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The Indo-US Strategic Partnership: An Analysis of the Trump Era**Faisal Shahzad¹**¹Ph.D Scholar, Department of Media Studies, Bahria University Islamabad, PakistanEmail: faisalshahzadmm@gmail.com

Abstract

The United States, as a superpower, after the collapse of the former Soviet Union, plays a significant role in shaping international politics. Its actions and decisions have a major impact on global and regional events. It establishes strategic partnerships with regional allies and powers to maintain its hegemony across the world. The United States has recently established partnerships with India to keep its influence in the region and counter emerging forces like China and Pakistan. This study examines the impact of the Indo-US strategic partnership since the Trump era and its impact on Pakistan. The analysis focuses on the political, economic, and security aspects of the relationship and how they have affected Pakistan. The study finds that the partnership poses a major security threat to Pakistan, particularly in terms of economic relations and security cooperation. Through an examination of primary and secondary sources, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the strategic partnerships established between India and the US during this period and their impact on the region.

Keywords: bilateral relations, Strategic Partnership, Shared Interest, International Politics, Analysis, Regional Impact, India-Pakistan

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1. Introduction

Over the past 17 years, both the United States and India have become increasingly aligned in matters of respective interests, after a period of mistrust and hostility throughout the Cold War. Recently, they have formed a strong strategic partnership, with a particular emphasis on trade, defense, and counterterrorism. In 2000, President Bill Clinton made the first-ever visit to India by a sitting U.S. President, which marked a turningpoint in bilateral relations. Both countries signed a landmark defense contract, the “Next Steps in Strategic Partnership” (NSSP) which aimed to increase collaboration in areas of defense, nuclear energy, and space. The relationship between the two countries was given a boost in 2005 when both countries signed the India-US Civil Nuclear Agreement, "123 Agreement", which paved the path for the US to export fuel and civilian nuclear technology to its partner India. During the Barack Obama Administration, the two countries decided to increase cooperation related to defense, trade, and technology, with the signing of the “Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI)” (Robert, 2022). Additionally, the “Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region” was signed during the same period. This agreement provided a framework for the United States and India to work collectively to promote peace, stability, and prosperity in the region, through greater cooperation on security and defense issues, as well as on economic and energy issues. Under the Trump Administration, the two countries continued to strengthen their strategic partnership, with the signing of agreements such as the “Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement”, which allows the US to sell advanced military technology to India, and the “Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement”, that permits the U.S. to share geospatial intelligence (Robert, 2022). The United States’ new alliance with India has given more confidence and encouraged the Indian administration to take a more aggressive approach toward Pakistan. The whole security situation of South Asia relies on the status of strategic relations between

Pakistan and India, in this context, India and US cooperation has raised security concerns for Pakistan.³ India and Pakistan have a traditional rivalry and lately, Pakistan is concerned about the Indian role in Afghanistan. With the resurgence of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the security situation has worsened further. Rather than settling the crisis, regional and international forces are aggravating it by pursuing their limited security objectives.

The Indo-US strategic partnership will continue to pose a threat to Chinese interests on Pakistan soil and as instability in Afghanistan increases, it will create hurdles for the CPEC project. It is being analyzed in this research how U.S. strategic alliance with India, this two-party' success, has evolved over time and how it impacted Pakistan. For the United States, restructuring its ties with India was the most vital strategic objective. India gained strategic importance and influence in the area because of its pivotal geostrategic location and development as a prospective economic power. India realigned and evolved its foreign policy in response to changing geopolitical circumstances, allowing it to be considered a viable counterbalance to China. India started liberalizing its economy and welcomed globalization, bringing them closer to the United States. In July 2005, the bilateral relations between the U.S. and India changed drastically when the US decided to pursue full civil nuclear energy cooperation with India. In 2008, the Nuclear Suppliers Group gave India a waiver to begin civil nuclear trading, and the following month, the momentous India-US civil nuclear cooperation agreement ('the 123 agreements') was signed and brought drastic change to the bilateral relationship (Misbah, 2020). In 2017, the Indo-US relationship progressed significantly, with President Donald Trump fulfilling his campaign pledge to be India's "best friend" inside the White House (Indo-US Policy Perspectives, 2018). India was the only nation to receive a 100-year plan from the Trump administration, a distinction not bestowed on even America's other allies (Farooq et al., 2018). In 2017, President Trump announced his first National Security Strategy, in which he referred to India as a "leading global force" and emphasized the need of strengthening the US' strategic cooperation with New Delhi and supporting its leadership role in ensuring regional security government forcibly annexed in the early years of Pakistan's independence (Bukhari, 2011).

1.1 Problem Statement

India-US strategic ties since the Trump administration achieved new heights. India and Pakistan have been traditional rivals, and the U.S. inclination towards India will change the balance of power in the region. It will have strategic, and economic, implications for Pakistan. The partnership will have implications for the CPEC project and the role of Pakistan in Afghanistan. As a result of the regional imbalance, Pakistan will look towards other major powers such as China to gain their support to ensure the success of the CPEC project and its role in the region, especially in Afghanistan.

1.2 Research Question

1. What were the major agreements made between India and U.S. from 2017 to 2021 and their strategic importance?
2. How did the Indo-US partnerships in the Trump era affect the balance of power between India and Pakistan?
3. What are the implications of the Indo-US strategic partnership for CPEC and Pakistan's interest in Afghanistan?

1.3 Research Objectives

4. To explore the impact of India-US strategic ties Since the Trump administration by examining the challenges and security concerns for Pakistan.
5. To examine the past and present nature of the Indo-US relationship.
6. To explore how the India-US collaboration has boosted India's propensity to isolate Pakistan, as well as how successfully Pakistani and Chinese cooperation has reduced that tendency.

2. Literature Review

Several research papers published in the past have studied strategic relationships between the United States and India. This literature review will highlight the strategic partnerships between the

two countries that occurred during President Trump's era and will find out about the scholarly work that has been done to study the influence of U.S. India strategic partnership on the security of Pakistan. Dhaliwal stated in his book *"Indo-US Relations: Steering Through the Changing World Order"* mentioned that "the strategic partnership between India and the United States is as old as the discovery of these countries". After gaining independence India realized that both states India and the United States have a common history of colonization so the relationship between these states has increased over time. So, the interface of interaction is enhanced by the way of trade, defense, and missionary activities. According to Ayres and Mohan, the end of the Cold caused a significant change in the United States' relationship with India. The downfall of the Soviet Union, which happened to be India's supporter in terms of providing military supplies, alongside economic support, left India in need of a trustworthy partner who could provide them with military support in combating its traditional rivals. Gupta (2010) mentioned that the Indo-US partnership emerges from this comprehensive historical backdrop and that the two countries had important reasons to maintain their strategic alliance. To accommodate the strategic objectives and security concerns of India, the US began tailoring its South Asia policy in the early years of the twenty-first century. The US saw India's rise at the time as a beneficial development in world politics, and on the flip side, India seemed to recognize the US's role as an Asia-Pacific security provider. Additionally, the materialization of India was seen by US policymakers as a sign of strategic stability. According to Jaspal (2008), the strategic alliance between the United States and India, which includes, among other things, the US-India nuclear agreement, joint military exercises, technology exchange, and military cooperation adds to Pakistan's insecurity and requires a balanced treatment with Pakistan. India, one of the major powers in Asia, may become more imbalanced with Pakistan, India's rival in South Asia, because of its strategic ties with the US.

A deal named "Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA)" was signed between India and the United States in 2020 that aimed to improve Intelligence sharing. The agreement was also known as the four foundational military agreements. The major goal of the deal was to give the United States authority to provide India access to satellite and other radar data so that India's military targeting and navigation capabilities may be enhanced (Minakashi, 2021). China's growing worldwide influence and India's determination to counterbalance it have led to growing strategic convergence between the two countries in the Indo-Pacific area, where they see the need to offset China's Indo-Pacific presence. It's been particularly evident throughout the administrations of Narendra Modi and Donald Trump in the area of security and defense (Robert, 2017).

Jan Hornat expresses in his article "Hegemonic Stability in The Indo-Pacific: US-India Relations and Induced Balancing" that it has been a long time since the Cold War ended, but the relationship between India and the United States has substantially improved. A significant change occurred in the bilateral relationship when the United States announced in July 2005 that it would "work towards full civil nuclear energy cooperation" with India. When the Nuclear Suppliers Group gave India permission to begin civil nuclear commerce in September 2008, the landmark India-United States civil nuclear cooperation deal (known as the 123 Agreement) was signed, which irrevocably changed the two countries bilateral relations (Hornat, 2021). Further adding to the literature, a strategic alliance between the United States and India foreshadows the integration of India's political, economic, defense, technical, and security infrastructure. The level of strategic cooperation between the two countries has steadily increase source of foreign investment. The two countries have also been working together to improve infrastructure and access to electricity in India through the US-India Partnership to Advance Clean Energy (PACE). Despite these converging interests, there are also areas where the US and India have different views and interests, such as on issues related to trade, intellectual property rights, and climate change (Sameer, 2021). While the United States and India continue to be concerned about China's rise, alarm bells have been ringing in many places in Asia, as well. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will also benefit Pakistan economically, which is seen as another problem for India, which has been unable to isolate Pakistan as a result of its association with terrorism and extremism at various international fora because it failed to isolate Pakistan. Already, Pakistan's economy is showing signs of long-term recovery, thanks in large part to lower commodity and fuel prices, increased accessibility of energy, and improved security conditions resulting from the implementation

of CPEC infrastructure and energy projects, according to the World Bank (WB). India's administrators and political leaders deny Pakistan's economic growth as it has the potential to challenge India's status as the dominant force in the region. The United States is also concerned that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will give China direct access to the Indian Ocean and its warm waters. Historically, the US has viewed India as a counterbalance and deterrent to China. "A holy cow" for Pakistan is how the Indian media has described the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which they see as an invasion of Kashmir and a violation of their sovereignty. It is feared that the CPEC project will make it impossible for India to disparage or isolate Pakistan globally, as both Gilgit-Baltistan and Balochistan's economic positions will be altered, leaving India with nothing to exploit (Carin, 2016).

Syed Shahid Hussain Bukhari argues that by encouraging Indian presence on Pakistan's western border, the US is sending a message to Pakistan and supporting increased Indian involvement in Afghanistan. He believes that India will use its stronger ties to the Northern Alliance to destabilize Pakistan, and that the partnership will have diplomatic and political implications, including potentially allowing India to gain a permanent seat in the security council. Additionally, Bukhari suggests that the partnership may shift the nuclear balance of power between Pakistan and India in India's favor, which could impact Pakistan's defense, political, economic, and foreign policy objectives" (Bukhari, 2011).

3. Theoretical Framework

Realism is a theory that emphasizes the role of material factors, such as military and economic capabilities, in shaping international relations. This framework could be useful for studying the impact of the Indo-US partnership on Pakistan's security and stability, as it would focus on the military and economic aspects of the relationship.

Structural or Neo-Realism

In this theoretical approach to realism, the perspective of neorealism will be adopted. Also referred to as structural realism, it is a theoretical framework in international relations that emphasizes the impact of tangible factors such as military and economic capabilities on the actions of states. It asserts that the international system is in a state of anarchy with states being the primary actors in the system, driven by self-interest and the goal of increasing their own power. A state can either aim for power maximization or security maximization. Structural realism posits that the distribution of capabilities and anarchy, as the underlying organizing principle, define the character of the international system, which can be measured by the number of great powers within the system (Arsh, 2009).

Assumption of Neorealism

- i. The structure is responsible for human nature.
- ii. Power has roots in the structure of world politics.
- iii. Anarchy is enrooted in the system of world politics.
- iv. Insecurity and fear are embedded in the structure of world politics.

The neo-classical realists believe, to understand the connections between power and policy, involves a close assessment of the framework from which a state's foreign policies are framed and executed. For new neoclassical realism, the leaders of the world can be restricted both by global and national political affairs. Moreover, international anarchy is neither Hobbesian nor benign but murky and difficult to read (Peter, 2005).

Offensive Realism

Like Kenneth Mearsheimer a structural realist thinks that "the key factor behind the survival of a state is power" (Sverrir, 2014). Offensive realism is best suited to discuss the case of Indian hegemony and its implications for south Asian strategic stability. This theory holds the basic assumption that the nature of the international system is anarchic. Secondly, States are forced to have offensive military

capabilities, and this makes one state capable to inflict damage on the other state. Thirdly this theory proposed that a state is never sure about the intention of other states' capabilities, the intention can be liberal one day and aggressive the next day. The fourth assumption is that the primary goal of a state is to survive the anarchic policies of other powerful states. States can engage in other intentions too like global prosperity and human rights, but they take serious steps for survival as survival is the most important for getting other goals done.

Defensive Realism

Security is built into the international system according to defensive realism. According to defensive realism, the anarchic nature of the international system typically encourages states to take moderate and cautious actions to guarantee their survival and security, rather than to pursue expansionist policies. To enhance power through primacy and dominance, aggression, competition, and growth are considered harmful since they will provoke security problem and counterbalancing behavior, which will undermine the state's efforts to improve its security. According to defensive realism, states seek to ensure their survival in an anarchic international system, where there is no overarching authority to provide security. As a result, states must rely on their military capabilities to defend themselves and deter potential aggressors. This emphasis on self-help and military power leads to an emphasis on maintaining a balance of power in the international system, to prevent any one state from dominating and becoming a threat to the survival of other (Glenn, 2002). Defensive realism argues that the primary goal of a state's foreign policy should be to maintain its security, rather than to pursue expansion or the imposition of ideology. This often leads to a focus on maintaining the status quo in international relations and avoiding conflict, rather than actively seeking to change the balance of power. Critics of defensive realism argue that it does not fully consider the complexity of international relations and the various non-state actors and non-military factors that shape state behavior. Also, some argue that the theory does not always provide an explanation for the political and economic interactions among states.

Balance of Power

Most scholars agree that the balance of power theory is the most crucial framework for understanding the dynamics between states in international politics. To advance their own national interests, governments exert influence in the international system. The state as a unitary actor seeks its preservation and works best for its universal domination. Kenneth Waltz, a founder of neo-realism explains the term balance of power (Waltz, 1979) According to him, as in the case of defensive realism, a state should focus on the balance of power.⁴² A state wants to become a hegemon by avoiding war and focusing on it by forming alliances with other powerful states. States try to use all the means available to them to achieve their goals. Those means can be achieved in two ways according to the balance of power theory. According to this balance of power, these are external balancing and internal balancing.

External balancing

In external balancing, a state moves to make alliances with other states. The state should focus on strengthening itself with the larger alliances to gain power and security and self-interest. After this power, the state becomes able to weaken its opposing states. In external balancing, the concept of a balance of power is often associated with Realism, which argues that states are the main actors in the international system and that they are motivated by self-interest and the desire to maximize their own power.

Internal Balancing

In internal balancing, states should focus on their economy. It moves toward economic stability and also by focusing to strengthen its military. A state should move to make clever strategies by focusing on the economy against its enemies. According to Kenneth Waltz, the concept of balance of power is based on the anarchy in the international system. According to him. No state knows the interest of the

other state towards itself but focuses on itself to survive (Robert, 1994). So, for this surveillance, states should move toward power distribution. The balance of power is not quite an easy task. It is because no state wants to give its control to the hands of the other state. So, in this case, if no state wants to give its control to the hands of the other states, it must have to increase its power for its survival.

Research Approach

The deductive approach and the inductive approach are two fundamental approaches to discovering the truth. The deductive approach begins with dictums, which are simple true statements about how the universe works. The nature of the correct statement or axiom can be used to understand and deduce the phenomenon. When there is no existing theory to test, the inductive approach is widely utilized in qualitative research, the researcher must construct a new hypothesis after collecting data. The inductive technique progresses from the specific to the general, then makes some actual observations about the intriguing phenomenon and then creates theory and concepts on it. In the case of an Indo-US partnership, the deductive approach may be useful in identifying the driving factors of the strategic partnership, and the areas of cooperation between India and the United States.

Research started with the hypothesis that the Indo-US partnership is increasing India's military capabilities and undermining Pakistan's security, then collects data on the military cooperation and defense deals between India and the US, as well as data on the military capabilities of both countries. After that, the researcher uses logical reasoning to draw specific conclusions about the impact of the partnership on Pakistan's security. This thesis aims to discover new knowledge, but a theory is already established to explain the hegemonic behavior of India and the United State.

Qualitative Research Approach

There are two approaches that are used in social science research methodology, i.e., quantitative, and qualitative. The underlying study utilizes a qualitative approach as quantitative research collects data that is numerical in nature and uses a statistical method to establish the relationship between variables. While the qualitative research approach understands, clarifies, and explores the beliefs, feelings, perception, and situation of the people. Qualitative research is used by the researchers to analyze the motivation, reasons, and opinions. The Indo-US strategic relationship since the trump era has been discussed using a qualitative approach removed from the international system. After this, there will be no higher authority to guarantee the security, sovereignty, and national interest of that state. By examining, history the United States and India have overcome trust barriers from President Clinton, Bush, and Obama to Trump. Later in 2000, President Bill Clinton visited India and met the prime minister of India, Mr. Vajpayee. After this meeting, it highlighted that these two states are close enough to extend bilateral cooperation. They signed a document that declared a friendlier alliance between India and the United States for serving mutual interests and strategic stability in South Asia and beyond.

Treating India as a Rising and Responsible Global Power

George W. Bush took on the burden of building a strong bilateral relationship between the United States and India after Bill Clinton laid the groundwork for it previously. The United States covered many agreements with India under the Bush administration and promised to be fostering bilateral cooperation (Robert, 2004). The civilian nuclear pact, in which Bush endorsed India as a responsible state, was the most significant agreement of his administration. The Bush administration's readiness to set up official civilian nuclear cooperation while ignoring India's nuclear program was a crucial factor in the country's success. An approach to foreign policy that acknowledges India's expanding economic and military might and views it as a possible partner in tackling global concerns is to treat it as a rising and responsible global power. It serves as a means to acknowledge how the traditional Western countries are no longer the sole important players in the international system due to the shifting balance of power.

Significance Defense Pact 2005:

On June 28th, 2005, the United States and India signed a new defense pact they initiated a new

framework to extend the security and military cooperation between these two states. This defense pact acted as an instrument and became highly valuable to India to produce weapons and assist in the defense of missiles (Garamond, 2015). The defense agreement paved the path for India to get US military hardware and technologies. The signing of this ten-year defense agreement was done to accomplish two key objectives:

- a) To aid India in becoming a power to advance American strategic objectives in the South Asian region.
- b) To aid India in extending the reach of its military force outside of its boundaries.

Commonalities in interests and values form the foundation of the Indo-US strategic cooperation. In the upcoming years, it will open up new avenues for collaboration between India and the United States on several levels. Washington has acknowledged that this defense agreement was made to address global security concerns and to protect South Asia's strategic interests (Kasim, 2019). The defense minister of each state expressed their views in a joint press conference which was the starting point of formal strategic partnership among these states. The decision by both nations to monitor military trade partnerships in item technology, cooperative naval exercises, and training led to the formulation of the defense conclusions. After the end of the Cold War, the United States restructured its policies toward India. Washington started to enhance its close political, economic, and strategic ties with India, and the relationship between these two democracies converted from "estrangement to engagement". The United States had its reason to have friendly strategic relations with India, one of the reasons being to counterweight rising China, capable of contributing to the rebalancing of power in the Asian region. In the twenty-first century, India and the United States engaged in exchange conversations over security issues and military cooperation. It was a shift in the post-Cold War era. 1993 is marked as a milestone among these two states as the US Congress decided to make categories for providing special assistance to India (Danneil, 2008).

After the presidential elections when George W. Bush came into power, the President changed most of his policy toward India, in his administration, he lifted all the continuing sanctions that were enforced on India after its nuclear test in 1998. To protect their national interest at the time, the Bush administration began helping India develop into a regional power. Following a proposal made during the two presidents' summit on civilian nuclear cooperation in July 2005 in Washington, George W. Bush and Manmohan Singh signed a civil nuclear cooperation agreement on March 2, 2006, in New Delhi. The United States Congress's passage of the Henry J. Hyde United States-India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act of 2006 marked a turning point in the two countries' relations by enabling complete civil nuclear cooperation between the two countries (Sathasivam, 2017).

The Trump Administration

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the relationship between the United States and India has evolved. The strategic partnership between India and the United States during the administration of President Trump was characterized by a focus on deepening defense ties, expanding economic cooperation, and promoting a free and open Indo-Pacific region. To maintain a balance of power in Asia, India is now seen as a crucial ally. From the moment he assumed office, Prime Minister Modi made forging close ties with the United States a top priority. In comparison to past years, India and the United States had to deal with a number of strategic and political issues. The relationship between the two nations was strained throughout the Cold War due to India's nonalignment policy, American backing for Pakistan, and US efforts to thwart India's nuclear program (Sunderpal, 2019).

President Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi are expected to find common ground given their similar patriotic and entrepreneurial tendencies. Making the most of the opportunity is encouraged by the Congress's strong political support for U.S.-India relations and official Indian confidence in those relations under the Trump administration (Bouton, 2017). The Trump administration has the chance to provide mutual benefits and closer ties to the relationship with India. While doing so will be more difficult than it would be with a formal ally, the advantages could be more significant. The two main areas where the government may advance are finding an agreement on how to deal with China and

encouraging India's interaction with other Asian countries (James, 2014).

During the Trump Administration, the United States demonstrated its dedication to India's increasing part in Asia by promoting and supporting India's participation in regional and global affairs. The Trump Administration accepted India as a "major defense partner" and sought to deepen defense ties between the two countries through the "Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI)" and the "India-US Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region" (James, Wall Street). The Trump Administration also supported India's "Act East" policy, which focuses on strengthening tie with Southeast Asian countries, and encouraged India's involvement in regional forums such as the "ASEAN Regional Forum" and the "East Asia Summit".⁸¹ As a counterbalance to China's expanding influence in the area, the US also encourages India's participation in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, a strategic discussion involving the US, Japan, Australia, and India. Moreover, the Trump Administration recognized India's "Indo-Pacific" vision, which emphasizes freedom of steering, respect for international law, and peaceful resolution of disputes, and encourages India's participation in regional infrastructure and connectivity projects. The Trump Administration showed its commitment to India's expanding role in Asia through its support for India's participation in regional and global affairs, its recognition of India's major defense partner status, and its encouragement of India's participation in regional forums and infrastructure projects (Kashish, 2020). The Trump administration established an enormous defense trade pattern with India, with bilateral defense trade rising from less than \$1 billion in 2008 to more than 18\$ billion in 2019. In comparison to the previous five years, US military assistance to India has increased by almost 550 percent in 2013-17, making US India's second-largest arms supplier.⁸³ Since Trump, the rising direction of bilateral energy links between the US and India is considered a viable alternative to India's reliance on West Asian energy. Since the threat of US typically the responsibility for India's energy imports from Iran was raised, US energy exports to India have increased by 40%, reaching US\$10 billion (Rosen, 2017). Trump administration would continue to play a crucial role in strengthening the already robust Indo-US relations.

The Republican Hindu Coalition sent a significant sum of US\$898,000 to the Trump Victory Fund and consistently backed President Donald Trump's campaign (Ishani, 2017). increasing pressure on Pakistan to prevent terrorists from utilizing its borders as safe havens, and India should promote Afghanistan's economy and development more (Bergess, 2019). China's rise to global importance in politics and the economy is still highly meaningful for the US. Pakistan's improvements in its Security and stability as well as its closer connections with China pose a challenge to India's ambition to become a regional power.

Indo-US Defense Cooperation During the Trump Era

During the Trump Administration (2017-2021), the United States and India deepened defense cooperation. One of the key aspects of this cooperation was the strengthening of the strategic cooperation among the two states. The Trump Administration emphasized the importance of the U.S.-India relationship and sought to strengthen it by increasing defense and security cooperation. One of the major developments during the Trump Administration was the signing of the "Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement" in 2018 (Raj, 2009).

The Trump Administration also sought to increase defense and security cooperation with India in the Indo-Pacific region, where both countries have shared interests in maintaining stability, security, and the rules-based international order. The defense cooperation between the United States and India during the Trump Administration was strong and multifaceted, with both countries working together to strengthen their strategic partnership and enhance their military capabilities. While the economic cooperation between the United States and India was marked by both cooperation and tension. While the two countries sought to expand economic ties and increase trade and investment, there were also several areas of disagreement, particularly on trade and immigration issues. On trade, the Trump Administration sought to reduce the trade deficit with India and address issues related to market access and intellectual property rights. The two countries held several rounds of talks on a potential bilateral

trade agreement, but ultimately no deal was reached. The Trump Administration also imposed tariffs on several Indian exports, including steel and aluminum. On immigration, the Trump Administration introduced several measures that affected Indian citizens and businesses, such as tightening H-1B visa rules and increasing visa fees (Bown, 2021). These measures caused concern and resulted in a decrease in Indian professionals traveling to the US. Despite these challenges, both countries sought to manage economic relations positively and find ways to expand ties. India and the US continued to cooperate on issues such as energy and defense, and India's Act East policy provided opportunities for increased trade and investment in the region. Additionally, both countries continued to participate in regional trade initiatives such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). Indo-US Cooperation on Counterterrorism:

The United States and India have a strong partnership in counter-terrorism efforts. The two countries have cooperated in several areas, including intelligence sharing, capacity building, and law enforcement cooperation. There is a chance for the Trump administration to increase its backing of India's defense efforts. Following years of hostility and India's rejection to establish military ties with the US, the two countries began to step up their security cooperation in 2005. The Defense Trade and Knowledge Initiative was signed by the US and India in 2012 to reduce bureaucratic and political barriers to defense sales and technology transfer. One of the primary initiatives established for cooperative US-India efforts in 2015 under a new framework agreement was the advancement of aircraft carrier technology, which is important to India's capacity to project force into the Indian Ocean. In August 2016 India and US finalized the "Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement" which has ability to increase cooperation between the two countries beyond just the sale of military equipment's.

During the Trump Administration (2017-2021), the United States and India continued to strengthen their partnership in counter-terrorism efforts. One of the key areas of cooperation during this period was intelligence sharing. The two countries continued to share information and intelligence on potential terrorist threats, which helped to improve their ability to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks. The two countries also sought to deepen the intelligence-sharing relationship under the Trump Administration, with the signing of the Information Exchange Agreement (IEA) in 2019. Another area of cooperation during the Trump Administration was capacity building. The U.S. and India continued to work together to build the capacity of their security forces and other law enforcement agencies to combat terrorism. This included training programs and the sharing of best practices and expertise. The U.S. also supplied India with the necessary equipment and technology to combat terrorism. The Trump Administration also stressed the need for India and the US to coordinate efforts in international fora such as the United Nations, the G-20, and BRICS, in order to counter the global threat of terrorism (Ganguly, 2022).

Additionally, the Trump Administration also put emphasis on the need to target and dismantle terrorist safe havens and financial networks in order to disrupt terrorist activities. The U.S. and India worked together to track down and bring to justice individuals and organizations involved in terrorist activities. Overall, the partnership between the United States and India on counter- terrorism efforts continued to strengthen during the Trump Administration, with the two countries working together in various areas to combat this threat.

India and United States Strategic Partnership

A state's foreign policy is always planned with the national interest in mind, as from the Clinton visit to the Trump administration the Indo-US growing convergence of interest enhanced over bytime. Because of this, there is a connection between foreign policy and the interests of the country, which is clear in world politics. The strategic relationship has great potential and strength to participate in a variety of fields, including advancing and bolstering democracy and collaborating on nuclear and military projects (Sutch & Juanita, 2007). The two countries India and the United States have a shared interest in promoting stability and security in the region, as well as countering the influence of other regional actors, such as China and Pakistan. In the realm of defense and security, the US has been a major supplier of defense equipment to India, and the two countries have performed joint military drills and training. India has also been a key partner for the US in its efforts to stabilize Afghanistan,

providing economic and development assistance, as well as training Afghan security forces. Thus, the growing Indo-US strategic partnership could lead to increased cooperation and coordination between the two countries on issues such as security and counterterrorism, which could further complicate Pakistan's position in Afghanistan. Afghanistan has been an important area of strategic consideration for the United States and India in their bilateral relationship. Both countries have a common interest in a stable and secure Afghanistan, as well as in countering terrorism and extremism in the region. The United States has been actively engaged in Afghanistan since 2001 when it led a coalition of international forces to eject the Taliban from power following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. India has also been involved in development and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan and has provided financial and technical assistance to the Afghan government. Every state's internal and international policymaking processes are impacted by regional and global crises, which then affect and shape each state's policies appropriately. India now is very different from what Gandhi and Nehru envisioned or planned when they founded the nation. It has developed into the largest democracy in the world and a powerful state in South Asia as a result of its foreign and economic policies. Since 9/11, India has altered its regional policy in response to changes in the domestic environment in the area. India has established solid and deep connections with Afghanistan as a regional power. In the contemporary state system, every state needs alliances and ally not only for existence but also to achieve its goals and pursue its long-term strategies. India had been encouraged to broaden its sphere of influence in Afghanistan and South Asia by Afghanistan's geostrategic location, deteriorating Pakistan-Afghanistan relations, the rise of militancy and terrorism in the region, and the presence of India's ally, the United States, in Afghanistan. This policy shift has led to a strengthening of the US-India partnership on counterterrorism and security in the region. The US has provided India with greater intelligence sharing and military cooperation and has also supported India's bid for a greater role in global security and economic governance.

India and US Regional Ambitions to Counter China

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a large-scale infrastructure and development project that seeks to connect Gwadar port in Pakistan's Baluchistan province with China's northwestern region of Xinjiang. The project involves the construction of a network of roads, railways, and energy pipelines to facilitate trade and economic growth between the two countries. India and the United States have expressed concerns about the CPEC, particularly because the corridor passes through the Pakistan-administered Gilgit-Baltistan region, which India claims as a part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Some concerns also related to the potential debt burden on Pakistan and the impact on regional security. India has opposed the project as it considers it a violation of its territorial integrity and sovereignty. It also believes that it would be a catalyst for Chinese economic, military, and strategic presence in Pakistan (Cooley & Carolijn, 2022).

The United States has also expressed concerns about the CPEC, particularly its potential implications for regional stability and the potential debt burden it could impose on Pakistan. The US has been vocal about its concerns that the project could be used as a tool of political and economic leverage by China in the region, furthering instability in an already disputed area. Overall, Both India and the United States have concerns about the strategic implications of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which they see as an effort by China to expand its economic and strategic influence in the region. Considering the rise of China in the region to be troublesome, the Americans perceive China to be a threat and adopt similar strategies as India. The CPEC project, which is reported to be a "major worry" for Washington, has prompted many of the defense deals that are being negotiated between the US and India. While China's development continues to alarm both India and the US, concerns about China's growing aggressiveness are developing in many countries of Asia (Siddarth, 2010).

Furthermore, India-Afghanistan cordial relations can also endanger the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project, as India has been vocal about its concerns about the project's potential impact on regional stability. India's presence in Afghanistan could be used to disrupt the project and pressure Pakistan to scale back or halt the project. This would have a major impact on Pakistan's economic determinations in the region. India's close relationship with Afghanistan has increased Pakistan's

security concerns, as it sees it as an attempt by India to assert its dominance in the region and to undermine Pakistan's strategic interests in Afghanistan. Pakistan has long been involved in Afghan politics and has sought to maintain a balance of power in the country in order to protect its own security interests. The porous nature of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, combined with India's increasing presence in Afghanistan, has raised concerns in Pakistan that India could use Afghanistan as a base to launch terrorist attacks on Pakistan and interfere in Pakistan's internal affairs.

Strategic convergence between New Delhi and Washington disrupts the Pakistan-US strategic cooperation putting Pakistan's security at risk. The interest of the United States and India included countering terrorism, weapons of mass destruction also called WMDs, and most importantly countering China. India's concerns about the China-Pakistan nexus and its potential impact on India's influence in Afghanistan and regional security position are rooted in the belief that the partnership between China and Pakistan can be used to counterbalance India's influence in the region. India sees the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project as a way for China to gain a strategic base in the region and challenge India's dominance.

South Asia is considered to be one of the most troubling and dangerous regions in the world due to the direct conflict between the two nuclear states, India and Pakistan. The history of hostility and mistrust between the two countries has led to multiple conflicts and a constant state of tension in the region. The presence of nuclear weapons in the hands of both countries has only heightened the potential for a catastrophic outcome. The current geopolitics in the region has greatly changed India's regional security policy. India's growing economic and military power has led it to take a more assertive stance in the region, and it has been actively seeking to expand its influence in neighboring countries such as Afghanistan. This has led to increased tensions with Pakistan, as well as with China, which has territorial disputes with India. India's close relationship with the United States has led to concerns in Pakistan that the US is attempting to encircle Pakistan and undermine its security interests in the region. This has further escalated tensions in the region.

Indo US partnership and its Security Concerns for Pakistan:

Since the Cold War, India and Pakistan's relationship has been on a riddle, while Pakistan was closely aligned with the US at that time India chose to align with the Soviet Union however after the disintegration of the USSR, the United States began to reorient its policies towards South Asia. Chinese rise on the global political chessboard was seen as the status quo and a threat to the US hegemony. India is a significant democracy in South Asia that may be utilized to offset China's growing influence. The United States created its influence by investing its energies in South Asia for its interests. The strategy of the United States for the South Asian region is very doubtful and has been questioned at the international level. India and Pakistan have been two arch-rivals since their independence, the United States always had a soft corner towards India and formed quick bilateral strategic relations encompassing trade cyber security, defense, technological cooperation, counterterrorism, and much more. The US considers India to be important to gain its desired interests in the region and it can help in balancing and stabilizing the region (Tariq, 2006). Pak-US relationship saw the lowest when the United States signed India the Defense Agreement in 2005 and civil nuclear cooperation in 2008. Pakistan considered these efforts of signing agreements between these two states would cause disturbance in the existing balance of power in the region. India also got permission to become a part of the Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG), ignoring the concerns Pakistan that what would be the results of it. Pakistan's narrative is that the growing support of India by the United States is creating security concerns for the region. The strategic cooperation pact sought to support India's development of conventional weapons as well as nuclear technologies, including supersonic fighter planes and extremely advanced missiles. Therefore, the arms sale offer is likely to exacerbate the conventional imbalance that currently exists between Pakistan and India. As the relationship between the US and India has grown stronger, Pakistan has expressed concerns about being encircled by its rivals. Pakistan sees the growing defense cooperation between the US and India as a threat to its security, particularly in terms of its long-standing dispute with India over the region of Jammu and

Kashmir. The United States has maintained its security relationship with Pakistan, which it views as an important partner in the fight against terrorism and in stabilizing the region. The US has been supporting military and economic assistance to Pakistan and it sees the country as an important regional player for many important geo-strategic and geopolitical issues. The US-India strategic partnership has contributed to increasing tensions between India and Pakistan, with the latter feeling encircled by its rivals. However, the US sees the importance of maintaining a relationship with Pakistan, recognizing its significance in the region. Under the Trump administration, the US sought to strengthen its relationship with India to counterbalance China's growing influence in the region. Many defense and security cooperation agreements were established between India and the United States including the "Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement" which permits the sharing of military technology, geospatial maps, and satellite data. The move was seen as a major boost to India's military capabilities and provided it with access to advanced US military technology.

This strengthening of the US-India relationship led to security concerns in Pakistan about being outmatched militarily by its rivals. Pakistan has traditionally relied on its military as a deterrent against India, and the increasing military cooperation between the US and India has led to calls for Pakistan to increase its military capabilities to maintain the balance of power. The Indo-US partnership also led to increased diplomatic pressure on Pakistan over the CPEC. India has long opposed the project because it considers it to be a threat to its territory integrity and sovereignty, and the US has also expressed concerns about the potential implications of the project for regional stability and the potential debt burden it could impose on Pakistan. As a result, the partnership has led to increased diplomatic pressure on Pakistan to address these concerns and potentially reconsider the project.

In addition, the Trump administration reinforced its stance on Pakistan's handling of terrorist groups and reduced military aid and assistance to Pakistan. The move further isolated Pakistan diplomatically and caused a strain in its relationship with the U.S. The power dynamics between India and Pakistan have been significantly impacted by the US and India's strong alliances under the Trump administration. The strengthening of the US-India collaboration and the increased military assistance between the two countries has led to concerns in Pakistan about being outmatched militarily by its rivals and has further isolated Pakistan diplomatically. The reason that seems to be evident behind this strategic partnership between India and the US is Pakistan's nuclear capability and China's automatic and military strength. Pakistan and China had always been closed so to counter India in the region, the United States is strengthening its ties with India to counter China in South Asia.

Political Implications

The partnership between India and the United States can have significant political implications for Pakistan. Historically, Pakistan has viewed the relationship between the US and India with suspicion, as it sees India as a regional rival and fears that the US might favor India over Pakistan in matters of diplomacy and security. The US and India have a strategic partnership, which has grown stronger in recent years due to a convergence of interests, such as both countries' desire for counterterrorism and China's rising influence in the region. This partnership has led to increased military cooperation, trade and investment, and intelligence sharing between the US and India. This can put Pakistan in a difficult position as the US may increase pressure on Pakistan to take stronger action against terrorist groups that operate within its borders and are seen as threats to US and Indian interests. Increasing economic and military cooperation between India and the US may also embolden India to take a more aggressive stance in its disputes with Pakistan. Furthermore, the fact that both nations are strategically moving toward each other and forming an alliance can also lead to a shift in the dynamics of the South Asian region, especially in its neighboring countries. In the long term, it can shift the balance of power in the region and change the status quo which can have an impact on regional security and stability. The US-India alliance can also have an impact on regional stability and security as the US and India may be more inclined to engage in joint military operations in the region, which can affect Pakistan's security.

4.1.1 : Economic Implications

The partnership between India and the United States can have several economic implications for

Pakistan, some of which include:

1. Trade competition: As India and the US deepen their economic partnership, it could lead to increased trade and investment between the two countries at the expense of Pakistan. This could make it more difficult for Pakistan to compete in the US market and could lead to a decline in Pakistan's exports to the US.
2. Fall in Foreign investment: As India's economy continues to grow and its ties with the US strengthen, it could attract more foreign investment, making it a more attractive destination for investors. This could lead to a decrease in foreign investment in Pakistan, which would be detrimental to its economy.
3. Reduction in US aid: As the US shifts its focus to India, there could be a decrease in US aid to Pakistan, which the country's economy relies on.
4. Impact on regional trade: The strengthening of the US-India partnership could also change the dynamics of regional trade, as it could lead to the US and India becoming more integrated economically and may lead to exclusion of Pakistan from regional trade and investment opportunities. Economic pressure from the international community: As US and India's partnership deepens, Pakistan may face pressure from the international community to open its economy further, make it more liberal, and attract investment. This can also put pressure on Pakistan to reform its economy and make it more business friendly.
5. Impact on infrastructure: The partnership between India and the US can also lead to increased investment in infrastructure in India, which could make it more competitive as a destination for goods and services and make it harder for Pakistan to attract investment in this area.

All of these factors can have an adverse influence on Pakistan's economy, making it more difficult for the country to grow and create jobs. Nevertheless, it is also essential to mention that the partnership between India and the US is still evolving, and Pakistan still has opportunities to take advantage of the benefits that may come from these developments. Perception of other people who are part of the research. In the case of Indo-US strategic partnership perception of humans and the study of human behavior play a vital role in understanding the hegemonic policies and nature of India and the United States. The Indo-US relationship can be interpreted as a power struggle between India and Pakistan, with the US aligning itself with India and providing it with advanced military technology and intelligence sharing. This can be seen as an attempt by India to assert its dominance over Pakistan and to gain an upper hand in the region. There are two philosophies for social science research, the first one is Positivist and the second is Constructivist. A Positivist school of thought is a quantitative way of getting knowledge and interpretive or constructivist is a qualitative method that uses observation, interviews, and document reviews. Since social science is qualitative in nature so data for this research is collected by using an interpretive approach. The research will interpret and explore the idea of India and the United States Hegemonic design and the possible future threat that can destabilize the security of South Asia specifically Pakistan.

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