



INDIA PAKISTAN: GEOPOLITICS, HISTORY AND FUTURE

Dr. Richa Sharma

Assistant Professor and Head, Kishan Lal Public College, Rewari, Haryana

Cite This Article: Dr. Richa Sharma, "India Pakistan: Geopolitics, History and Future", International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Modern Education, Volume 8, Issue 2, Page Number 79-83, 2022.

Copy Right: © IJMRME, 2022 (All Rights Reserved). This is an Open Access Article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium provided the original work is properly cited.

Abstract:

Ever since their Inception as independent Sovereign state both India and Pakistan could not steer their relationship on the amicable pathway and the right direction. No matter how many years pass, they continue to determine their relationship through the tinted glass of history. The mutual animosity towards Each Other has its roots in multiple factors that are historical, geographical, cultural as well as strategic and which shape the Dynamics between these two South Asian nations. This paper provides an overview of India Pakistan relationship into three parts- first about the contemporary scenario in terms of economic military and Societal perceptions about their inter relationship. Concludingly, it attempts to explore about future trajectory of relationship based upon contemporary trends.

Key Words: Independent, Sovereign, India, Pakistan, Relationship

1. Introduction:

Pakistan-India relations are determined by the history of mistrust, ideological differences, and perpetual conflicts.¹ The geopolitical context of India-Pakistan relations is marked by a complex interplay of historical, geographical, cultural, and strategic factors that have shaped the dynamics between these two South Asian nations. The article delves into various key points related to the geopolitical dynamics, historical context, and potential future scenarios of this crucial relationship.

2. India-Pakistan Relations: History

Indo-Pak relations have been defined by the violent partition of British India in 1947, the Jammu & Kashmir conflict and the numerous military conflicts fought between the two nations.¹ The relations between Pakistan and India started on a bitter note because of the partition of the Indian subcontinent. The immediate cause of tension was the bloodshed of millions of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, moving across the new borders to settle either in India or Pakistan. The communal violence, at the time of independence, set the stage for a permanent future rivalry between Pakistan and India.²

There have been wars, limited conflicts, border skirmishes, intrusions, warlike situations and confrontations. The historical connection between India and Pakistan, both possessing nuclear capabilities, is deeply intertwined. Since their independence from British rule in 1947, the two nations have engaged in a series of conflicts, primarily centered around the disputed Kashmir region that both lay claim to. India acquired nuclear status in 1974, followed by Pakistan in 1998. Despite not resorting to nuclear warfare, concerns exist among experts that the ongoing crisis could escalate beyond conventional military actions. A succinct overview of the conflict's history follows:

- August 1947: Following the end of British colonial rule, British India was partitioned into India and Pakistan based on religious majorities. This division resulted in widespread migration and communal violence, particularly in the disputed Jammu and Kashmir regions claimed by both nations.
- October 1947 - January 1949: The first Indo-Pakistani war ignited when armed tribesmen from Pakistan invaded Kashmir. Seeking India's assistance, Kashmir handed over key defense, communication, and foreign affairs powers in return for protection. A ceasefire was established in January 1949, marking the creation of the Line of Control.
- August 1965: The second Indo-Pakistani war emerged from border clashes. Pakistani troops crossed the Line of Control into Indian-administered Kashmir in an effort to initiate an insurgency against India (Operation Gibraltar). The war concluded in January 1966 with a commitment to peace by both nations.
- December 1971: The third Indo-Pakistani war coincided with a civil conflict within Pakistan. East Pakistan, demanding independence, was supported by India, leading to the creation of Bangladesh. West Pakistan surrendered, resulting in the liberation of East Pakistan and its transformation into Bangladesh.
- May 1974: India conducted its first successful nuclear test, codenamed "Operation Smiling Buddha," near its border with Pakistan.

- July 1989: Armed resistance against Indian rule began in Kashmir, evolving from nationalistic to religious in nature. Pakistan supported the movement, advocating United Nations intervention, while India urged Pakistan to cease cross-border terrorism. This insurgency continues to the present day.
- May 1998: Both India and Pakistan conducted nuclear tests, eliciting international condemnation and calls for disarmament.
- May 1999: India launched airstrikes against Pakistani-backed forces in Indian-administered Kashmir, escalating tensions between the nuclear states.
- February 2007: Bombs in the Samjhauta Express killed Pakistani nationals, undermining improving India-Pakistan relations.
- November 2008: Terrorists attacked Mumbai, leading to increased tensions and global scrutiny.
- February 2019: The suicide car bomb attack in Indian-controlled Kashmir heightened tensions, resulting in air strikes and escalated conflict.
- August 2019: India revoked Article 370, granting autonomy to Indian-administered Kashmir. Pakistan highlighted ensuing violence while maintaining relative silence.

The interconnected history of India and Pakistan, marked by wars and territorial disputes, remains centered around the contested Kashmir region. While nuclear warfare has been avoided, concerns persist regarding potential escalation beyond conventional conflicts.

3. The Conflicts:

The Kashmir Issue: The second important characteristic of a great deal of the literature on India-Pakistan relations is its overwhelming focus on Kashmir, and the causes and manifestations of a military conflict. The activities of the military of both states, and the prioritization of protecting or expanding this piece of territory are seen to be keeping India and Pakistan constantly on the brink of war during their 70-year history.⁴ The Kashmir issue remains a contentious topic between India and Pakistan, causing significant friction between the two nations. Over the past decade, Pakistan's approach to the Kashmir issue has been primarily reactive, responding to India's actions in the region. The Indian government undertook initiatives to integrate Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of the country, culminating in the revocation of Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution, which granted special status to the region. This move resulted in the grant of Union Territory status, a move strongly opposed by Pakistan due to its aspirations for greater control over Kashmir.

Junagadh Issue: The Junagadh issue stems from the princely state's accession to Pakistan during the partition of 1947. Despite a Hindu majority, the Muslim Nawab of Junagadh acceded to Pakistan without conducting a plebiscite to gauge the people's will. India rejected this accession, leading to a dispute. The Nawab's subsequent escape to Pakistan prompted India to assume direct control. Pakistan contested India's jurisdiction, but a plebiscite conducted by India in 1948 revealed overwhelming support for joining India. While Pakistan initially refused to accept the results, the issue has waned from bilateral discussions over time, serving as a reminder of partition's religious division.

Indus Waters Treaty: The Indus Waters Treaty, brokered by the World Bank and established in 1960, governs water distribution between India and Pakistan. India has control over the Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej rivers, while Pakistan controls the Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab rivers. This treaty, effective since April 1, 1960, allocates water resources crucial for agriculture and energy generation in both countries. India-Pakistan Trade Relations: Bilateral trade between India and Pakistan, while limited, impacts their economies. India's exports to Pakistan in 2018-19 amounted to \$2.06 billion, with imports at \$495 million, resulting in a trade surplus for India. Items such as cotton yarn, fabrics, dyes, chemicals, and vehicles are major Indian exports, while Pakistan exports fruits, cement, and leather products. Political tensions and non-tariff barriers have hindered trade relations, further exacerbated by India's tariff increases and Pakistan's suspension of bilateral trade following the Pulwama attack.

People-to-People Relations: The aftermath of Partition and debates over resource allocation led to strained communal relations. Nonetheless, the 1974 Bilateral Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines allows limited visits to religious sites. Hindu and Sikh pilgrimages to Pakistan and vice versa are conducted under this protocol, fostering limited people-to-people interaction. India's efforts have led to the release of prisoners and fishermen, contributing to improved relations. Kartarpur Corridor: The Kartarpur Corridor links Indian and Pakistani Sikh shrines, enabling direct pilgrimage access for Indian Sikhs to Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur, Pakistan. The corridor, inaugurated in 2019, marked a positive step, enhancing people-to-people ties and promoting religious tourism. It symbolizes cooperation amid strained relations. Cross-border Terrorism: Cross-border terrorism remains a major point of contention between India and Pakistan. Since the 1980s, Pakistan has been accused of sending armed insurgents into India, leading to significant national security challenges. Infiltration of armed terrorists from Pakistan's western borders continues to impact India's security landscape.

Thus, India-Pakistan relations are influenced by multifaceted factors, including contentious issues like Kashmir and Junagadh, water resource management under the Indus Waters Treaty, trade relations, and efforts to promote people-to-people contacts. While geopolitical challenges persist, initiatives like the Kartarpur Corridor

offer glimpses of cooperation amid ongoing tensions. The issue of cross-border terrorism remains a significant hurdle to normalized relations

4. The Geo - Politics:

The geopolitical context of India-Pakistan relations is marked by a complex interplay of historical, geographical, cultural, and strategic factors that have shaped the dynamics between these two South Asian nations. Here are some key aspects of the geopolitical context that influence the India-Pakistan relationship:

- **Historical Legacy:** The partition of British India in 1947 resulted in the creation of two separate nations, India and Pakistan. This partition was accompanied by violence and mass migration, leaving a legacy of bitterness and mistrust between the two countries. The historical events surrounding partition have deeply affected their relationship, contributing to ongoing tensions.
- **Territorial Disputes:** The territorial dispute over Kashmir is a central issue in India-Pakistan relations. Both countries claim the region in its entirety and have fought multiple wars over it. The control and status of Kashmir have remained unresolved, contributing to frequent military standoffs and political rhetoric.
- **Nuclearization:** Both India and Pakistan have developed nuclear weapons, making them nuclear-armed neighbours. This nuclear deterrence factor adds an additional layer of complexity to their relationship, as any conflict between the two nations carries the risk of nuclear escalation with dire consequences for the region and beyond.
- **Strategic Interests:** Both India and Pakistan occupy key strategic positions in South Asia. Their geographic locations influence regional stability and the interests of major global powers. These nations are often seen as crucial players in the broader geopolitical dynamics of the region.
- **Great Power Influence:** The India-Pakistan relationship is also influenced by the interests of major powers such as the United States, China, and Russia. These powers have historically played roles in mediating conflicts and influencing the behavior of both countries due to their own strategic interests in the region.
- **Regional Organizations:** Both India and Pakistan are members of regional organizations such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). However, tensions and conflicts between the two have often hindered the effectiveness of regional cooperation and integration efforts.
- **Cross-Border Terrorism:** The issue of cross-border terrorism, with groups allegedly operating from one country causing violence in the other, has been a source of major contention between India and Pakistan. Accusations of supporting terrorism further strain diplomatic relations.
- **Water Disputes:** Sharing several rivers, including the Indus River, has led to water-related conflicts and concerns. The Indus Waters Treaty, brokered by the World Bank, governs the sharing of these waters, but disputes and concerns over water resources persist.
- **Ethnic and Religious Diversity:** Both India and Pakistan are diverse nations with various ethnic and religious groups. The treatment of minority communities within their borders can affect their diplomatic relations and international image.
- **People-to-People Contacts:** Despite the official tensions, there are people-to-people contacts between India and Pakistan, including cultural exchanges, business interactions, and efforts by civil society to promote understanding and peace.

The geopolitical context of India-Pakistan relations is multifaceted and influenced by historical events, territorial disputes, nuclearization, strategic interests, and international dynamics. The intricate nature of this relationship continues to impact regional stability and international efforts to promote peace and cooperation. The geopolitical stability of South Asia, rather than hugs with civilians for the sake of political optics, should be the primary motive of India's Pakistan policy, rising above the dialogue-estrangement-hostility cycle and allowing India to emerge as a global power in the twenty-first century.⁵

5. The Issues:

The geopolitical location of both India and Pakistan plays a significant role in shaping their interactions with each other and with the broader international community. Here are some important factors that are affected by or affect the geopolitical location of India and Pakistan:

- **Regional Stability and Security:** Both India and Pakistan are situated in a region characterized by complex security challenges. Their close proximity means that any conflict or instability in one country can have spill-over effects on the other and the entire region. The nuclear capabilities of both nations add an extra layer of concern to regional security dynamics.
- **Bilateral Relations:** The geopolitical location of India and Pakistan shapes their bilateral relationship. Their shared borders and historical animosities have led to periods of tension and conflict. Disputes over border territories, such as Kashmir, have been central to their relationship. However, There is a common history and culture and there are many challenges faced in each country that can be addressed more effectively if peaceful relations ensue.⁶

- Role in South Asia: India and Pakistan are the two largest and most influential countries in South Asia. Their geopolitical significance affects regional politics, trade, and economic cooperation. Their actions and policies can have ripple effects on neighbouring countries.
- Major Power Interests: Global powers such as the United States, China, and Russia have interests in the stability of the South Asian region. The geopolitical location of India and Pakistan influences how these major powers engage with the region, either through alliances, partnerships, or conflict mediation efforts. The United States has an interest in balancing any future Chinese expansion in Asia, and the Indo-US strategic partnership could play a very important role.¹⁷ The US needs India's partnership to sustain US pre-eminence in this global balance of power and to win the peaceful competition with other powers, especially China and the European Union,⁷
- Trade and Connectivity: Both India and Pakistan serve as key transit routes for trade and connectivity between Central Asia, the Middle East, and South Asia. Their geopolitical location makes them important players in regional trade agreements and initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).
- Energy Routes: The region in which India and Pakistan are located is crucial for energy transportation routes, including oil and natural gas pipelines. The stability of these routes is vital for energy security not only for these countries but also for global energy markets.
- Counterterrorism Efforts: Geopolitical location affects counterterrorism efforts. Both countries have faced challenges from extremist groups and have cooperated to some extent on counterterrorism initiatives. However, their geopolitical differences and domestic politics can impact the effectiveness of such efforts.
- Water Resources: The Indus River, flowing through both countries, is a vital water resource. The geopolitical location affects water-sharing arrangements and can impact water security for both countries and downstream regions.
- Diplomatic Alliances: Their geopolitical location influences their diplomatic alignments. India's policy of non-alignment and its relations with Western and Eastern powers, as well as Pakistan's close ties with certain Gulf countries, are influenced by their geographic position.
- Cross-Border Ethnic and Religious Ties: Geopolitical location affects cross-border ethnic and religious ties. Pakistan's geographic proximity to Afghanistan has implications for regional stability, and India's relations with its neighbors are influenced by its geographic location and historical ties⁸.
- International Mediation: Due to their geopolitical location, India and Pakistan have been subjects of international mediation efforts by organizations like the United Nations and influential countries interested in regional stability.

In summary, the geopolitical location of India and Pakistan has far-reaching implications for regional and global politics, security, trade, and alliances. The history and dynamics of their relationship are deeply intertwined with their geographic positions, influencing their actions and the perceptions of other nations.

6. Conclusion:

In conclusion, the intricate relationship between India and Pakistan is characterized by a complex interplay of historical, geographical, cultural, and strategic factors that have shaped the dynamics between these two South Asian nations. The historical backdrop of the violent partition of British India in 1947 and the subsequent conflicts over territories like Jammu & Kashmir has had a profound impact on their interactions. The ongoing dispute over Kashmir and the reverberations of the partition continue to cast a long shadow on their bilateral relations. The geopolitical context of the region, with both countries possessing nuclear capabilities, adds an additional layer of complexity to their interactions. The military conflicts, such as the wars of 1947-1948, 1965, 1971-1972, and the Kargil conflict, have left scars that contribute to the fragility of the peace between them. The persistence of cross-border terrorism and insurgency further strains the relationship and presents challenges to regional stability. Economic factors, particularly trade relations and resource sharing, also play a pivotal role. The Indus Waters Treaty and the limited trade between the two countries underscore the intertwined nature of their economies, although political tensions have often hindered the realization of their full potential in this area.

Efforts to establish people-to-people connections, like the Kartarpur Corridor, demonstrate that despite their differences, there is potential for cooperation and shared cultural ties that transcend political boundaries. However, these initiatives often exist within the broader context of historical grievances and territorial disputes. Looking ahead, the future of India-Pakistan relations remains uncertain. While there have been instances of diplomatic dialogue and initiatives aimed at building trust, the historical baggage and geopolitical complexities continue to impede substantial progress. The potential for further conflict, particularly in the context of ongoing terrorist activities, underscores the need for both countries to prioritize regional stability and security. Ultimately, the trajectory of India-Pakistan relations will be determined by a combination of factors, including domestic politics, international pressures, and the willingness of both nations to engage in meaningful dialogue. Achieving a lasting resolution to the Kashmir dispute and fostering an environment of trust and cooperation

would not only benefit India and Pakistan but also contribute to regional peace and stability in South Asia. The challenges are significant, but the potential for positive change remains, reminding us of the importance of finding common ground amid a history of complex and multifaceted interactions.

7. References:

1. Waqar-un-Nisa, 'Pakistan-India Equation Determinants, Dynamics and the Outlook', Policy Perspectives, Vol. 14, No. 1, Pakistan and its Neighbors (2017), pp. 23-57
2. Thazha Paul, ed., The India-Pakistan Conflict: An Enduring Rivalry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 33.
3. Christophe Jaffrelot, ed., A History of Pakistan and its Origins, trans., Gillian Beaumont (London: Anthem press, 2008), 112.
4. Pallavi Raghavan, 'The Making of the India-Pakistan Dynamic: Nehru, Liaquat, and the No War Pact correspondence of 1950, Modern Asian Studies 50, 5 (2016) pp. 1645-1678. Cambridge University Press 2016
5. SHREY KHANNA, Interpreting the Perennial Impasse in Indo-Pak Relations, Interpreting the Perennial Impasse in Indo-Pak Relations Asian Survey, MAY / JUNE 2019, Vol. 59, No. 3 (MAY / JUNE 2019), : University of California Press, pp. 474-499
6. Michael Hirsh, Ahmad Hassan Awan and Jayanta Krishna Sarmah,; India and Pakistan: Outlining a Path towards Peace, Policy Perspectives , Vol. 15, No. 1 (2018), : Pluto Journals, pp. 21-42
7. K Subrahmanyam, "Why the United States needs India," Rediff News, Jan. 2, 2006.
8. Siddiq, Ayesha (2004), "Pakistan's Security Perspective: Problems of Linearity" in P. R. Kumara Swamy (ed.), Security Beyond Survival (Essays for K. Subrahmanyam), New Delhi: Sa