pakistani foreign policy is leaning towards attaining the goal of regional stability so as to guarantee its domination over the region. The future peace deal thus needs to be acceptable to the judgment of the other actors in the region including Pakistan to result into viable and secure peace.

Besides, the findings of the given research define the relevance of the economic integration as the mechanism of stability promotion in the region. The economic integration in the region inherits a certain purpose as per the analysis itself, which lies at the core of the foreign policy behaviour of the state of Pakistan. The policy makers and practitioners should thus put much focus on economic integration towards the establishment of any possible future peace pact in Afghanistan.

At last, this chapter offers a description of how Pakistan has behaved in the foreign policy towards the pullout of US Afghanistan. These results of the analysis point to the complexity of the Pakistan behaviour in the sphere of foreign policy and correspond with the role of the concerned analysis of context as far as the explanation of the behaviour is concerned. There are also implications of the study to both the policymakers and the practitioners and it is worth noting that active participation of Pakistan and other players in the region are also major in as far as resulting in the regional stability and economic integration.

Even findings of the study are also captivating since it has shown the issue of considering the opinion of the whole players in the region in any future peace deal in Afghanistan to be important. The importance of economic integration has also been indicated as one of the ways of delivering the stability in the region by the research results. Therefore, economic integration should be given maximum attention of both the policy makers and practitioners when devising any peace agreement in Afghanistan in the future.

In a sum up, the paper provides an elaborate and advanced argumentation of the actions of the Pakistan foreign policy that was responding to the US withdrawal of Iraq. The results of the study highlight the complexity in the action and avenues of Pakistani foreign policy about the importance of case-based interpretations in case of its behaviour. The outcomes of the study also influence the policymakers and the practitioners as they have to emphasize the importance of the engagement with Pakistan and other local actors to provide the stability and integration in the area.

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