

The Impact of CPEC on Pakistan's Strategic Culture



Researcher:

Name: Muhammad Ghaffar

Roll No: 51-FSS/PhDIR/S21

Supervisor:

Name: Prof. Dr Muhammad Khan

Department of Politics and IR, IIUI

Department of Politics and International Relations

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD

2024

The Impact of CPEC on Pakistan's Strategic Culture

Muhammad Ghaffar

Registration Number: 51-FSS/PhDIR/S21

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the PhD. Degree in the Discipline of
Social Sciences with specialisation in International Relations at the Faculty of Social Sciences.

International Islamic University, Islamabad.

Supervisor: Professor Dr. Muhammad Khan

December 2024

DEDICATION

*This dissertation is dedicated with heartfelt gratitude to **Prof. Dr. Ali Muhammad Chaudhary**, former Dean of Social Sciences at Agriculture University Faisalabad, whose inspiration and spiritual guidance have been instrumental in helping me achieve this milestone.*

TABLE OF CONTENT

DEDICATION	iii
TABLE OF CONTENT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	viii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	ix
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES	x
ABSTRACT.....	xi
INTRODUCTION	1
1. Statement of the Problem	10
2. Objectives of the Study	10
3. Research Questions	10
4. Significance of the Study	11
5. Delimitation of the Study	11
6. Literature Review	12
7. Original Contribution to the knowledge	19
8. Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Framework.....	20
9. Research Methodology.....	22
10. Organization of Study	26
CHAPTER ONE	31
Theoretical Framework	31
1.1 Theorizing Realism, Strategic Culture and Geo-economic Theory	34
1.2 Theory of Realism	34
1.2.1 Thucydides as Classical Realist.....	35
1.2.2 Hans Morgenthau and Classical Realism	36
1.2.3 John Mearsheimer and Offensive Realism	37
1.2.4 Kenneth Waltz: Concept of Neo-realism.....	39
1.2.5 Realism and Rise of China	40
1.2.6 Critical Analysis of Impact of CPEC on Pakistan’s Strategic Culture through the Lens of Realism	43
1.2.7 Application of Kenneth Waltz’s Theory of Neo-Realism on the Impact of CPEC on Pakistan’s Strategic Culture	47
1.3 Geo-Economic Theory	48
1.3.1 Geo-economic Theory: Pakistan’s Strategic Culture and its Engagement with China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).....	50
1.3.2 Critical Analysis of Impact of CPEC on Pakistan’s Strategic Culture through the lens of Geo-Economics	54
1.4 Strategic Culture Theory.....	56
1.4.1 Yitzhak Klein: Strategic Cultural Theory	58
1.4.2 Iain Johnston: Strategic Cultural Theory	58
1.4.3 Pakistan’s Strategic Culture and its Engagement with China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)	59
1.4.4 Application of Strategic Culture Theory on the Impact of CPEC on Strategic Culture of Pakistan.....	64

CHAPTER TWO	66
Dynamics of Strategic Culture	66
2.1 Evolution of the Idea and Definitional Debates	68
2.2 Key Elements of Strategic Culture	68
2.3 The Scope of Strategic Culture	70
2.4 Importance of Understanding Strategic Culture in International Relations and Security Studies	71
2.5 Historical Development of the Concept of Strategic Culture	74
2.6 Critiques and Debates	76
2.7 Origins of Strategic Culture as a Concept.....	78
2.8 Foundational Works	80
2.9 Key Contributions and Evolution of Strategic Culture Theory	81
2.10 Theoretical Approaches to Strategic Culture.....	84
2.11 Manifestation of Strategic Culture in Developed Powers.....	87
2.12 Strategic Culture of Major Powers	89
2.12.1 China's Strategic Culture.....	91
2.12.2 Strategic Culture of European Powers.....	94
2.12.3 Strategic Culture of the USA.....	96
2.12.4 Strategic Culture of Russia.....	98
2.13 Strategic Culture of Small States.....	100
2.13.1 Role of Geo-Economics in changing the Strategic Culture of small states	103
2.13.2 Economic Leverage and Strategic Autonomy	105
2.13.3 Participation in Multilateral Economic Institutions.....	106
2.13.4 Soft Power Enhancement	107
2.13.5 Adaptation to Global Economic Shifts	109
2.14 Impact of Economic Initiative on Strategic Culture	110
CHAPTER THREE	117
Evolutionary Phases of Strategic Culture of Pakistan	117
3.1 Concept and Importance of Strategic Culture	117
3.2 Scope of Analysis: From the Advent of Islam to Contemporary Times.....	118
3.2.1 Formative Years of Pakistan's Strategic Culture.....	118
3.3 Early Conflicts and the Shaping of Strategic Outlook	129
3.3.1 1965 War: Implications for Strategic Culture.....	129
3.3.2 1971 War: Implications for Strategic Culture.....	133
3.4 Pakistan's Strategic Posture and Global Alliances	137
3.4.1 Cold War Era: Alliances and Strategic Realignments	138
3.4.2 Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan	143
3.4.3 Post-Cold War Era and the Nuclear Dimension	148
CHAPTER FOUR.....	154
Changing Nature of Conflicts and Transformation of Pakistan's Strategic Culture	154
4.1 Counterterrorism and Regional Stability Concerns.....	154
4.2 War on Terror and Its Strategic Implications.....	156

4.2.1	Local and Regional Implications	156
4.2.2	Transformation of Pakistan's Strategic Landscape	157
4.2.3	Post-9/11 Strategic Adjustments.....	159
4.3	Strategic Partnerships in a Multipolar World.....	161
4.4	Navigating Between Traditional Allies and Emerging Partners.....	163
4.5	Addressing Non-Traditional Security Threats	165
4.6	Influence of Islam on Contemporary Strategic Culture	168
4.7	Geo-Economic Implications on Strategic Culture of Pakistan	176
4.8	CPEC and Economic Corridors as Strategic Assets.....	177
4.9	Geopolitical and Geo-economic Implications.....	179
4.10	Challenges and Future Directions	182
4.11	Historical Continuity and Change in Strategic Culture.....	183
4.12	National Security Policy.....	184
CHAPTER FIVE		187
An Overview of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).....		187
5.1	Impact of CPEC on Pak-China Relationship	188
5.2	Historical Ties between China and Pakistan	189
5.3	The Legacy and Relevance of the Silk Route	190
5.4	The Silk Route's Pivotal Connection to CPEC	191
5.5	Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Part in CPEC.....	192
5.6	CPEC Main Elements.....	199
5.6.1	The Focus on the Advancement of Infrastructure	199
5.6.2	Energy Sector Expansion.....	205
5.6.3	Coal, Hydro, and Solar Energy Initiatives	209
5.6.4	Special Economic Zones (SEZs) Under CPEC.....	212
5.7	Implementation Phases of CPEC: Early Harvest Projects and Key Impact	214
5.8	Economic Implications of CPEC Projects	216
5.9	Social Impact and Human Development.....	216
5.10	Stakeholders and Partnerships in CPEC.....	217
5.11	Governmental Bodies and Agencies in CPEC Implementation	217
5.12	Overview of International and Regional Collaborations in CPEC.....	220
CHAPTER SIX.....		224
Evaluating the Impact of CPEC on Strategic Culture of Pakistan		224
6.1	Conceptualising the Shift in Pakistan's Strategic Culture Definition and Understanding of Strategic Culture within the Pakistani Context	224
6.2	Analysis of the Pre-CPEC strategic culture of Pakistan, emphasising its traditional security-centric focus	227
6.3	Elucidation of the Concept of Geo-Economic Strategies and Their Relevance to Contemporary Strategic Thinking	229
6.4	CPEC as a Catalyst for Strategic Cultural Transformation	231
6.5	Discussion on how CPEC Serves as a Bridge Between Pakistan's Geo-strategic Priorities and Its Geo-Economic Aspirations.....	233

6.6 Analysis of Policy Documents, Speeches, and Strategic Communiqués to Illustrate the Government's Recognition of CPEC's Role in Strategic Culture Transformation.....	236
6.7 Key Developments and Components of CPEC Influencing Pakistan's Strategic Culture	240
6.8 Case Studies on Specific CPEC Projects and Their Direct and Indirect Impacts on Pakistan's Strategic Policies and Posture.....	242
6.9 Examination of the Economic Corridors, Energy Cooperation, and Infrastructural Development as Elements Redefining Pakistan's Strategic Priorities	244
6.10 Impact Assessment of CPEC on Pakistan's Strategic Culture	246
Major Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations	247
Major Findings.....	247
Policy Implications for Pakistan's National Security and Foreign Relations.....	252
Concluding Observations.....	253
Key Recommendations	254
Conclusion.....	259
REFERENCES	261
Appendix I	289
Interview Guide	289

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I express profound gratitude to my supervisor, **Professor Dr. Muhammad Khan**, for his unwavering and selfless guidance throughout my research journey. His steadfast support was crucial in transforming the dream of my PhD into reality. My heartfelt thanks extend to the esteemed faculty and staff of Politics and IR Department, for their invaluable support during my doctoral studies.

I extend my deepest gratitude to my selfless mother, whose unwavering prayers have supported me at every step of the dissertation process. I also honor the memory of my late father, who sacrificed his every comfort to secure a better and prosperous future for me. With heartfelt appreciation, I acknowledge the steadfast support of my fatherly figure, Mr. Khalid Aziz, whose guidance has helped me navigate the challenges of life. I am profoundly thankful to my three sisters, whose unconditional help and prayers have been a constant source of strength and encouragement.

I am deeply indebted to my wife, whose unwavering and unparalleled support has been the cornerstone of my journey. My heartfelt gratitude extends to my dearly loved children, Haider Ali, Muhammad Hashir, and Hassan Ali, whose constant encouragement and countless sacrifices have been fundamental to my diligent efforts. Words fall short in expressing my profound appreciation for the love and dedication they have shown throughout this journey.

I am truly fortunate to have Dr. Qasim Ali Shah as a senior, colleague, and friend, whose invaluable material, moral, and technical support has greatly contributed to the completion of my thesis. I extend my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Idrees Janjua, who served as a guiding light during the challenging moments of my academic journey, offering his unwavering assistance whenever I encountered obstacles in my research. I am also deeply grateful to my true friends and brotherly figures, Mr. Bilal Yousaf and Mr. Rahim, for their steadfast moral and material support and for fostering an environment that allowed me to work with greater focus and dedication.

I am sincerely grateful to Raja Yasin, Mr. Rehan, and Dr. Farooq for their readiness to provide clarification and guidance whenever I needed it. Additionally, I would like to express my profound appreciation to Dr. Muhammad Ibrar Shinwari, Associate Professor at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Basic Sciences (CIRBS) and Provost of Men's Hostels at IIU, whose steadfast support was invaluable in helping me navigate university affairs throughout my degree journey, from admission to graduation.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADB - Asian Development Bank

AID - Agency for International Development

AIIB - Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

BRI - Belt and Road Initiative

CPEC - China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

EHP – Early Harvest Project

FATA - Federally Administered Tribal Areas

FDI - Foreign Direct Investment

FTA - Free Trade Agreement

IMF - International Monetary Fund

IPE - International Political Economy

KPK - Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

MNCs - Multinational Corporations

NPT - Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

OIC - Organization of Islamic Cooperation

SAARC - South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

SCO - Shanghai Cooperation Organization

TTP - Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan

WB - World Bank

WTO - World Trade Organization

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Table 1: Data Collection Tools	Page 22
Table 1: Data Analysis Process	Page 26
Fig 1 : Strategic Culture and Decision-Making Process	Page 73

ABSTRACT

Strategic culture is instrumental in shaping the security behaviour of states. Like any other state, the attributes of Pakistan's strategic culture shape Pakistan's security and foreign policies. These attributes include troubled relations with India since their independence, reinforced by historical narratives and a strong distrust, aversion to an Indian-dominated region, and an active search for security to maintain its independence in the realm of foreign policy. Shifting international economic and security priorities have brought China into close cooperation with Pakistan through China- Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Moreover, CPEC is bound to have geopolitical and geo-strategic implications for Pakistan. In the aftermath of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Pakistan, historically characterised as a security state, has strategically embraced geo-economics alongside its traditional geo-strategic orientation. This shift poses a compelling inquiry into the evolution of Pakistan's strategic culture and the transformative impact of CPEC on its security policy. As Pakistan integrates geo-economics as a supplemental tool, understanding the nature of its strategic culture becomes imperative for comprehending post-CPEC security dynamics. This scenario might be compelling the state of Pakistan to readjust its foreign and national security policies under its new emerging strategic priorities, thus transforming Pakistan's strategic culture. This study will explore that how Pakistan's strategic culture is transformed with the CPEC.

KEYWORDS: China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Pakistan's Strategic Culture, Geo-economics, Geo-Economic Strategies, Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), National Security Strategy

INTRODUCTION

Once discussed as a subset of political culture, culture has different meanings and definitions. (Astrada 2019). One of the most common and used definitions of culture describes the concept as ‘historically transmitted patterns of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic form using which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life’ (Lantis 2002) .While discussing the term in International Relations, most of those who use the term "culture" tend to argue, explicitly or implicitly, that different states have different predominant strategic preferences that are rooted in the early or formative experiences of the state, and are influenced to some degree by the philosophical, political, cultural, and cognitive characteristics of the state and its elite (Johnston 1995).

In the past few decades, the concept of strategic culture surfaced in the field of International Relations as a theory based on the culture to explain the strategic behaviour of the states. Initially, the origin was to study the relations between United States and USSR in their interaction in the era of Cold War. Later, the concept expanded to the other major powers and the study of foreign policy and security studies at the microscopic level. The concept explains that every nation has unique characteristics which reflect its decision-making (Anand 2020).

A strategic culture is defined as a style of a nation that is distinctive in nature and exists in that state's military and security domain. The background of the concept of strategic culture can be traced to B. H. Liddell-Hart in 1930 when he theorised the traditional ways of British warfare having culture as a distinctive element, whereas Booth (1990) emphasised the strategist to be more conscious about the role of culture in their thinking. (Sondhaus 2009). The original and major contribution to the concept and term was given by Jack Synder, who explained the

importance of strategic culture while explaining the Soviet strategies (Johnston 1995). Jack Snyder's definition¹ of strategic culture offered an in-depth understanding of military and security strategies. Strategic culture represents the sum of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and habitual behaviour patterns that members of a national strategic community acquire through instruction or imitation and share with each other.

Strategic culture, far from being a mere theoretical concept, plays a pivotal role in shaping a nation's strategic objectives, political wisdom, and the use of military power. It serves as a practical guide that significantly influences a nation's decisions and actions. (Jack L. Snyder 1977). The strategic styles of a state are deeply rooted in its historical experience, a factor that often goes unnoticed. These styles are significantly influenced by the nation's history, which plays a crucial role in the defense of the state (Booth 1990) defines strategic culture as "A nation's traditions, values, attitudes, patterns of behaviour, habits, customs, achievements and particular ways of adapting to the environment and solving problems with respect to the threat or use of force" (Booth 1990).

According to Deutsch, Foreign Policy Decision making is a continuous process of "mixing, blending, analysing, and selective use of the contents of three separate streams of information. One of these is the stream of messages from the outside world; the second is the stream from the actor's own system and resources; the third is the stream of messages recalled from memory" (Khan 2012) These three streams of information are the sum total which makes a lens through which the decision makers see the conflict and react accordingly. In most cases, decision-making becomes the default in nature, and one can determine how a particular state will react in a scenario.

¹ Strategic culture represents the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behavior that members of a national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation and share with each other.

Strategic culture is “a collectivity of beliefs, norms, values, and historical experiences of the dominant elite in a polity that influences their understanding and interpretation of security issues and environment and shapes their responses. Notwithstanding these comments, strategic culture is important for understanding the security policymakers' disposition, responses, and decisions. It offers a better understanding of how the leaders will react to a security situation and the options they will likely go for. The study of strategic culture focuses on the historical experiences and narratives of the policymakers, their perceptions of the adversary's intentions and capabilities and the challenges they encounter in their interaction with the rest of the world, especially the immediate neighbours. It considers the policymakers' beliefs, values, and orientations concerning these security issues. Here, strategic culture is a generator of preferences, a vehicle for the preservation of values, and a force of action in the revival of these values. Rosen's characterization of strategic culture as the “beliefs and assumptions that frame decisions to go to war, preferences for offensive, expansionist or defensive modes of warfare, and levels of wartime casualties that would be acceptable” also blurs the line by including reference to the rules that might govern conduct in war (Lantis 2009).

Explaining strategic culture concerning newly formed nation-states that are still evolving and discovering their identity is challenging. Strategic culture in new states is affected by two factors: the regional security situation and the local political culture (Khan 2005). Pakistan has a unique strategic position accompanied by its diverse geo-strategic location compared to other South Asian countries. However, the evolution of its strategic culture has seen the evolutionary variants of our strategic thinking (Rizvi, 2023). To answer how this study develops an understanding of Pakistan's Strategic Culture, it is important to understand the essential ingredients of this ‘Strategic Culture’ which are that India is the source of security threats that have never accepted the creation of Pakistan and will do everything possible to undo it; Islam is the basis for Pakistan's existence and useful protection. The gradual development of a

particular strategic culture and mindset is traced by adapting Prof. Karl Deutsch's three streams of information model and different inputs into the decision-making process. This 'Strategic culture' and a particular mindset make Pakistani foreign policy responses and not some well-thought-out system of decision-making that weighs different options (Khan 2012). To be correct, 'Strategic Culture' develops and exists in every society, but that works in certain systems, especially in democratic societies. There is popular, educated, and academic debate, as well as independent inputs and analysis of different policy responses to events or policies of others. In Pakistan, policy responses come from this mindset, with strong individuals sometimes giving them some personal style.

A country's strategic culture provides it with fundamental thinking and direction along with a socio-cultural power base to direct its strategic thinking. Strategic culture helps a country define its foreign policy priorities and decide on its emerging security dilemmas (Hyder 2022). There are two factors which affect its strategic culture: local political culture and regional security (Khan 2005). Notwithstanding having different social, religious, and cultural divergences, Pakistan-China relations remained cordial throughout history (Ahmad, Mi, and Fernald 2020).

Pakistan's strategic culture can be traced back to 1857, when resistance against the British Raj started (Fisher 2000b). However, with its birth in 1947, Pakistan inherited the mercantile and social hierarchy from the British Empire, which was mercantile-oriented, and the institutional legacy was extractive (which was nonproductive after 1947). With its independence, it brought along territorial disputes with three of its neighbours, India, Afghanistan and China, which made Pakistan a security state (Khan 2023). Just one year after its independence, Pakistan fought its first war with India on territorial disputes in Kashmir. In a strategic move, being a new state, Pakistan joined SEATO in 1954 and CENTO in 1956 to counter India while joining

the Western bloc (Faruqui 2001). Since its beginning, due to multiple threats, Pakistan tried to resolve social, political, economic and security issues through its security apparatus. The wars of 1965 and 1971 further intensified Pakistan's position to be a security state.

Some determinants of strategic culture are permanent, including the historical experiences of the state, perceptions of adversaries and self-conception. Understanding any crisis requires a thorough review of the situation or the fact that the crisis may differ. Though the review of any situation is done in the backdrop of permanent determinants of strategic culture, sometimes, the new situation or phenomenon compels policymakers to look for other options in international politics in the realm of technology and diplomacy. Sometimes, policy measures are equally dictated by the realism and strategic culture perspective and may lead to the same or similar policy options. Considering the regional power imbalance in favour of India and the resource constraints of Pakistan in the mid-1950s and early 1980s, the decision taken by Pakistan to seek U.S. military assistance is better explained concerning realism as well as Pakistan's strategic culture.

The era of populism started in the decade of 70s when the issues were to be resolved through welfare (Baxter and Jalal 1997). The Smiling Buddha and the testing of nuclear weapons by India again compelled the state to re-adjust its security priorities by keeping the aspect of the welfare state at the back, thus returning to securitisation in 1976. This had destabilising effects in South Asia (Kapur 2008). In 1979, Pakistan became the client state and joined the US against the USSR's expansion; thus, Pakistan's strategic culture was reoriented when Pakistan faced threats from India and the USSR (Weinbaum 1991). Later, as per the Pressler agreement, the US provided military and economic assistance to Pakistan, thus again depending on the state for foreign assistance (Ganguly and Kapur 2023). From 1990 to 1999, four governments were changed amid economic pressure.

Another opportunity arose in the form of 9/11, where Pakistan joined the US in the war against terror, compelling the state of Pakistan to re-adjust itself according to the dictates of time, thus again going towards securitisation. During the war on terror, China entered the international landscape within the context of China's Peaceful Development Road in December 2005. The Chinese leadership outlined the strategy for peaceful development, economic cooperation and trade, multilateralism, sovereignty, and sustainable development (Dunford and Liu 2019). Between China and Pakistan, bilateral relations, economic cooperation, and Gwadar Port development was strengthened. This era marks the start of a new era for Pakistan to reorient itself from predominantly securitisation to the economy. In 2011, under Obama's administration, the US "Pivot to Asia" policy aimed to counterbalance China's rising influence (Silove 2016). The year 2015 was important in the history of China and Pakistan once the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), as a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), was formally inaugurated during the state visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Pakistan (Javed and Ismail 2021). It started a new era of partnership between the two countries. Grasping this opportunity, Pakistan's elite civil and military leadership realised the need to shift its strategic priorities from security to the economy for the first time in history (Hussain , Khan, and Ayaz 2021).

Since Pakistan lacks domestic resources and its economy depends on foreign support, its strategic doctrine cannot be pursued without external cooperation. For this reason, military planners mostly favour their security relations with the United States. Besides keeping strong security relations with United States, Pakistan's relations with China are of equal importance as China is an important neighbour for building strong defence capability for Pakistan (Rizvi 2002). The close relationship and the regional integration in South Asia have the potential to impact the geo-strategic and geo-economic landscape of the important South Asian region. History shows that the complex relationship between Afghanistan, Pakistan and India has

influenced geopolitical landscape. (Wani 2022). With Xi Jinping becoming the President of China and resuming power in 2013, China's foreign and economic policies are undergoing dynamic changes. The CPEC project worth \$64 Billion, which is part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), is double the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to Pakistan in the last decade (Hyder 2022). The 2500 kilometers inside Pakistan, the project will save up to 12,000 kilometres of China. Besides its economic significance, the project of CPEC is liable to have strategic implications for the South Asia region. The Gwadar Port in the province of Balochistan increases the strategic importance of the CPEC project, dubbed as a geopolitical game-changer in the wider South Asian region or a flagship for the Belt and Road Initiative. China and Pakistan's collaboration in attaining regional integration can alter the regional geopolitical and geo-strategic dynamics. CPEC is a step toward benefiting Pakistan, China, and the whole region. The role of regional and extra-regional actors in undermining and threatening the CPEC cannot be ignored. India, Iran, Afghanistan and the USA could create security challenges for CPEC (Mughis and Siddiqui 2021). CPEC will mainly benefit China and Pakistan, hence, USA, India, Afghanistan, and Iran may create security problems for CPEC (Ismail and Husnain 2022).

BRI has impacted China's foreign policy, and Pakistan, being the host of CPEC, is also liable to change its foreign policy, which is based on strategic thinking and strategic culture (Farwa 2018). Although the CPEC project is primarily an economic initiative that will link many regional and extra-regional countries, but the volatile situation in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East has made it more of a strategic project.

Short-term diplomacy is the result of Pakistan being forced to improvise radically different diplomatic responses in the face of different and severe challenges in its international relations. India's existential threat has always been the overriding challenge in Pakistan's international

relations. The shift of alliances in its region between the U.S., China, Russia and India prompted Pakistan to pivot alliances alternately between the U.S. and China while maintaining a difficult balancing act. In the current scenario, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has recently provided an opportunity to shift Pakistan's Foreign Policy (Hyder 2022).

CPEC is a trade connectivity route consisting of highways, railways, infrastructure, energy projects, special economic zones and oil supply lines. It is a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) with immense economic potential and geopolitical significance. CPEC is one of the key nodes in the BRI, connecting China's underdeveloped western province - Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region – traversing through Pakistan from North to South at the Gwadar Port and beyond; entering from Khunjrab Pass and running through parts of Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, KPK provinces and Gilgit Baltistan; with its final foot in Arabian Sea through Gwadar Port in Balochistan (Khan 2022).

In May 2013, during the visit of the Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang to Pakistan, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor agreement was signed. Various projects will be completed under the CPEC until 2030. The CPEC is a holistic, comprehensive package of competitive economic initiatives from China (Afridi and Khalid 2016).

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has significantly impacted Pakistan's strategic culture in several ways, including economic development, strategic partnership with China and enhanced military cooperation. CPEC has provided Pakistan with economic growth and development opportunities by investing in key infrastructure projects such as energy generation and transportation. This has resulted in increased economic activity, job creation and improved living standards for the people of Pakistan. CPEC has deepened the strategic partnership between Pakistan and China, reflected in their joint efforts to enhance economic cooperation and improve regional stability. This has given Pakistan greater confidence in its foreign policy,

as it now has a powerful ally to help protect its interests. CPEC has also increased military cooperation between the two countries, which has helped Pakistan to enhance its security posture. This is evident in China's commitment to providing military equipment and training to the Pakistan military, which has helped to improve its overall capability. Overall, CPEC has helped shape Pakistan's strategic culture by providing it with greater economic, military and geostrategic advantages, strengthening its position in the region and beyond.

It is not precise to say that the change in Pakistan's strategic culture is solely due to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and not globalisation. While CPEC has certainly impacted Pakistan's strategic culture, it is important to consider the wider context of global economic, political, and technological developments that have also shaped Pakistan's strategic culture. Globalisation has brought increased interconnectedness and interdependence among nations, and has influenced Pakistan's foreign policy and economic strategy and its strategic culture. Additionally, CPEC is itself a manifestation of larger trends in globalisation and regional integration and, therefore, cannot be separated from these broader forces (Fatima, Baig, and Shah 2019).

With a history of a certain strategic culture, CPEC imperatively has implications on Pakistan's strategic thinking that lead to a change in its strategic culture in the long run. Taking this as a point of departure, this study focuses on the strategic implications of CPEC in the context of Pakistan's strategic culture, although it influences the decision-making process even in economic projects, the role of perceptions, behaviour, and cultural norms is largely ignored. Decision-making is not an abstract concept, rather, it is highly enmeshed in a nation's civil and military elites' collective values, ideas, beliefs, and biases. According to strategic culture theorists, these beliefs and perceptions are considered constitutive elements in designing and

executing a nation's security policies (Farwa 2018). Strategists and foreign policy-making elites do not formulate policies and strategies in a static environment.

1. Statement of the Problem

This study examines the transformative role of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in reorienting Pakistan's strategic culture from a predominantly security-centric approach to one that integrates geo-economic considerations. Historically perceived as a security-focused state, Pakistan's engagement with China marks a significant shift, embracing geo-economic strategies complementing its traditional geostrategic policies that may lead towards reorientating Pakistan's strategic culture. Considering this shift, there is a need to understand the evolution and current dynamics of CPEC vis-a-vis Pakistan's strategic culture. This research study seeks to unravel the integration of geo-economic strategies with traditional security concerns in reshaping Pakistan's strategic culture.

2. Objectives of the Study

- To elucidate the evolution, mechanisms, and importance of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)
- To understand the strategic culture, elucidating its evolution, components, and analytical approaches
- To explore the evolution of Pakistan's strategic culture in changing geopolitical and economic landscapes
- To evaluate the impact of CPEC on Pakistan's strategic culture

3. Research Questions

- What is the evolution, dynamics and significance of CPEC?

- What are the foundational elements of strategic culture, and how has the concept evolved, including its key components and analytical approaches?
- How has Pakistan's strategic culture evolved in relation to CPEC?
- What impact has CPEC had on Pakistan's strategic culture, particularly in the context of shifting geopolitical and geo-economic trends?

4. Significance of the Study

The original contribution of this thesis to the knowledge base lies in its holistic examination of CPEC's impact on Pakistan's strategic culture, offering a fresh theoretical and empirical insights. The study not only elucidates the components and evolution of Pakistan's strategic culture considering CPEC but also evaluates the broader geopolitical and geo-economic trends influencing these dynamics. By integrating neo-realism and strategic culture theory with geoeconomic analysis, this research contributes a novel framework for assessing the strategic ramifications of economic development projects. Furthermore, it provides policymakers, strategists, and academics with a detailed understanding of how economic initiatives like CPEC can catalyse strategic transformation. This contribution is particularly significant in increasing global interest in geoeconomic strategies and their implications for international relations, making this study a valuable reference for future research on similar initiatives worldwide.

5. Delimitation of the Study

The scope of this dissertation is deliberately focused on the impact of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) on Pakistan's strategic culture, marking a clear delimitation in terms of geographical and thematic focus. While CPEC's influence is vast, encompassing economic, social, and environmental dimensions, this study specifically delves into the strategic and geopolitical implications, limiting the exploration of how these aspects alter Pakistan's strategic culture. The research was bounded by the time frame from CPEC's

inception to the present, providing a contemporary analysis but not speculating on long-term future impacts beyond the available data and current trends.

Additionally, the study predominantly relied on qualitative methods, including interviews and focus group discussions, besides analysing the documents, to understand the changes in strategic culture. This methodological choice delimits the research from quantitative assessments of economic impacts, focusing instead on interpretive insights into strategic thinking and policy orientations. The selection of participants for interviews and focus groups was confined to experts, policymakers, and academicians with direct knowledge or involvement in strategic culture and CPEC, thus concentrating on informed perspectives while acknowledging that the diversity of views outside this expert group may not be fully represented.

6. Literature Review

There is a clear dearth of academic literature on the Impact of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) on Pakistan's Strategic Culture. Although much has been written on CPEC and Strategic Culture of Pakistan separately, there is no study that could have highlighted the transformative impact of CPEC on Pakistan's strategic culture, which is the backbone of the security outlook of a state. Many scholars have discussed Pakistan's strategic culture at length, keeping in view its strategic compulsions and historical legacy. However, few scholars have highlighted its significance in a shift from geopolitical to geoeconomic priorities.

Comparative Strategic Culture: The Case of Pakistan Strategic Insights is an important account of the determinants of Pakistan's strategic culture. It explains Pakistan's internal and external choices in forming its strategic culture. It highlights that the military, bureaucracy, and people in foreign affairs are the keepers of Pakistan's strategic culture. The dominance of the military is due to the intense security environment. The trauma of Kashmir, Indian dominance,

Afghanistan issues, and its alignment with China are the important external factors of Pakistan's strategic culture. Some traits of Pakistan's strategic culture include the image of oneself as second to none and the image of the adversary, i.e., India, which lead to strategic choices. Strategic culture determines state behaviour and responses to emerging threats and policy courses. The weaker states either bandwagon or seek to balance. Pakistan always opts to create a balance with India. The article also explains the history of Pakistan's external alliances with the USA and China. It also highlights the importance of the nuclear factor in strategic culture. The article concludes that in strategic culture, Pakistan's behaviour is predictable in many ways as Pakistan will not seek parity with India but will try to retain initiative and balance. Pakistan will also try to keep a balance between USA and China (Khan 2005).

Economic Development and Military Effectiveness discusses the importance of the military, stating, "military power influences patterns of international cooperation, trade policy, economic development, identity construction, and of course, war causation and termination". The author argues that there is a strong correlation between economic development and military effectiveness. Economically stronger countries can achieve stronger military capability. Economically stable countries can create more effective militaries through modernisation and technological cooperation.(Beckley 2010).

Subcontinent Adrift: Strategic Futures of South Asia is a comprehensive book which addresses the different eras of Pakistan's strategic culture and foreign policy making. The work of Mr. Khan highlights the importance of India's rising power at the regional level and China as an emerging power at the global level, challenging the USA. Though the work of the author is relevant, yet it does not cater for the change in strategic culture of Pakistan amid the CPEC as flagship project of BRI (Khan 2022).

The Politics of Interdependence: A Case of China Pakistan Economic Corridor used the paradigm of interdependence to analyse the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. The study highlighted that interdependence is a broad term and has a reciprocal effect amongst states on a wide range of issues, not limited to political-military interdependence but also to political-economic interdependence. In the case of CPEC's completion, it seems to be a complex interdependence (Afridi and Khalid 2016).

Pakistan's Strategic Culture and Foreign Policy Making: A Study of Pakistan's Post-9/11 Afghan Policy Change is a detailed account of Pakistan's strategic culture. *It highlights its importance and role in foreign policy-making. The book focuses on post-9/11 policy and does not address* the CPEC and its impact on Pakistan's strategic culture. (Khan 2012).

Revisiting the potential security threats linked with the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) highlights the positive outcomes of CPEC and Gwadar Port development. It highlights the threats associated with CPEC and Gwadar Port. It highlights that CPEC will integrate the other subregions of Asia, which will be detrimental to improving the economic and strategic environment in the region. The study lacks a detailed study on the impacts on the foreign policy-making of Pakistan due to changes in its strategic culture (Ahmad, Mi, and Fernald 2020).

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Opportunities and Challenges for Implementation is a comprehensive examination, and this study seeks to shed light on the transformative potential of CPEC while addressing the concerns and hurdles that may impede its successful implementation. By identifying strategies to tackle these challenges, this research aims to contribute to realising CPEC's envisioned benefits and regional integration beyond Asia to Europe. The study mainly focused on the economic aspects and did not cater for its strategic implications (Alam, Hussain, and Bogheiry 2023).

Understanding Pak-China Relations Through CPEC: Geostrategic Implications for South Asia highlighted geo-political and geo-strategic aspects of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and marked it as a major trade and investment for the geopolitics of the future. The study also focused on China and Pakistan's shared goals and objectives in the region. It also focuses on the emerging Pak-US relations and the role of India from the neo-realistic perspective. Foreign policy options of Pakistan are discussed with a focus on their impact on Pakistan's strategic culture, which compels the state to adopt a particular foreign policy option that has not been covered (Iftikhar Ali, Noonari, and Mahesar 2021).

Importance of CPEC a Crown Jewel of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) For China and Pakistan focuses on the linkage of CPEC with BRI initiative. It highlights how important CPEC is for BRI as a flagship project. The article signifies that the project will have dividends beyond Pakistan to the Middle East and Central Asia (Ali 2022).

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: prospects and challenges, discusses the geo-sectoral significance of CPEC besides its socioeconomic leverages. The article further exacerbates the geopolitical situation of South Asia, which could lead to tension between Pakistan and India, as India considers it a security project (Ali 2020).

Pakistan's Strategic Culture described the general contours of Pakistan's national security policy, predicted Pakistan's strategic culture through three separate theoretical approaches, and then evaluated these predictions against the historical data on Pakistan's specific policies. The analysis is designed not only to test leading international relations theories but also generated important insights about the key features of Pakistan's current and future strategic conduct (Lavoy 2006).

Strategic Dimensions of CPEC: Role of Regional and International Powers explained the importance of the Pak-China strategic partnership and the convergence of their interests over CPEC and Gwadar port. The article highlights that CPEC will increase Pakistan's regional strategic strength and serve as a deterrence for India. The article has linked Pakistan and China's security as mutually inclusive due to the CPEC. They have elaborated on three determinants of the strategic culture of Pakistan. *Studying Pakistan's Strategic Culture and Foreign Policy* lays down its theoretical basis. The books discuss the theories applicable to Pakistan's strategic culture (Latif and Zia 2020).

Fighting to the End: The Pakistan Army's Way of War explains the framework for the army's strategic culture and identifies the implications for Pakistan's behaviour over the near term. It argues that policies of appeasement, such as helping to secure a resolution of Kashmir, may encourage Pakistan's persistent revisionism rather than vitiate it. Christine Fair argues that the answer lies, at least partially, in the army's strategic culture. Through an unprecedented analysis of decades' worth of the army's defence publications, she concludes that from the army's distorted view of history, it is victorious if it can resist India's purported drive for regional hegemony as well as the territorial status quo (Fair 2014).

Explaining Pakistan's Foreign Policy, Escaping India discussed Pakistan from its inception as a separate state; Pakistan's foreign policy focused on 'seeking parity' with India and 'escaping' from an Indian South Asian identity. The desire to achieve parity with its much larger neighbour led Pakistan to seek the assistance and support of allies. The author analyses the relationship Pakistan has with Afghanistan, the United States, China, and the Muslim world and looks at how these relationships are based on the desire that military, economic and diplomatic aid from these countries would bolster Pakistan's meagre resources in countering Indian economic and military strength (Pande 2011).

Compulsions of Sino-Pakistani Strategic Engagement instead of Security Constraints Engendered by the Anarchistic International Political System is an analysis is made of how and why Pakistan-China relations have emerged in strategic partnership with an altogether different history, culture, and ideology to counter the regional and international challenges (Hussain et al. 2014).

The China-Pakistan axis: Asia's new geopolitics presented a brief but meaningful account of the bilateral ties between China and Pakistan and their implications on the region's geopolitics. Primarily, the book addressed two substantial issues. First, it is an attempt to unfold the basis of China-Pakistan relations from the time of the Cold War until 2015, and second, it also examines the geopolitics of South Asia in the context of China-Pakistan relations (Small 2015).

China Engages Asia? Caveat Lector offers an up-to-date and broad analysis of China's emerging influence on international relations in Asia. It explores the various dimensions of China's rise, its influence on the region, the consequences for the United States, and alternative models of the evolving Asian order (Khoo, Smith, and Shambaugh 2005).

Taking Stock of Asia-Pacific's Tangible Power Changes: Measuring Aggregate Power, probes if a power shift has occurred in the Asia-Pacific region after the end of the Cold War. This book challenges the perception that economically and militarily more powerful China is automatically turning the regional tides in its favour. By systematically examining the development of power dynamics in Asia-Pacific with a special emphasis on Sino-US competition, the book explores the alleged linkage between the regional distribution of relevant material and immaterial capabilities, national power, and the much-cited regional power shift (Enrico 2017).

Testing China's rise. China–Pakistan relations discussed the importance of Pakistan as a

country that occupies a unique space in China's foreign policy. Guided by six major objectives, with its biggest concern on counter-terrorism cooperation, China has suggested a multi-pronged advancement to overcome this problem. First is the political level, where China has begun a revision of its policy towards the Taliban, second, for countering extremism, China is enhancing the capacity of Pakistan's military, and third, direct actions on countering terrorism have been initiated by both countries. It highlights China's growing cooperation in the program of Pakistan's strategic weapons, intensification of nuclear cooperation, bilateral engagement regarding outer-space and provincial level cooperation, decrease of their reliance on the US dollar, and diversification of their foreign exchange reserves. Grabbing the initiative, China is looking into advancing a comprehensive approach to Pakistan and Afghanistan, including integration to maintain the rise of China. (Kondapalli 2012).

The Foundations of Pakistan's Strategic Culture: Fears of an Irredentist India, Muslim Identity, Martial Race, and Political Realism work highlights the Pakistan Army's strategic culture. The research explores the causes and impacts of partition as the main pivot in developing early foundations of the strategic culture of the Pakistan Army. It also explains the Pakistani fear of a "vengeful" Hindu India and a persistence in the belief of discredited martial race theories as well as the idea of Muslim military exceptionalism; the article concludes that the foundation of this culture remains evident while it is also malleable to contemporaneous events. The article also explains the basis of Pakistan's strategic culture, which is embedded in adversary India and the basis of ideology for getting a separate homeland (Briskey 2022a).

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Its Implications for Security Cooperation in the Region explain how the economy is strengthening the relations between China and Pakistan. The article highlights that the bilateral relations between Pakistan and China, besides the economy, are strengthening in the military sphere (Linowski and Lukas 2021).

CPEC: Shifting Sands in Pakistan's Foreign Policy is an important account for understanding Pakistan's foreign policy and its development, paradigm shift, and future in terms of CPEC. The article also highlights the security issues faced by Pakistan, which led to its instability and futuristic view of how Pakistan's foreign policy will shift after the CPEC project (Hyder 2022).

South Asia in 2020: Future Strategic Balances and Alliances, defines strategic culture which is based on the norms, values, and beliefs of a society and it acts like a prism to see and interpret the challenges and adopt a particular course of action. It explains that the strategic culture can also change with external devolvement and a state creates alliances (Chambers 2002).

Belt and Road: A Chinese World Order considers BRI as most ambitious geopolitical initiative of the time. The author highlights that the project of BRI will cover almost seventy countries and has given each initiative as a security initiative. It also focuses on China as becoming a superpower by controlling the world economy and considers China as new centre of capitalism and globalisation (Mações 2019).

7. Original Contribution to the knowledge

This study on "The Impact of CPEC on Pakistan's Strategic Culture" holds critical academic and strategic importance, as it ventures into the relatively unexplored intersection of geoeconomics and strategic culture within the South Asian context. This research filled a significant gap in the existing literature by examining the evolution, components, and impacts of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) on Pakistan's strategic culture. It offered a unique understanding of how economic corridors influence national security policies and strategic decision-making processes. The findings promised to contribute to theoretical advancements in international relations and strategic studies, providing valuable insights for policymakers, strategists, and scholars interested in the dynamics of strategic culture in response to major economic initiatives.

Moreover, the study is poised to provide policy formulation and strategic planning guidelines by highlighting the strategic dimensions of economic development projects like CPEC. It elucidates the complex interplay between economic growth initiatives and national security considerations, offering a comprehensive global analysis relevant to Pakistan and similar geopolitical contexts. By enhancing understanding of this interplay, the research aimed to guide the development of informed policies that balance economic objectives with strategic imperatives, thus contribute to regional stability and constructive international engagement.

8. Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Framework

A theory acts as an anchor point in social sciences studies without which the researchers are likely to astray and deviate from their topic and, at times, the discipline. Theories can be seen as such lenses; competent analysis requires knowledge of the potentials and limits of the different options (Jørgensen 2010). However, there are certain areas where no generalised theory exists, or the contest between theorists is such that it makes the issue at hand elusive instead of illuminating it. Strategic culture is one area where the lack of a general theory renders the idea elusive, and every theorist sticks to his understanding of it. Most scholars dealing with strategic culture have focused on what it does and overlooked what it is or why it exists. This problem is rooted in the different strategic cultures of states as no two states share the same strategic culture.

Similarly, strategic cultures usually persist and resist change, but when societies undergo significant transformation, it is reflected in the change in strategic culture. In Pakistan's case, the exogenous determinants of strategic culture are changing, like the geopolitical environment and regional politics but the indigenous determinants are more stable. The inheritance of two troubled borders, India and Afghanistan, and existential security concerns since independence still cast a shadow on the strategic culture through threat perception.

Realist Theory, rooted in the principles of political realism, posits that states operating within an anarchic international system prioritise power and national security to understand their behaviour. Key contributors like Hans Morgenthau, Kenneth Waltz, and John Mearsheimer have provided perspectives within this theoretical framework. Morgenthau's Classical Realism underscores a pursuit of power based on human nature, Waltz's Neorealism emphasises the anarchic structure's influence on state behaviour, and Mearsheimer's Offensive Realism suggests that states inherently seek dominance (Humphreys 2013). In applying Realist Theory to Pakistan's involvement with CPEC, this framework can elucidate Pakistan's strategic engagement, viewing CPEC to enhance national security, navigate regional power dynamics, and engage in strategic competition under Neorealism (structured realism).

Geoeconomic Theory further complements this analysis by exploring how economic tools can serve geopolitical ends. As articulated by Edward Luttwak, this theory highlights the strategic use of economic policies and infrastructure projects for national advantage (Luttwak 1990). It positions CPEC as a strategic economic initiative for China and Pakistan, with Pakistan leveraging the corridor for enhanced security and regional influence. This reflects the geoeconomic imperatives of infrastructure development, energy security, and trade facilitation.

Finally, strategic culture theory emphasises historical experiences and cultural values and enriches Pakistan's understanding of strategic decisions regarding CPEC. It posits that Pakistan's historical context and strategic culture shape its engagement with CPEC, influencing perceptions of national security and strategic policy directions (Khan 2012). Through these theoretical lenses, the dissertation aims to dissect the multifaceted impact of CPEC on Pakistan's strategic priorities, contributing to the understanding of international relations and strategic culture in the context of significant economic corridors.

9. Research Methodology

The present study used a research paradigm, which is qualitative in nature. The data was interpreted, and a description was provided in the results. It enabled the researcher to gain access to collect relevant data, and to probe into the matter with an in-depth study through the thick and thin description (Flick, Kardorff, and Steinke 2004). This research was mainly qualitative as it is considered more appropriate for interpreting contextual elements and understanding a particular geographical setting (Bryman 2004). The major focus of this research was the stakeholders not only in the study area but also outside of it. The research focused on emic perspectives, views, perceptions, interpretations, and meanings viewed by people. The data collection and analysis proceeded together.

Data Collection Tools

The number of respondents hardly matters in qualitative studies (Guest et al., 2006), however, the researcher interviewed eight key informants to get a holistic view of the study. In addition, 16 semi-structured interviews were conducted with the experts. FGDs (Focus Group Discussions) were also conducted with four groups, each consisting of minimum 12 respondents, both male and female.

Table 1: Data Collection Tools

Type of Data	Respondents/ Groups	Remarks
Key Informant Interviews (KII)	8	Individual with specialised knowledge, expertise and insights about a particular topic under study
Semi Structured Interviews	16	The participants are selected based on their relevance to the research topic and ability to provide valuable insights.
Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)	4	Each group consist of a minimum of twelve respondents

Sample of the Study

The selection of a sample is a hectic job in qualitative research. This study used purposive sampling, also known as procedural sampling. Likewise, Maxwell (2005) declares purposive sampling ‘purposeful selection’ because it helps the researcher decide who would fit or become a part of the understudy, wherein a respondent can provide enough information to answer the research questions.

Operational Definition of Strategic Culture

The set of shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behaviour, derived from the country’s unique historical experiences, geographical positioning, and societal norms, shape collective understanding and decision-making processes regarding national security, foreign policy, and military strategies. In the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) context, Pakistan’s strategic culture encompasses its traditional security concerns, responses to perceived threats, and the integration of geo-economic strategies into its national security and foreign policy paradigms. This cultural framework influences how the country perceives and reacts to regional and global security dynamics, particularly its strategic partnership with China through CPEC.

Procedure (data collection)

Different researchers use various methods of extracting data in qualitative research. However, keeping in view the nature and type of topic, interviews were conducted, and a few FDGs were also the main tools of investigation. FDGs were conducted only where possible, and the researcher was sure it would provide more information related to the topic. Besides, audio-visual aids were also used by the researcher, case studies approach was adopted, and mapping techniques were utilized to keep the record.

Details were also collected from secondary sources; the government's official stance was also collected from civil and military authorities through feedback data and personal interaction. Both civil and military authorities and stakeholders were consulted, and information was collected for the completion of research work. In addition, earlier related research work, libraries, print, and electronic media were also used to get information to complete this research work. The thesis drew its resources from government reports from Pakistan, China, Iran, Afghanistan, India, and the USA. Moreover, the research work included the intellectuals' guidance and conclusions from their studies. To achieve fairness and remain unbiased, sources from major stakeholders China, India, USA, and Pakistan were contacted. The researcher's personal observations are a very important tool in carrying out quality research. The researcher's observations helped him find the appropriate respondents for the interviews and data collection.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

Key informant interviews are qualitative, in-depth interviews with people who know what is happening in the community. Key informant interviews aim to collect information from a wide range of people, including community leaders, professionals, and residents, who have first-hand knowledge of the community. Key informants are well-versed in the cultural dynamics of their society, and they know about the past, understand the present, and can give clues about the possible future (Houston and Sudman 1975). I targeted senior bureaucrats and senior military officers as my key informants during my research.

Semi-Structured Interviews

A semi-structured interview is a qualitative research technique that includes open-ended but selected questions, promotes discussion, and allows the interviewer to get information about

topics. It is a mix of structured and unstructured interviews, with some questions predetermined but others not planned. The researcher used in-depth interviews to get the contextual frame of the research area.

Focused Group Discussions (FGDs)

A focus group discussion (FGD) gathers information from a group of people of the same social background related to a specific topic of the researcher's interest. The group is controlled by a moderator (facilitator) who starts with the topic and provides an opportunity for all the group members to participate in the discussion and share their experiences (Myers 1998). The researcher conducted four FGDs with the chosen professionals from think tanks in Islamabad and Abbottabad (male and female) and students (male and female). Where FGDs were not possible, they were changed to personal interviews. The students' FDGs were conducted to get their view of the implications of CPEC on Pakistan's strategic culture.

Secondary Data

Secondary data formed an important part of this research. Official publications related to Pakistan's strategic culture and CPEC were considered. Books, journals, periodicals, encyclopedias, dictionaries, Newspapers, internet sources, and published material on CPEC and Pakistan's strategic culture are the secondary sources of this study.

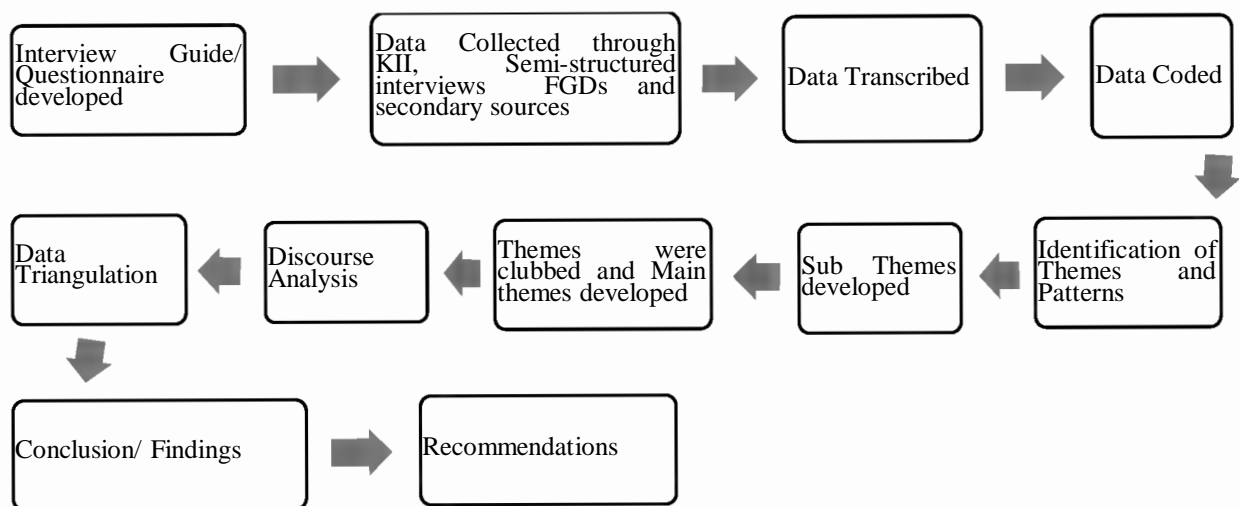
Data Analysis

Discourse analysis is a method for understanding and analysing language use in communication, focusing on the way people make meaning and communicate (Widdowson 1995). Discourse analysis refers to a variety of methodological approaches and practices. Generally, discourse analysis is employed to explore how people create, convey, share, acquire,

and (mis)understand the meaning(s) of moments, events/experiences, lives, and (sub)cultures. The data presented is interpreted through the qualitative methodology to draw and present conclusions. Thus, the collected data was transcribed, coded, and then categorised. These categories helped the researcher to develop and formulate the themes.

Thematic analysis is used because it provides a systematic and flexible approach to analyzing qualitative data, uncovering deep insights into human experiences and social contexts. The data was interpreted, and a description was provided in the results with an in-depth study through the thick description (cultural and contextual meanings) and thin description (surface-level observations).

Table 2: Data Analysis Process



10. Organization of Study

The study was organized into six chapters as under: -

Introduction. The first chapter comprises the background of the study, problem statement, significance of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, review of existing literature and theoretical framework. The methodology, including research design, data collection tools, population, sampling, operation definition, data collection procedure and data analysis, are part of this chapter.

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Framework

This first chapter introduces the study. To do this, it defines the basic ideas of neo-realism, strategic culture and geoeconomics. These are necessary to understand how a country's strategic orientation relates to its economic policy. It then explains that these theories will be used in the investigation and gives more information about them. This includes listing down some important principles, thinkers, and works on each theory. Thus, by laying such groundwork, subsequent chapters can delve into Pakistani case with China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) from a strong theoretical standpoint.

Chapter Two: Dynamics of Strategic Culture

This chapter explores the complexity of strategic culture as a field of study by breaking down its fundamental aspects, historical development, and controversies within it. Due to the less data available in compiled form, this chapter clarifies the concept and dynamics of Strategic culture. Different viewpoints on how strategic culture is created, transmitted, and expressed are included in the conversation, drawing from disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, and political science. Such an all-encompassing discussion sets the stage for understanding Pakistan's strategic tradition and interactions with external financial ventures like CPEC.

Chapter Three: Evolutionary Phases of Strategic Culture of Pakistan

This chapter provides a chronological study of the evolution of Pakistan's strategic culture by highlighting key historical events, geostrategic compulsions, and internal factors. Starting from independence and leading through different wars and alliances, up-to-date security concerns, and future aspirations, the account maps out Pakistan's strategic journey. The chapter places them in their historical and cultural context, thereby revealing what has remained constant and

changed over time, constituting its strategies while establishing an all-rounded background against which CPEC's impact can be analysed.

Chapter Four: Changing Nature of Conflicts and Transformation of Pakistan's Strategic Culture

Chapter 4 explores the transformation of Pakistan's strategic culture due to evolving conflict dynamics, emphasising the shift from conventional warfare to counterterrorism in response to rising militant extremism and cross-border terrorism. This strategic shift integrates military, political, and socio-economic strategies, reflecting global trends in addressing non-state threats. The chapter discusses Pakistan's regional stability concerns, particularly the impact of the Kashmir conflict and the situation in Afghanistan on its security policies, as well as its engagement with regional and global powers through frameworks like SAARC and SCO. Additionally, the chapter highlights the significant influence of geo-economic strategies, especially the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), in reshaping Pakistan's strategic orientation, emphasizing economic partnerships for national security and regional stability. This holistic approach incorporates economic, cyber, environmental, and human dimensions, illustrating Pakistan's comprehensive strategy to navigate contemporary conflicts and strategic challenges.

Chapter Five: Comprehensive Overview of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

This chapter delves into an in-depth analysis of CPEC. It breaks down the different elements of this mega project such as infrastructure development, financial investment and strategic goals. The chapter explains what makes up CPEC, its parts, and predicted results. In addition, it puts the corridor in the wider context of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and global

geoeconomics. This comprehensive explanation highlights the fact that CPEC is a game changer with profound implications for Pakistan's strategic culture.

Chapter Six: Evaluating Impact of CPEC on Strategic Culture of Pakistan

Given a key analytical study, this chapter evaluates the impact of CPEC on Pakistan's strategic culture. It looks at the changes in its strategic discourse and policy aims in response to CPEC by building upon the theoretical and contextual foundation laid in preceding chapters. The Chapter also seeks to find out if or not CPEC has shifted Pakistan's strategic interests towards economic considerations alongside traditional security concerns and what this means for the region's global standing while considering corridor states.

Major Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

The last part of the dissertation combines all the knowledge gathered while researching CPEC and how it affects Pakistan's strategic culture. It outlines findings on a wider scale by showing what they say about the current connection between strategic culture and economic development in world politics. In this section, certain things have been prescribed that can be done with the results of the analysis for people who make decisions in the government or for those who study strategy as a discipline; it proposes some actions which could help strategists and adapt themselves towards these changes or lessen their impact where necessary due to factors like this being brought about by economic corridors such as China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Lastly, there is also an area that calls attention to possible future investigations, indicating when this research work becomes relevant within international relations studies while also completing gaps within strategic studies alongside geoeconomics. Based on the major findings and conclusions, policy recommendations have been proposed for policymakers

and stakeholders to take measures while observing the change in the strategic culture of Pakistan due to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

CHAPTER ONE

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework plays an important role in research as it serves as the foundation and theoretical support for investigations, guiding researchers in formulating research questions, maintaining focus, and interpreting results (Waldt 2020). In social science, the theory acts as a lens through which a particular phenomenon is evaluated. For some topics, one theory does not provide sufficient angles to evaluate the issue effectively.

Theories in the field of International Relations give reason and a way of perceiving how the world works and how states arrange their relationships. International Relations (IR) encompasses diverse meanings, primarily serving as an academic discipline (Kaplan 1961). Its formal inception into university curricula occurred relatively recently, approximately a century ago; however, scholarly engagement in the study and generation of knowledge within this field predates this institutionalization considerably. The Peace of Westphalia in 1648 marked a pivotal moment in history, as it heralded the emergence of independent sovereign nations (Krasner 2001). This significant development effectively instated a new era of international interactions and activities, prompting nations to assume the role of primary actors on the global stage. The establishment of the Department of International Politics at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, in 1919 marked a pivotal moment in the institutionalization of International Relations as an academic discipline (Baylis, Wirtz, and Johnson 2022).

The introduction of International Relations (IR) as an academic subject is often attributed to the United States. At the same time, it is noteworthy that a substantial portion of pioneering research activities and reports within the field originate from US or are conducted by American academics (Kuru 2017). This dynamic has fueled an ongoing debate surrounding the characterisation of International Relations as an American social science (Khadka 2017).

Within the realm of International Relations (IR), the field itself serves as the object of study, encompassing a wide array of international issues, prevalent ideologies, historical experiences, ongoing practices, and theoretical frameworks. Among these various objects of study, theories hold particular significance, providing a lens through which to analyse the behaviour of states, state actors, agencies, and structures within the international arena. While International Relations boasts a multitude of theories, it is essential to understand their necessity. Before delving into the significance of theories in International Relations, it is crucial to grasp the concept of theory itself (Kaplan 1961).

The Oxford Dictionary defines a theory as “an idea utilised to explain a situation or justify a course of action.” Alternatively, it is described as “a set of principles upon which the practice of an activity is founded. A theory in the context of International Relations constitutes a set of principles upon which nations' activities, interactions, and practices are founded. It serves as a framework to analyse and account for these diverse elements, aiming to predict behaviour and generate new insights and knowledge within the field (Guzzini 2001).

Worth-mentioning theories can be understood as collections or sets of laws that pertain to specific behaviours or phenomena. Specifically concerning International Relations theories, Waltz further elucidates that they serve to explain the laws governing international politics or the recurrent patterns observed in state behaviour (Quinn and Gibson 2017). Hollis and Smith contend that theories in International Relations strive to achieve one of two objectives: either to elucidate and forecast behaviour or to comprehend the intricacies of the world (Hollis and Smith 1991). Theories within the realm of International Relations critique various forms of domination and perspectives. They contemplate ideal structures for organising the world and scrutinise the process of theorising itself. Furthermore, theories delve into analysing

epistemological claims regarding how humans perceive and understand the world, as well as ontological claims concerning the fundamental nature of the world (Burchill et al. 2021).

The primary objectives of theorising in International Relations are pursuing knowledge acquisition, studying the evolution of IR as a discipline, and analysing and predicting state behaviour. Another key purpose of theorising in International Relations is to critically examine both intermittent and ongoing debates within the field (Guzzini 2001). International Relations theories serve a dual purpose, extending beyond the realm of academic discourse to become indispensable tools for comprehending the intricacies of the real world. They provide invaluable insights into international politics, global issues, and the dynamics of world order. In practical terms, theories play a crucial role in organising knowledge derived from empirical experiences and observations. Moreover, they facilitate hypothesis testing, the construction of new knowledge and analytical frameworks, and the analysis and prediction of state and non-state actor behaviour (Jørgensen 2010). Theories of International Relations (IR) serve as indispensable tools for comprehending and interpreting the complexities of the world around us, offering various lenses to view global phenomena. They function much like maps, each representing a different theoretical perspective tailored to simplify the intricate landscape of international politics (McGlinchey, Walters, and Gold 2017). Analogous to a map designed for navigation, IR theories selectively include variables deemed essential for understanding and analysing global dynamics while omitting extraneous details to maintain clarity. Just as a map of Singapore's Mass Rapid Transit network focuses solely on lines, stations, and essential access information, IR theories prioritise variables such as states, organisations, economics, history, and ideologies. By constructing simplified representations of the world, IR theories provide analysts with invaluable frameworks for interpreting events and, in some instances, making predictions. In practical terms, IR theories can be likened to an analytical toolkit,

offering students diverse methods to address complex questions and scenarios within the field (McGlinchey, Walters, and Gold 2017).

1.1 Theorizing Realism, Strategic Culture and Geo-economic Theory

This chapter discusses Pakistan's strategic culture and its engagement with China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in theoretical perspective. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), as part of the Belt and Road (BRI) initiative, is a mega project aimed at developing the economy with mutual interest and interdependence. Besides developing Gwadar, connecting it with the western province of China through railways, highways, and oil and gas pipelines is the project's hallmark. This project has significant implications for the strategic culture of Pakistan, which will be analysed through the lens of three theories: Neo-Realism, strategic culture, and geo-economic theory.

1.2 Theory of Realism

In the realm of International Relations (IR), realism emerges as a prominent school of thought, accentuating the competitive and conflict-driven nature of international dynamics (Bell 2017). Scholars often trace the roots of realism to ancient historical texts, notably Thucydides' account of the Peloponnesian War, a protracted conflict spanning from 431 to 404 BCE. Despite the absence of formalised IR theory during his time, Thucydides' narrative, crafted over two millennia ago, exhibits thematic elements akin to those later identified as realist principles (Camis o 2018). However, it is essential to acknowledge that the explicit categorisation of realism within IR theory did not materialise until the twentieth century. Thucydides cannot be retrospectively labelled a realist in the modern sense, as the conceptual framework of realism had yet to be established during his era (Elashkar 2020).

Realism has solidified its position as a discernible strand within political theory in the past two decades. Broadly defined, realism is distinguished by its adherence to the concept commonly referred to as the autonomy of politics (Rossi and Sleat 2014). Proponents of realism assert that political theory should be conducted in a manner that religiously reflects the actualities of political dynamics. This perspective emphasises the importance of grounding political analysis in pragmatic assessments of power dynamics rather than solely relying on normative or idealistic frameworks (Westphal and Willems 2023). Two coherent ramifications of realism emerge that do not contradict each other. Firstly, prescriptive realism contends that it should function as a theory guiding foreign policy decisions rather than focusing solely on systemic structures. Secondly, realism, when applied as a predictive framework for foreign policy, necessitates reflexivity (Walt 2018). This entails critically examining its own assumptions and biases as an integral component of the study of international politics. Such introspection is essential for maintaining accuracy and relevance in understanding and forecasting global affairs (Barkin 2009).

1.2.1 Thucydides as Classical Realist

For the past seven and a half decades, within the realm of academic 'international relations,' Thucydides has held sway, albeit perhaps with a nod of acknowledgement. This rendition of Thucydides, commonly known as Thucydides the Realist, emerges as a discerning observer of power dynamics and vested interests, challenging idealistic notions. Thucydides is considered the first writer in the realist tradition and the founding father of international relations, supporting classical and neorealist viewpoints (Bagby 1994). He serves as a debunker of moral fallacies, offering a lucid perspective on the intricacies of geopolitical interactions (Forde 2012). Thucydides is esteemed as an intellectual progenitor of realpolitik, as he perceives interstate relations as grounded in power dynamics rather than idealistic principles (Bedford

2001). Thucydides underscores the significance of the national character in moulding foreign policy agendas (Luginbill 1999). Thucydides vividly portrays how, in the tense period preceding conflict, leaders often deceive themselves into believing they can achieve victory without engaging the enemy directly on its home territory. Maritime dominions aspire to triumph over land-based adversaries without decimating their armies. Initial skirmishes prove inconclusive as both factions can retreat to their secure territories without significant losses. This impasse leads to a stalemate: Both factions possess the military capability to compel surrender, and neither is willing to concede due to the immense political ramifications at stake (Rovner 2017). Additional concrete evidence supporting Thucydides' economic perspectives can be discerned in his concise narrative of early Greek history. For instance, he highlights the suppression of piracy by Minos, not solely for the sake of order but primarily to augment his revenues. Thucydides illustrates how, in ancient times, individuals of substantial economic means wielded influence over weaker city-states due to their excessive wealth. Moreover, he observes that those who established coastal settlements accrued greater wealth and security, with some amassing such prosperity that they fortified their communities with defensive walls (Smith 1940).

1.2.2 Hans Morgenthau and Classical Realism

Hans Morgenthau, a prominent figure in realism, is renowned for asserting that all politics is a power struggle (Petersen 1999). This statement encapsulates the essential realist perspective, which posits that politics primarily revolves around the quest for dominance rather than cooperation among states. It underscores the foundational belief within realism that power dynamics and competition are central to the functioning of international relations (McGlinchey and Gold 2017). Hans J. Morgenthau is credited with advancing realism into a comprehensive international relations theory. His intellectual framework was shaped by the ideas of the

Protestant theologian and political thinker Reinhold Niebuhr, along with the philosophy of Hobbes. Morgenthau's perspective places self-interest and the pursuit of power at the forefront of human nature. He contends that the enduring and ubiquitous human craving for power, which he terms “animus dominandi” or the desire to dominate, is the primary catalyst for conflict in international affairs (Karpowicz 2023).

Moreover, Morgenthau also elucidates that interest, when defined as power, holds universal relevance and is a fundamental aspect of politics. He emphasises that what constitutes interest or power may vary across contexts and epochs. The substance and application of power are contingent upon the specific political and cultural milieu they operate. This underscores the dynamic and adaptive nature of power dynamics, which are shaped by the prevailing political and cultural landscapes (Barkin 2009). When Morgenthau discusses "power politics," he also goes through the concept of historical contingency. This indicates that the understanding and application of power in political affairs are subject to historical context (Schmidt and Wight 2023).

1.2.3 John Mearsheimer and Offensive Realism

Offensive realism asserts that states are inherently inclined towards competition and conflict due to their self-interested nature, pursuit of power maximisation and dominance over the other states. Furthermore, proponents of offensive realism contend that such behaviour is not only expected but also rational within the anarchic framework of the international system, as it offers the most viable strategy for survival. The behaviour exhibited by chimpanzees closely resembles the patterns predicted by the theory of offensive realism when analysing state behaviour (Johnson and Thayer 2016). Mearsheimer's stance begins with the assertion that major powers prioritise “maximising their relative power”, aligning him closely with Morgenthau's perspective on the perpetual power struggle among states driven by an innate

desire for dominance (Gaid 2017). However, Mearsheimer diverges from this notion by rejecting it as the primary source of causation. Instead, he argues that while the power struggle is perpetual, it is not fueled by an inherent human appetite for power. Rather, it stems from a quest for security necessitated by the anarchic nature of the international system (Snyder 2002).

In this environment, where all states possess capabilities to inflict harm upon each other, the imperative to accumulate power arises from the need to enhance security against potential threats. This emphasis on security-driven motivations and structural causation places Mearsheimer's perspective closer to that of Waltz (Latif and Akmal 2019). Where Mearsheimer diverges from Waltz is in his assertion that the pursuit of power and security knows no bounds, contrary to Waltz's argument that it has its limits. This fundamental disagreement with Waltz revolves around the question of how much power states desire. Mearsheimer concisely articulates this point by highlighting that, for defensive realists, the international structure offers little incentives for states to actively seek additional power; instead, it compels them to uphold the existing balance of power. Thus, the primary objective for states, according to defensive realism, is not to expand power but rather to preserve it (Gruber, Tekles, and Bornmann 2023).

Furthermore, offensive realists argue that status quo powers are seldom observed in global affairs due to the potent incentives the international system provides for states to actively seek opportunities to augment their power vis-à-vis their rivals, and to exploit such circumstances when the benefits outweigh the associated costs. The ultimate aim of a state, according to offensive realism, is to attain hegemonic status within the system (Toft 2005). The concepts of "hegemon" and "potential hegemon" hold significant importance in Mearsheimer's theory. A potential hegemon goes beyond being merely the most powerful state within a regional system. It possesses such formidable strength that it has a substantial likelihood of exerting

dominance over its region by surpassing its great power neighbors, either collectively or sequentially. This potential hegemon is characterized by a significant disparity between the size of its economy and military compared to that of the second most powerful state in the system (Bras and Polit 2022).

1.2.4 Kenneth Waltz: Concept of Neo-realism

Neorealism, also known as structural realism, stands as a prominent theory within the realm of international politics. Its primary proponent is Kenneth Waltz (1924–2013), renowned for his seminal work “Theory of International Politics,” published in 1979. In this book, Waltz aimed to establish a comprehensive framework elucidating the consistent patterns characterising state behavior and interactions within the international system (Walling 2017). Neorealism offers significant insights into the concept of opportunity and addresses, albeit to a lesser extent, state preferences. A fundamental assumption made by neorealism regarding state preferences is that, primarily, states pursue self-preservation, a notion distinct from notions of defence or offense (Telbami 2002). This assertion does not imply that all states exclusively aim for survival, nor does it negate the existence of states with offensive strategies. Instead, it represents a fundamental, minimalist assumption concerning the preferences shared by all states, regardless of their additional objectives. (Zaheer 2023).

Structural realists endeavour to elucidate the dynamics of International Relations by emphasising the structural constraints imposed by an anarchic international system. Within structural realism, scholars diverge in their interpretations regarding the extent of power states must possess within this context. Consequently, neorealism is commonly categorised into two main sub-branches: defensive and offensive realism. Defensive realism posits that states should seek an adequate level of power necessary for their security and prosperity. However, they should avoid pursuing hegemonic dominance by maximising their relative power (Steinsson

2014). Defensive realism presents a perspective on the relationship between systemic pressures and state behaviour, acknowledging its complexity and potential pitfalls. Within the framework of the security dilemma, even states genuinely seeking security may misinterpret each other's intentions, leading to a spiral of mutual distrust and conflict. While defensive realists acknowledge the presence of states with revisionist agendas, they also analyse the circumstances that drive states toward security-driven expansion (Taliaferro 1999). Central to defensive realism is recognising how national leaders perceive relative capabilities and navigate the intricate power dynamics, which shape states' foreign policies. Moreover, domestic political dynamics play a crucial role, constraining leaders' ability to mobilise resources for national defence and adapt foreign policies in response to external pressures (Taliaferro 1999).

1.2.5 Realism and Rise of China

Realism was the predominant theoretical framework for studying South-East Asia until the 1980s. The eruption of numerous regional conflicts, notably the three Indo-China wars spanning from 1945 to 1989, was pivotal in reinforcing realist perspectives. Consequently, scholars such as (Glaser 2011) have extensively utilised realism to analyse China's ascension as a regional power. As Li (2008) highlighted, most realist analyses concerning China's emergence concentrate on the interplay between structural shifts in the international system and the rise of major powers. Put differently, researchers examine China's foreign policy within the context of transitioning from a bipolar global order during the Cold War era to a unipolar world dominated by US hegemony (Li 2019). However, the rise of China has different implications and impacts on different parts of the world. There is a need to understand China's re-emergence in the international political economy (IPE) and world system perspectives nexus. China's dual position as hegemon and counter-hegemon is conceptualised as dialectic,

dynamic, and complex. China is becoming a leading counter-hegemonic socio-political and socio-economic force to the “centre” of the existing world order. At the same time, it can be seen as a new emerging hegemon to the semi-peripheral and peripheral parts of the world order. In line with the understanding of Realism, China’s economic rise is premised on expanding and intensifying integration within the international system; China’s rise signals an inevitable conflict within the current international system and a challenge to the US hegemony (Li 2019).

According to realist theory, in an anarchic international system, states prioritize relative gains over absolute gains. This means that states are more concerned with accumulating more advantages than other states rather than simply increasing their own gains, highlighting the competitive nature of international relations (Charrette and Folker 2023). From this perspective, a state might seek to enhance its own capacities to strengthen its power relative to another state. Alternatively, a state might form alliances with one or more other states to balance against a more powerful adversary, highlighting the strategic importance of cooperation in international relations. (Mearsheimer 2003) .

Li contends that emerging states with robust economic growth tend to harbour greater ambitions and capabilities to challenge the unipolar system. Consequently, numerous realist scholars characterise China as the primary challenger to the dominant position of the United States within the global order (Li 2009). Furthermore, the end of the Cold War and the subsequent decline of the USSR as the predominant power in Southeast Asia have created opportunities for emerging regional powers. From this standpoint, some realist scholars argue that China capitalised on the structural shifts in the balance of power to pursue heightened influence. Additionally, figures such as Mearsheimer (2001) and Morgenthau (1978) posit that China's ascent within a zero-sum paradigm entails a relative decline of other powers (Lobell 2010).

Following realist principles, states struggle for power at the expense of their adversaries. Consequently, with China's escalating military expenditures and robust economic growth, many assert that China aims to undermine US leadership in Southeast Asia. Nevertheless, offensive and defensive realists hold divergent perspectives concerning China's rise to power (Taliaferro 1999).

Offensive Realism and Rise of China

As previously mentioned, from the perspective of offensive realism, a state's ultimate objective is to attain hegemony to ensure its survival. Recognising the impracticality of achieving global hegemony due to the complexity of controlling all territories, major powers instead strive to establish themselves as regional hegemons (Nurjanah 2010). However, these states are reluctant to the emergence of competitors and actively seek to hinder other great powers from assuming regional hegemony. Thus, from an offensive realist standpoint, China's primary aim is to compel the withdrawal of US military forces from the region and establish itself as the sole regional hegemon in Southeast Asia. Additionally, China endeavours to strengthen its power relative to potential regional rivals such as Japan and India, perceiving them as potential security threats (Dunne, Kurki, and Smith 2020).

Nonetheless, offensive realists contend that shifts in power within the international system often precipitate military conflicts between rising powers and established hegemons. Indeed, offensive realist Mearsheimer (2001) anticipates aggressive military intervention by the US in response to any attempts by China to assert dominance over the region (Jalil 2019).

Defensive Realism and the Rise of China

Defensive realists adopt a relatively optimistic viewpoint regarding China's ascendance. Like offensive realists, they contend that the structure of the international system incentivises China

to strengthen its power, thereby fostering security competition in the region. However, defensive realists assert that China's pursuit of increased power will likely be restrained, aiming to avoid provoking a coalition of major powers against it. They argue that pursuing regional hegemony could potentially trigger a security dilemma and compromise China's efforts to enhance its security (Kuszevska and Agnieszka 2021). Furthermore, China's extraordinary economic growth in recent years has occurred without resorting to military aggression against other nations, indicating that territorial expansion through military force may not be necessary. Additionally, the presence of nuclear weapons by some powers, such as India and Russia, makes the escalation of conflict between China and these nations unlikely, given the principle of deterrence that deters states from initiating attacks due to fear of retaliation and mutual destruction (Barillé 2022). Moreover, China should be capable of maintaining peaceful coexistence with both its neighbours and the US. However, defensive realists acknowledge that domestic political factors could lead China to act imprudently. From an offensive realist perspective, China is perceived as a revisionist power aiming to disrupt the current international order through military means (Zille and Malik 2021). Conversely, defensive realists view China's actions primarily driven by the imperative to safeguard its security interests (Martadinata, Wirajuda, and Risman 2024). By incorporating these two sub-theories, this research can offer a more refined understanding of China's motivations than if it had solely relied on realism

1.2.6 Critical Analysis of Impact of CPEC on Pakistan's Strategic Culture through the Lens of Realism

Classical realism, with its focus on power politics, national interests, and the primacy of state security, offers a compelling framework for analysing Pakistan's strategic culture and its engagement with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) (Platias and Trigkas 2024).

This theoretical lens emphasises the anarchic nature of the international system, where states pursue their interests in a competitive environment characterised by uncertainty and conflict. In the context of Pakistan, classical realism provides insights into the country's historical experiences, security dilemmas, and strategic calculus and CPEC, shedding light on the underlying motivations and challenges shaping its foreign policy decisions (Juneau 2023). At the heart of classical realism lies the principle of *realpolitik*, which prioritises state interests and power dynamics in international relations. In the case of Pakistan's engagement with CPEC, realist analysis highlights the strategic imperative of enhancing the country's geopolitical leverage, economic resilience, and security posture. Pakistan's alignment with China through CPEC can be interpreted as a calculated move to counterbalance perceived threats from India, bolster its regional influence, and mitigate dependence on traditional Western allies (Majeed, Anwar, and Bashir 2023). Furthermore, classical realist perspectives illuminate the security-centric nature of Pakistan's strategic culture, which focuses on military capabilities, territorial integrity, and deterrence strategies (Larik, Mangi, and Bukhari 2023) .

Classical realism underscores the centrality of security dilemmas and the balance of power in shaping state behaviour and strategic decision-making. In the context of CPEC, Pakistan faces a complex set of security challenges, including internal insurgencies, external threats, and geopolitical rivalries. The corridor's alignment with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) amplifies Pakistan's strategic significance in regional power dynamics, triggering concerns among neighbouring states and global powers (Wen and Saleem 2021). From a classical realist perspective, Pakistan's engagement with CPEC can be seen as a rational response to these security dilemmas, aimed at maximising its relative power and influence in the region while hedging against potential adversaries (Khan and Liu 2019). However, the pursuit of strategic interests through CPEC also exposes Pakistan to risks of entrapment, alliance conflicts, and great power competition, highlighting the delicate balance between security

imperatives and economic opportunities in shaping state behaviour (Kuszevska and Agnieszka 2021).

Defensive realism offers valuable insights into Pakistan's strategic culture and engagement with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), emphasising the state's primary concern with ensuring its security and survival in a competitive international environment. Unlike offensive realism, which focuses on power maximisation and expansionist strategies, defensive realism posits that states seek to maintain a balance of power to deter potential threats and protect their territorial integrity (Jones 1998). In the context of Pakistan, defensive realism provides a refined understanding of the country's foreign policy decisions, emphasising its efforts to secure economic and military capabilities to safeguard against perceived security challenges and maintain regional stability (Larik, Mangi, and Bukhari 2023). From a defensive realist perspective, Pakistan's engagement with CPEC can be interpreted as responding to its security dilemmas and strategic imperatives.

The corridor offers Pakistan opportunities to enhance its economic development, infrastructure, and energy security, strengthening its defensive capabilities and resilience against external pressures. By deepening its partnership with China through CPEC, Pakistan aims to mitigate vulnerabilities, diversify its strategic options, and bolster its deterrence posture vis-à-vis regional adversaries (Ali et al. 2018). Moreover, defensive realism underscores the importance of cooperative security arrangements and alliances in managing security threats and promoting stability, as evidenced by Pakistan's collaboration with China within the framework of CPEC to address common security concerns and counterbalance perceived hegemonic ambitions in the region (Javed and Ismail 2021).

Defensive realism highlights the balancing act that Pakistan must navigate in its engagement with CPEC, balancing the pursuit of economic interests with the imperatives of security and

sovereignty. While CPEC offers immense economic benefits and opportunities for Pakistan's development, it poses risks and challenges, including concerns over debt dependency, geopolitical rivalries, and domestic opposition (Ali 2020). From a defensive realist standpoint, Pakistan must carefully calibrate its involvement in CPEC to avoid overreliance on external actors, safeguard its autonomy, and preserve its strategic interests. Moreover, defensive realism underscores the importance of fostering regional stability and cooperation through dialogue, confidence-building measures, and conflict resolution mechanisms to mitigate security threats and promote mutual trust among neighbouring states (Kuszevska and Agnieszka 2021).

Offensive realism offers a compelling lens through which to analyse Pakistan's strategic culture and engagement with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), emphasising the pursuit of power maximisation and strategic dominance in international relations. Unlike defensive realism, which prioritises state security and survival, offensive realism posits that states seek to expand their power and influence to achieve hegemony and ensure their long-term survival in a competitive world order (Johnson and Thayer 2016). In the context of Pakistan, offensive realism provides insights into the country's foreign policy objectives, regional aspirations, and strategic calculus concerning CPEC, shedding light on its efforts to assert dominance and leverage strategic partnerships to advance its interests. From an offensive realist perspective, Pakistan's engagement with CPEC can be interpreted as part of its broader strategy to assert regional dominance and challenge the existing balance of power in South Asia (Lokman, Daud, and Hoo 2022).

The corridor serves as a conduit for Pakistan to enhance its geopolitical leverage, economic prowess, and strategic depth, consolidating its position as a major player in the region. By aligning closely with China through CPEC, Pakistan aims to counterbalance the influence of traditional rivals such as India, expand its sphere of influence, and shape the regional order in

its favour (Lokman, Daud, and Hoo 2022). Moreover, offensive realism highlights Pakistan's willingness to engage in power politics and assert its interests aggressively, even at the risk of provoking tensions and conflicts with neighbouring states. Offensive realism underscores the strategic calculations and great power dynamics at play in Pakistan's engagement with CPEC, particularly in the context of its relationship with China and other major actors such as the United States and India (Iftikhar Ali, Noonari, and Mahesar 2021). Pakistan's alignment with China through CPEC reflects its strategic calculus to harness a powerful ally's economic, military, and diplomatic resources to advance its regional ambitions and counter perceived threats from rival powers (Saini 2021). Moreover, offensive realism highlights the potential for competition and conflict arising from Pakistan's assertive behaviour as it seeks to maximise its relative power and influence in the strategic calculus of South Asia and beyond.

1.2.7 Application of Kenneth Waltz's Theory of Neo-Realism on the Impact of CPEC on Pakistan's Strategic Culture

As a sub-theory of Realism, Neo-Realism is the most relevant theory for its application to the shift of strategic culture due to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Kenneth Waltz's work *Theory of International Politics*, published in 1979, laid the foundation of Neo-realism, also known as structural realism. According to Waltz, two major factors that influence state behavior include the anarchic structure of the international system and the distribution of power amongst the states. The states are rational actors who prioritize their survival.

Due to the Chinese's initiative of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Pakistan's strategic and economic capabilities will be enhanced which will alter the security dynamics at regional level. The infrastructure development and stable economy due to this mega initiative is a form of self-help to strengthen its position against Indian rivalry, which is an important component of structural realism. Moreover, as per the neo-realism, states form alliances against

any kind of threat. Hence, Pakistan's strategic partnership with China and become a stakeholder of CPEC is a desire to counterbalance India. It will also shift the balance of power at the regional level against India. Pakistan's relations with China and joining CPEC is a rational decision as per the neo-realist perspective, which in turn maximizes its security besides getting economic dividends. This will help in military mobilization and will enhance its logistic capabilities, reflecting the improvement of its strategic autonomy orientation. The CPEC will enhance Pakistan's strategic autonomy with less reliance on western world, will add new dimension of economic security in its strategic culture and will adjust its policy and doctrine with the new dictates of economy as a source to strengthen its military.

1.3 Geo-Economic Theory

As a field of study, geo-economics originates from classical geopolitics and can be viewed as an extension of geopolitical principles applied to international economic relations. Essentially, geo-economics is an evolution of geopolitics (Ignatyeva and Isaev 2019). From a contemporary viewpoint, geopolitics involves analyzing the distribution and configuration of power within the international system and its impact on inter-state relations. While both geopolitics and geo-economics are closely tied to interstate geostrategic competition, geo-economics narrows the scope of geopolitical analysis to emphasize the importance of economic power. Thus, it incorporates a specific form of geopolitical competition focused on economic factors (Jaeger and Brites 2020). Geo-economic power is defined as the capacity of governments to leverage their country's economic strength through existing financial and trade relationships to achieve geopolitical and economic objectives (Csurgai 2018). Following World War II, the significance of geo-economic power in restructuring the global economy became a major focus among economists (Crawford 2024).

Worth-mentioning, Edward Luttwak (1990) introduced the term “geo-economics” to describe the shift in post-Cold War rivalry among states from military to economic arenas. He expanded on this concept in a 1993 book, arguing that with the Soviet threat to Europe and the United States largely diminished, military confrontations were unlikely in the near future (Luttwak 1990). Similarly, Samuel Huntington noted that in a world where major states are unlikely to engage in military conflict, economic power will become increasingly crucial in determining states dominance or subordination (Scholvin and Wigell 2018)). Thus, according to these, early geo-economists, the end of the Cold War did not signify the 'end of history' as predicted by Francis Fukuyama (1992). Instead, they anticipated a shift in how conflicts would unfold relying on capital rather than firepower, civilian innovation rather than military-technical advancements, and market penetration rather than garrisons and bases (Treddenick 1996). In this new geo-economic era, states would continue to pursue adversarial goals, but through economic means instead of military ones (Roberts, Henrique Choer, and Ferguson 2018).

The rise of geo-economic competition and conflict is not occurring in isolation. The nature of international politics is evolving within an existing order that significantly influences the shape, direction, and scope of the emerging order (Zaidi and Saud 2020). For example, during neoliberal globalization, global value chains extended across borders, and they are likely to continue playing a crucial role in the distribution of power and wealth in a post-neoliberal and post-pandemic world (Aggarwal and Reddie 2021). For Luttwak, the strategic perspective is fundamental to geo-economic analysis. It emphasizes competition, the potential for zero-sum outcomes, and considers mid- to long-term temporal perspectives along with the hierarchical power positioning of states in global affairs (Moisio 2018). Strategy, often referred to as ‘grand strategy,’ is described as ‘the intellectual architecture that lends structure to foreign policy,’ aligning available means with broader objectives for states in the international context (Lissner 2018). In principle, strategy provides coherence to foreign policy goals. Therefore, geo-

economics involves shaping and managing the strategic environment in which states operate to pursue their national interests through economic means. A notable large-scale example is from the early Cold War years, when economic tools and relationships were pivotal to the U.S. grand strategy of containing Soviet power expansion (Mastanduno 1998).

Geo-economics operates on the premise that power and security are not solely linked to the physical control of territory, as in classical geopolitical analysis, but also to the ability to command and manipulate the economic ties that bind states together (Csurgai 2018). By leveraging the asymmetric vulnerabilities inherent in these economic interdependencies, geo-economics offers a means for states to engage in power politics without resorting to military methods. Thus, while competition remains the predominant driver of international relations, the methods states use for strategic competition are primarily non-military (Wigell, Scholvin, and Aaltola 2019).

1.3.1 Geo-economic Theory: Pakistan's Strategic Culture and its Engagement with China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

Among all the theories of international relations, theory of geo-economic is relevant for this research topic. The core assumption of the theory “states increasingly engage in power politics through economic means” illustrates that states employ various economic strategies to advance their national interests. Whether addressing Iran's nuclear program or Russia's annexation of Crimea, Western states tend to favor economic sanctions over military force (Scholvin and Wigell 2018). Other major powers are also emphasizing economic means in power politics: China leverages finance, investment, and trade to forge alliances and expand its influence across Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Zhang, Wang, and Okafor 2022). The interplay between state power, economic power, and global economic governance has been recognized for centuries. From European mercantilism in the 15th century to the economic warfare during

the two World Wars, states have historically utilized economic means to achieve strategic objectives (McLaughlin 2024).

Moreover, Garlick contends that the overland connection between China and Pakistan faces challenges due to geographical, economic, and security issues. Therefore, he suggests that Chinese motivations for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) are primarily geopolitical. In both scenarios, geopolitical factors influence the shaping of CPEC (Garlick 2018). Much of the discussion surrounding the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) centers on China's geopolitical objectives. This focus is not surprising, considering the ambitious scale of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its aim to reshape the international order. At a macro-level, the BRI represents China's endeavor to reduce dependence, particularly in Asia, on Western-led rules and institutions, while bolstering Chinese influence in the region. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), a key financier of numerous BRI projects stemming from the Bretton-Woods system, is a centerpiece of China's strategy to offer alternatives to traditional global financial organizations (Yu 2017). Furthermore, the involvement of Chinese technology firms in setting standards, propelled by investments in network infrastructure, solidifies China's role in shaping international norms (Cai and Godwin 2019).

Pakistan's unique historical and strategic circumstances underpin the overarching objective of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to reduce reliance on Western support. Historically, Pakistan has been a recipient of foreign aid from the United States, the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), various European Union countries, and the Asian Development Bank (ADP). However, these financial and economic ties remained imbalanced due to policy differences. For instance, US aid and military assistance have been halted on several occasions over the past seventy years in response to disputes over Pakistan's

pursuit of nuclear capabilities and allegations of supporting cross-border terrorism. The future of Afghanistan also poses challenges, especially following the withdrawal of US troops in August 2021. Similarly, the European Union's Generalized Scheme of Preferences in Trade (GSP+), which allows duty-free access to a range of goods, remained under review for compliance with international treaties (Marx and Lebzelter 2020). This scheme expires in 2023, and its renewal is uncertain. Consequently, some in the West question the efficacy of providing aid to Pakistan in achieving policy objectives, while some in Islamabad view Western economic support as unreliable (Ali 2017).

China has emerged to fill the void. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) can be viewed as a modern iteration of a relationship established in the mid-twentieth century. This partnership has evolved from establishing diplomatic ties in May 1951, through increased trade and investment following the Sino-Pakistan entente of 1964, to Chinese loans in the 1970s, and military assistance aimed at countering India in the 1990s and 2000s. Despite encountering challenges along the way, the partnership is commonly referred to as an all-weather friendship (Chaudhuri 2018). Pakistan serves as China's gateway to the broader Islamic world and occupies a strategically significant geographical position in the region. Investments in land infrastructure through CPEC could potentially circumvent the Strait of Malacca, a narrow waterway crucial for sea transport to and from China. Security analysts have long viewed the Strait of Malacca as a strategic vulnerability for China, given the potential impact of a blockade (Ghiassy and Zhou 2017). Additionally, Garlick characterizes China's interest in CPEC as a form of “geo-positional balancing,” exemplified by the establishment of non-military presence at sites such as commercial ports to ensure the geopolitical integrity of the region, particularly vis-à-vis India (Garlick 2018). However, Pakistani officials have sought to downplay this aspect of CPEC, instead highlighting its intention to transition the China-Pakistan relationship from geopolitics to geo-economics.

Crucially, the “India factor” remains a significant consideration in the context of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) (Khan and Liu 2019). Pakistan and India have a longstanding history of conflict and hostility, driven by religious animosity, participation in opposing strategic alliances (such as with the US and Russia), and ongoing disputes such as the status of Kashmir (Misra 2001). Pakistan's military continues to view India with deep suspicion, and strategic rivalry between the two nations drives Pakistan's military expenditure. China has consistently supported Pakistan's conventional military and nuclear capabilities, leading some analysts to suggest that these investments are aimed at destabilising India's security calculus and diverting its attention away from other regional challenges. However, China contests these assertions in public statements, state media, and official Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) principles. Nevertheless, many projects under the CPEC umbrella have notable security dimensions as a cause or consequence of regional tensions (McLaughlin 2024).

In addition to addressing regional concerns, investments under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) are directed at tackling significant internal security challenges within Pakistan, such as separatism, terrorism, and religious extremism (Surahio et al. 2022). Critics argue that the Pakistani government has been ineffective in addressing these terror threats, often avoiding confrontation with powerful regional jihadist groups. One approach to counter this threat is by improving socioeconomic conditions to mitigate radicalisation. Chinese motivations for stabilizing Pakistan align with concerns over the influence of jihadist elements, particularly in the Xinjiang region (Duchâtel 2011). CPEC projects, apart from bolstering Pakistan's political stability, provide China with leverage to demand counter-terrorism efforts in exchange for its contributions to economic development (“Pakistan 2025: One Nation - One Vision” 2014).

One of the most prominent investments under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) with security-related aspects is in ports, which serve as a nexus of economic, geopolitical, and security interests within the initiative (Ahmad, Mi, and Fernald 2020). For instance, Gwadar Port is frequently cited as one of China's "String of Pearls," a network of naval bases across the Indian Ocean that is aimed at establishing a maritime presence. This concept aligns with theories advanced by US naval historian Alfred Thayer Mahan, who asserted that naval power was integral to achieving great power status. However, China stated as early as 2012 that it did not intend to establish a military presence in the Indian Ocean. This stance contrasts with India's perspective (*The Hindu* 2012).

1.3.2 Critical Analysis of Impact of CPEC on Pakistan's Strategic Culture through the lens of Geo-Economics

Pakistan's strategic culture and its engagement with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) represent a dynamic interplay of geopolitical and geo-economic forces (Saini 2021). The application of geo-economic theory in understanding this relationship offers valuable insights into the underlying motivations, challenges, and potential outcomes (Krugman 1998). Geo-economic theory provides a lens through which to analyse the intersection of economic interests, geopolitical strategies, and national security concerns. In the case of Pakistan and CPEC, this framework highlights the significance of economic development as a tool for achieving strategic objectives, such as enhancing regional connectivity, promoting trade, and addressing infrastructure deficiencies (Alam, Hussain, and Bogheiry 2023). Moreover, geo-economic considerations illuminate the competition and cooperation dynamics among states vying for regional influence, particularly between Pakistan, China, and India.

To fully grasp the implications of Pakistan's strategic culture and its engagement with CPEC, it is essential to contextualise these developments within the country's historical trajectory.

Pakistan's geostrategic location, bordered by Afghanistan, China, India, and Iran, has long shaped its foreign policy priorities and security calculus (Umair, Bazai, and Rehman 2021). The historic alliance with the United States during the Cold War, followed by a pivot towards China in recent decades, underscores the evolving dynamics of Pakistan's strategic orientation and partnerships. While CPEC offers Pakistan significant opportunities for economic growth, infrastructure development, and energy security, it also presents various challenges and risks. These include concerns over debt sustainability, geopolitical rivalries, domestic opposition, and security threats from insurgent groups (Khan and Liu 2019). Moreover, the asymmetrical nature of the Pakistan-China relationship raises questions about the long-term implications for Pakistan's sovereignty, economic autonomy, and strategic alignment.

The security dimension of Pakistan's engagement with CPEC cannot be overstated, given the country's history of internal conflict, external threats, and regional instability. The corridor traverses volatile regions such as Balochistan and KPK, where insurgent groups and separatist movements pose security risks to infrastructure projects and personnel (Kuszevska and Agnieszka 2021). Additionally, the perceived alignment of CPEC with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has raised concerns among neighboring states and global powers, contributing to geopolitical tensions and security dilemmas (Mahmood and Askari 2022). Pakistan's strategic culture and its approach to CPEC are further shaped by diplomatic maneuvering aimed at balancing competing interests and maximizing gains. This entails cultivating closer ties with China as a strategic partner while maintaining relations with other key stakeholders, including the United States, Saudi Arabia, and the European Union (Hyder 2022). Diplomatic engagements, such as multilateral forums, bilateral negotiations, and track-two dialogues, play a crucial role in shaping the narrative surrounding CPEC and managing geopolitical complexities.

To be more precise on the application of geo-economic theory on Pakistan strategic culture due to the China's rise and its flagship project of BRI, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is very relevant. Since the geo-economic theory focuses on the use of an economic instruments to achieve geo-political objectives, therefore it provides a lens to understand the interplay between the economic initiatives and the strategic behaviours of Pakistan. The geoeconomic theory emphasizes the geo-economics to achieve geopolitical aims. In this context, the CPEC is used as economic statecraft while using economic tools to influence the international arena to achieve its strategic objectives. The interdependence as a key element of geo-economic theory can alter the relationship and power dynamics with other states and influences its own strategic decision making. Pakistan can use economic leverage due to the CPEC and can exert pressure on India to shape geo-political landscape. Since economic strength of every nation is important for its national security, hence Pakistan can strengthen its national security while strengthening its economy due to China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), thereby increasing its geo-political influence. The economic foundations of Pakistan will be strengthened due to CPEC, and a shift has been observed in strategic priorities considering economic stability as key to the national security. This in turn leads to a comprehensive approach to the national security of Pakistan while integrating economic benefits and strategic opportunities came as result of CPEC.

1.4 Strategic Culture Theory

The notion of strategic culture has gained significant importance in international relations, especially as a means to elucidate the unique strategic actions of states by considering their distinct strategic characteristics (Lock 2017). The strategy encompasses many dimensions, one of which is culture. Culture consists of the enduring, though not eternal, socially transmitted ideas, attitudes, traditions, mindsets, and preferred methods of operation that are relatively

specific to a particular geographically based security community with a unique historical experience. A given community may host multiple strategic cultures, much like there are distinct military cultures associated with specific missions or geographical environments. Additionally, strategic cultures can evolve over time as new experiences are absorbed, interpreted, and culturally translated. However, cultural change tends to be a gradual process (Lock 2017). Strategic Culture offers a fresh perspective within the study of International Relations. Emerging in 1977, this concept was introduced by Jack Snyder, a pioneer in strategic culture theory. In his seminal essay, “The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operation,” Snyder observed unique behaviours in the Soviet Union's response to U.S. nuclear strategies. These behaviours were difficult to explain using the dominant Cold War era theory of neorealism, highlighting the need for alternative frameworks to understand state actions (Hudaya and Putri 2008). Snyder argued that a state's behaviour is influenced by its unique cultural attributes, forming a strategic culture. He noted that the United States failed to accurately predict the Soviet Union's actions because it neglected the cultural factors influencing Soviet policymakers. According to Snyder, elements such as cultural mindset, emotional biases, historical heritage, military culture, and the military's role in policy-making are crucial for understanding a state's behaviour through the lens of strategic culture (Snyder 1977). Strategic culture is defined as the inherited conceptions and shared beliefs that shape a nation's collective identity, influence the values that determine how a country evaluates its interests, and establish the norms guiding a state's understanding of the best means to achieve its goals in a competitive international system. These concepts are crucial for national security managers as they make decisions about responding to their strategic environment, both internally and externally. While it is clear that strategic culture plays a significant role, precisely how it influences decision-making remains challenging to articulate (Tellis, Szalwinski, and Wills 2016).

1.4.1 Yitzhak Klein: Strategic Cultural Theory

The second wave of strategic cultural thought was led by Yitzhak Klein (1991) in his article "A Theory of Strategic Culture." Klein began by criticising the lack of strategic thinkers capable of developing reliable war strategies to achieve national interests in the post-Clausewitz era. He argued that strategic planners often focus solely on seemingly sufficient and consistent principles, identifying various relevant facts to create a logical framework for strategy. However, Klein contended that this approach is insufficient for crafting a reliable strategy. He emphasised that understanding a strategy requires not only an examination of a country's national policies but also an analysis of its strategic cultural factors (Johnston 1995).

In Klein's (1991) explanation, strategic culture is defined as "the set of attitudes and beliefs held within a military establishment concerning the political objective of war and the most effective strategy and operational method of achieving it." Essentially, Klein's conception of strategic culture focuses on the establishment of military power, emphasising its use to achieve political goals in war, with war being an extension of politics (Henrikki 2002). This suggests that the beliefs and attitudes prevalent within a country's military significantly influence the formation of its strategic culture. Like Snyder (1977), Klein (1991) asserts that each country possesses a unique strategic culture shaped by its specific historical, geographical, cultural, political, economic, and technological contexts. Thus, the discourse on strategic culture primarily revolves around military issues and the use of the military to achieve political objectives in conflict (Macmillan 1996).

1.4.2 Iain Johnston: Strategic Cultural Theory

Iain Johnston (1995) observed that the third generation of strategic cultural thought tends to be more rigorous and eclectic in conceptualising independent ideational variables, focusing more narrowly on specific strategic decisions as dependent variables. Johnston (1995) defines

strategic culture as an integrated "system of symbols (e.g., argumentation structures, languages, analogies, metaphors) which acts to establish pervasive and long-term strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs." This means that a country's strategic culture is shaped by internally developed symbols (Johnston 1995). These symbols are closely tied to the national culture of thinking. As noted by earlier scholars such as Snyder (1977) and Klein (1991), a nation's unique thought culture significantly influences the formulation of its strategy (Synder 1977).

In his work "Thinking about Strategic Culture," Johnston (1995) outlines two methods for analysing a state's strategic culture: cognitive mapping and symbol analysis. Cognitive mapping aims to capture the structure of an individual's causal assertions related to a specific policy domain and to describe the consequences of that structure (Waldron 1996). To construct a cognitive map, scholars should examine official documents and speeches by government authorities, mapping the causes and effects outlined in these sources to the policies enacted. On the other hand, symbolic analysis is crucial in studying strategic culture because a country's cultural aspects significantly influence its strategy and policy. Symbols represent the culture itself; the culture within a country is communicated through these symbols, making it possible to study the underlying cultural influences on strategic decisions (Lizardo 2016).

1.4.3 Pakistan's Strategic Culture and its Engagement with China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

China has increasingly attracted the interest of many international relations scholars, particularly following its opening in the post-Mao Zedong era and its subsequent rapid rise in global significance (Knight 2003). China's evolving role in Pakistan provides an opportunity to observe China in a learning mode, navigate a challenging environment, and participate in the longstanding rivalry between Pakistan and India (Ranjan 2021). China's substantial investments in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) can be understood in at least

three ways: showcasing China's appeal as a partner, demonstrating the exportability of China's development model, and leveraging Pakistan in its strategic competition with the United States and India. The project also provides a frame with economic initiatives and an infrastructure network, providing a base for regional integration and an opportunity for trade between China and Pakistan, resulting in shared prosperity (Alam, Hussain, and Bogheiry). Pakistan's expectations for CPEC are tempered by China's apparent disinterest in establishing an overland transit corridor and its counter-terrorism concerns. It will likely remain a persistent issue against China's ambitions for geopolitical gains rather than geo-economic gains (Garlick 2018).

Moreover, there is a growing potential that China's increased involvement in Pakistan could heighten the threat Pakistan poses to India, especially if China expands its military presence and Pakistan continues to support the Kashmir cause. This situation could further motivate the deepening of the U.S.-India partnership in response to the shared threat from China and Pakistan. The success of China's investments will continue to be jeopardised by Pakistan's political and economic instability. The United States could provide targeted support to help Pakistan optimise the use of Chinese infrastructure to bolster its economy, potentially contributing to Pakistan's improvement and stabilisation (Ismail 2023).

Pakistan currently faces numerous economic and strategic challenges, necessitating a plan to enhance its economic strength. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is designed to address these issues by improving economic and security conditions (Khaskheli et al. 2023). Gwadar Port is poised to become the primary hub for Pakistan's trade and economy. The corridor aims to develop the underprivileged areas of Balochistan and the Punjab region, strengthening economic and trade relations between the two allied nations. CPEC involves the land route connecting Gwadar Port directly to the Kashgar Dry Port and linking to the

Shanghai seaport via a 5,200-kilometer route, facilitating China's export and import activities. This substantial investment by China is motivated by the corridor's shorter and safer routes. Additionally, CPEC is expected to help alleviate Pakistan's energy crisis, as both countries have invested heavily in this project (Ismail 2023).

The implementation of CPEC is expected to enhance security cooperation between Pakistan and China, a crucial aspect of this extensive project, particularly in their joint efforts against terrorism and extremism. India opposes this major initiative and creates obstacles in various ways, resisting both peace and prosperity in Pakistan and Beijing's economic influence in the region. The stability of the corridor relies on imported commodities and tranquility. Furthermore, the strategic importance of the Arabian Sea to both nations necessitates a mutual security arrangement, as the U.S. presence in the region poses several threats due to its strong influence and security ties with the Gulf States (Ismail 2023).

To complete the CPEC project, all involved nations must politically engage with regional stakeholders and address the associated risks rationally. CPEC will help China counter U.S. influence in Asia and has strengthened China's position in the Middle East with Pakistan's support (Javed and Ismail 2021). Maintaining the strategic importance of CPEC amidst an unstable political government, poor administrative and institutional performance, and terrorism is a significant challenge for both nations. Pakistan could become the region's economic hub if these obstacles are overcome. However, the United States, India, and Israel could present barriers, posing challenges to China and Pakistan. Additionally, Pakistan faces internal conflicts in two key provinces, KPK and Balochistan, which further complicate the situation (Rizvi 2014).

Balochistan is the focus point of the corridor since Gwadar Port is located there. The region faces political and military unrest due to India's presence. Its proximity to Iran and Afghanistan

further enhances Balochistan's significance. India has utilised its resources to foster terrorism in Balochistan, undermining Pakistan's integrity and creating insecurity for the project (Z. Shah 2017). Perceived geopolitical gains could take precedence over economic ones. Pakistan's military establishment views a deeper economic relationship with China, even if it favours Beijing, as a counterbalance to increasing U.S. diplomatic and economic pressure to cease support for militant proxies targeting Afghanistan and India. However, as China expands its economic presence in Pakistan, it becomes increasingly concerned about the threats these proxies pose to its national and regional security interests. Additionally, unequal benefits and perceptions that CPEC projects undermine the economic, social, and political interests of key stakeholders could exacerbate anti-Chinese sentiment within Pakistan. This tension is evidenced by several attacks on Pakistanis employed in CPEC projects ("China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Opportunities and Risks | Crisis Group", 2018).

The immense and daunting responsibility for the successful execution of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is significantly challenged by security threats. Pakistan, a country deeply affected by terrorism and extremism, faces continuous internal conflict among various religious factions over minor doctrinal differences. The nation is fragmented along lines of sect, caste, and creed, and the persistent disparity between the affluent and the impoverished has exacerbated the situation. These internal security issues have undermined Pakistan's socio-economic framework and contributed to socio-political instability. Since its inception, Pakistan has encountered numerous threats and challenges, but the security landscape has dramatically shifted post-9/11. Currently, new security challenges, both conventional and unconventional, have surfaced. These include separatist movements, extremism, terrorism, sectarian violence, political and economic instability, feudal conflicts, poor law enforcement, social media and political unrest. Such challenges pose significant risks to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) (Mughis and Siddiqui 2021).

Pakistan and China share a deep-rooted friendship, often described as "higher than the mountains and sweeter than honey." This profound bond is evident in their strong bilateral relations and historical ties since independence. The multi-billion-dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) are set to be transformative for Pakistan's economy. China's strategic aim to shorten its trade routes and gain access to the Arabian Sea has further strengthened its bond with Pakistan. The growing economic ties between Pakistan and China are expected to bring peace and stability to the troubled regions of both countries, including Balochistan and Xinjiang. This study delves into the security challenges, threats, and grievances in Sindh, Balochistan, KPK, and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). It also examines the political, law, and order situations. Despite being a frontline state in the war on terrorism and suffering significant impacts since 9/11, Pakistan has faced challenges where external state actors have supported local insurgents in targeting foreign workers on various CPEC projects, as per Indian design. Insurgency in Balochistan is being supported to counter the CPEC project. (Shah, Hussain, and Rasheed 2020).

The Pakistan Army and government are unwavering in their commitment to completing the CPEC project as swiftly as possible, reflecting a national consensus. Significant measures have been implemented to ensure the project's security (Malik and Jamil 2023). The Pakistan Army, deeply involved in CPEC security, has established a special task force led by an Army General to protect Chinese workers and companies involved in the corridor. The Pakistan Navy has also created a task force to safeguard the corridor and Gwadar Port from traditional and non-traditional threats. This issue has garnered broad national consensus, with almost all political parties reaching some level of agreement. To ensure success, addressing internal weaknesses, unresolved conflicts, and grievances is crucial, particularly in Balochistan, which external forces can easily exploit. The CPEC project, a multibillion-dollar initiative, should be widely

promoted among the general populace of Pakistan through print, digital, and social media. Raising awareness about the project's benefits will help foster a consensus and support.

The involvement of other countries such as Russia, Germany, and various European powers would not only enhance the stability of the CPEC project but also render it more significant and viable. Russian participation could address numerous challenges and facilitate the sharing of advanced technologies. Additionally, Russia's burgeoning military ties with Pakistan suggest the potential for future economic and military collaborations between the two nations. Interest in the project extends beyond Russia, with Iran, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Egypt expressing keen interest. This growing international attention indicates a promising outlook for Pakistan. Despite external pressures from the USA and India, Pakistan and China remain steadfast in their commitment to making CPEC a successful venture and a focal point for economic activities in the future.

It is notable that certain Gulf States regard CPEC with suspicion and oppose its success. Their apprehension stems from the potential threat posed to their interests if CPEC reaches its full potential. The development and prosperity of Gwadar city, port, and the associated free trade zone could emerge as a direct competitor to Dubai Port. Dubai, the largest port, stands to see its significance diminished with the establishment of Gwadar port. This shift could also impact the revenues of other ports in the Persian Gulf region.

1.4.4 Application of Strategic Culture Theory on the Impact of CPEC on Strategic Culture of Pakistan

Strategic culture's elements include a state's historical experiences, geo-political context, ideological foundations and institutional influences. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will boost the economic conditions of the state, which in turn will enhance its strategic

implications, further adding to the national power. It will reflect a shift towards a more comprehensive national strategy. The geopolitical reorientation of Pakistan will be calibrated through the success of the Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) by strengthening its relations with China and decreasing the influence of Western powers, especially the USA. The intersection of security and economy has changed the institutional dynamics, and now, the military plays an important role in the state's economic affairs. The same has been reflected in Pakistan's national security policy, and the role of the military in establishing and functioning the Special Investment Facilitation Centre is another indicator of the change in Pakistan's strategic culture. Narrative and identity are also important elements of strategic culture. The symbol of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a “game changer” and China as an everlasting friend of Pakistan has reinforced the notion that Pakistan strongly relies on external support for its economy and security. This narrative influences the political discourse and public opinion, further embedding the elements of strategic culture.

Theories play an important part in explaining any issue in the realm of international relations. The chapter's theoretical framework explains three theories and their relevance to Pakistan's CPEC and strategic culture. The strategic culture theory explains how strategic culture has evolved, how it is impacted, and how it can be transformed and changed. The realist theory explains how a state pursues its interests in the anarchic system. The geo-economic theory compliments how the geo-economic interests of CPEC shape the strategic culture of Pakistan.

CHAPTER TWO

Dynamics of Strategic Culture

International relations can be traced back to Greek city-states, where the ancient people sought to maintain relationships to pursue their socio-cultural and political ambitions. For example, on the eve of the Peloponnesian War, the Athenian *strategos* Pericles and the Spartan leader Archidamus sought to assess the balance between Athens and Sparta to determine whether it made sense to go to war with their rival. Their appraisals of the balance between the two city-states included not only economic and military factors but also contained an appreciation of the social and cultural influences that would shape Athenian and Spartan behaviour in times of war (Kartchner, Bowen, and Johnson 2023). Consequently, subsequent states evolved to build relationships upon the logic of their nationalistic approaches. Therefore, the underlying reasoning of this field has remained unchanged and static. More arguably, the core objective of international relationships was to address the conflicting issues among the nations to avoid war and maintain peace and stability.

It is accepted that contemporary states invest heavily in maintaining purposeful and future-oriented international relations to secure their national interests. Moreover, the survival of a nation lies in the determination of meaningful relations with others. Isolation from the rest of the world is detrimental to the state's progress. The realist approach asserted that material self-sufficiency and capabilities play a key role in maintaining international relations. Because intentions are subject to change circumstantially or even overnight, but material capabilities require a decade of protracted human efforts, skill, and resources (Yahaya 2018).

Due to this reasoning, the realist thinker Gilpin regarded economic self-sufficiency, advanced military equipment, and modern technological capabilities as the state's power (Gilpin 1981).

Most often, the underdeveloped states, too, spend heavily on security even at the cost of their economic and political development. War is understood as an indelible factor in maintaining harmony among the states. In such a competitive socio-political international scenario, states are fully mindful of war and other conflicting situations. Certainly, war is an enduring permanent element of the international system.

War has intense implications for the evolution of world politics and has remained an important determinant of the international system. What are the causes of war? How might the world be made more peaceful? In this landmark work of international relations theory, first published in 1959, the eminent realist scholar Kenneth N. Waltz offers a foundational analysis of the nature of conflict between states. He explores works by classic political philosophers, such as St. Augustine, Hobbes, Kant, and Rousseau, as well as modern psychologists and anthropologists, to discover ideas intended to explain war among states and related prescriptions for peace. Waltz influentially distinguishes among three “images” of the origins of war: those that blame individual leaders or human nature, those rooted in states’ internal composition, and those concerning the structure of the international system. With a foreword by Stephen M. Walt on the legacy and continued relevance of Waltz’s work, this edition brings new life to a perennial international relations classic (Walt 1957). Due to war’s centrality and occurrences, a distinct field of strategy, the art of general, has emerged. Strategy cannot be reduced from international relations because all resources, including security, are limited, and states compete for them. If there were a state of abundance and plenitude in this world, there would have been no conflict and, consequently, no use in raising militaries and conducting foreign relations. Within the broader field of strategy, a specialised area of expertise on strategic culture has emerged, which studies the determinants of a nation’s strategic behaviour related to the use of military force and the conduct of foreign relations. As Ken Booth contends, a nation’s strategic culture influences the parameters of a nation’s behaviour towards the issues of war and peace but is not

the sole determinant (Booth 1990). Talcott Parsons defines culture as “Comprised of 'interpretive codes' including language, values, and even substantive beliefs like the support of democracy or the futility of war”.

2.1 Evolution of the Idea and Definitional Debates

In a particular socio-political and territorial set-up, a strategic culture reflects a set of collective beliefs, ethical norms, religious or societal values and conventions that determine a nation's present and future approach. The approaches further outline using military force to combat the enemy. The approaches also incorporate the deeply in-built, along with novel ideas and attitudes of a society. Such ideologies and cultural norms of a state reflect during times of peril when a country tackles its security challenges. The formulation of strategic objectives, political wisdom and use of military power might be the outcome of strategic culture (Snyder 1977). The philosophy of strategic culture states that all the existing nations of the world have distinct, well-suited ways of strategic affairs befitting their national interests (Johnston 1995). It highlights that rational calculations such as geographical location, military force, and economic stability are key factors in maintaining strategic behaviour. It also focuses on the significance of cultural history and societal preferences in forming a nation's strategic choices.

2.2 Key Elements of Strategic Culture

Strategic culture is an amalgamation of fundamental beliefs, norms, rituals, and moralities a particular society holds (Booth 1990). The factors above are meaningful determinants in the arrangements of security matters and bilateral and multilateral international relations. The states increase or decrease their military force after considering the strategic culture. Strategic culture also helps reconcile matters in an already existing war situation. Hence, these beliefs often build a perception of external threats among the masses and give insights into its strategic

objectives. Therefore, international relations are embedded with past, present, and future strategic culture (Glišić 2020).

In this context, historical experiences, old conflicts, and memories collectively play an important role in forming a nation's strategic culture. In addition, strategic culture is the outcome of historical good or worst experiences and the failures or successes of a nation. On the one hand, the failures influence a country's strategic outlook and narrate military doctrines. While success builds perceptions of its capabilities and milestones (Barthel 1996).

Strategic culture also draws a comprehensive decision-making process for the state's political and military institutions. Government structure, the behaviour of politicians and military leaders and their internal relationship, whether harmonious or competitive, are all the outcomes of strategic culture. Furthermore, power sharing between the military and the civilian leaders and their influence over the bureaucratic system might be a true reflection of strategic culture (Farrell 1998). Strategic culture also defines a nation's temperament towards natural disasters, tolerance, and approaches to managing internal or external crises. Societal factors, such as public opinion, civil-military relations, and the broader socio-political context, shape a nation's strategic culture. Public attitudes towards war, national security, and the use of force can influence a government's decision-making and its ability to sustain military engagements (Ali 2022).

Comprehension of a state's strategic culture is equally very crucial for analysts and policymakers. It gives an insight for future's short- and long-term goals. It further helps in formulating threat perceptions, preferred strategies about defense and security. By recognising the cultural factors that shape a nation's strategic behaviour, policymakers can better anticipate responses, manage conflicts, and develop effective strategies for engagement and cooperation (Lantis 2003).

In its futuristic importance, strategic culture became an ongoing debate among academicians, analysts, and law-making experts. Different approaches, e.g., the behavioural, system, and institutional approaches, help analyse strategic culture. Political scientists compare these approaches with the strategic culture of a nation (Lantis 2003).

2.3 The Scope of Strategic Culture

Values and Beliefs. Strategic culture exhibits society's basic socio-political and religious values and beliefs. These values may be called the ideology of that nation as an identification and recognition worldwide. These serve as the basis for sorting out a country's international relations. For instance, if a country holds a strong peaceful tradition, it might have adopted a strategic culture that highlights diplomacy, reconciliation and a non-violent attitude (Mitręga and Kozub 2019).

Historical Experience. It is noted that historical events related to war or peace and shared memories of a nation form its strategic culture. Successes in the past or failures at various ends largely influence a country's response to external threats. Therefore, historical experiences provide a pattern of how a country observes threats. It also outlines an appropriate approach to combat against the enemy. Historic narratives and mythology often play a major role in shaping strategic cultures (Drozdewski, Nardi, and Waterton 2016).

Institutional Factors. A state's institutional structures and governance system also shape strategic culture. These include the army's administration, the character and participation of civilian leaders, and the cross-interactions of different branches/institutions of government. Institutional aspects shape decision-making processes, tolerance, and the level of civil-military relationships.

Socio-political Factors. In the context of a society's socio-political and economic set-up, Political systems, opinions, and civil-military relations greatly impact strategic culture. For example, a highly democratic system with high public accountability might have a more viable strategic culture. Equal participation in foreign policy decisions might produce a different strategic culture as compared to a dictatorial regime (Reiter and Stam 2002).

Understanding a nation's strategic culture is crucial for policymakers and analysts as it helps explain and predict a country's behavior in international relations, military doctrines, and responses to various security challenges. By recognising the role of cultural factors, policymakers can better anticipate and manage potential conflicts and develop effective strategies for engagement and cooperation. It is important to note that strategic culture is a subject of ongoing debate among scholars, and different theories and approaches exist to study and analyse it.

2.4 Importance of Understanding Strategic Culture in International Relations and Security Studies

Understanding strategic culture is of great importance in the fields of international relations and security studies for several reasons:

Predicting Behavior. Strategic culture gives valuable insights into a nation's outlook. Its temperament to maintain healthy international relations can be drawn from strategic culture. Analysts can make comparatively more accurate predictions by enlightening a country's cultural background, decision-making processes, and underlying values. This prediction might be helpful in its strategic choices and reactions to various challenging circumstances. Resultantly, such comprehension can help in predicting future conflicts and measuring the risk of acceleration (Adobor 2021).

Conflict Resolution. Recognising and understanding the strategic cultures of different nations is crucial for successful conflict resolution. It is understood that all countries of the world have their unique set of convictions, principles, and norms that outline their strategic behaviour. (Avruch 1999). By identifying cultural factors, policymakers and analysts can easily identify potential areas of finding the middle ground to develop strategies. The outcome and implications of such policies are more likely to be acceptable to all stakeholders unanimously. Therefore, to restore peacebuilding in warfare or to maintain stability in normal circumstances, strategic culture holds the primary position.

Enhancing Diplomatic Engagement. Acknowledging strategic culture maintains diplomatic engagement among the nations. Political representatives and policymakers are mindful of the fact that the cultural sensitivities of their opponents can tailor their approaches at an international level (Ang, Isar, and Mar 2015). In this context, their messages would be more efficient and reverential. By admitting and recognising the strategic culture of other countries, diplomatic relationships can contribute to building trust, raising cooperation, and realising mutually favourable outcomes.

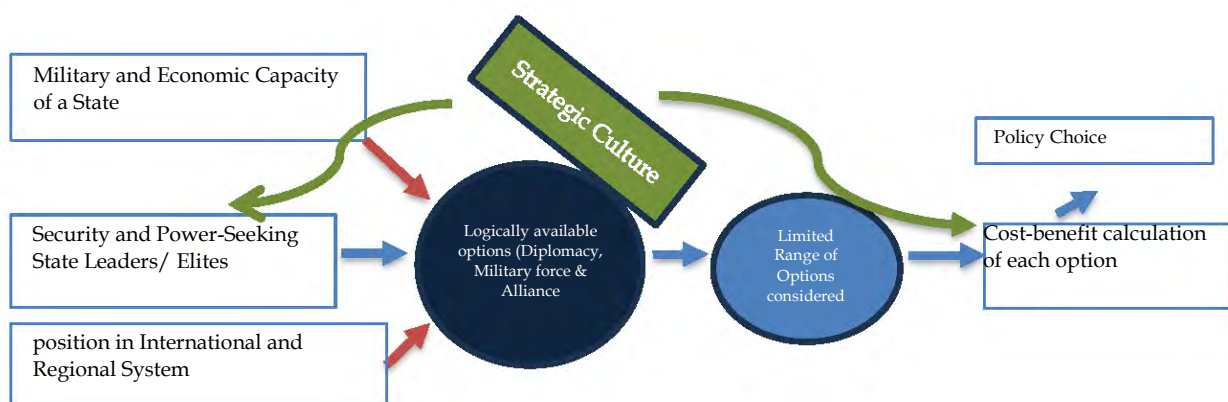
Policy Formulation and Decision-Making. To present an aligned future policy embedded with the ground realities, strategic culture provides an in-depth understanding of the present and a pure background of history (Schneider 1989). After comprehensive analysis, it becomes easy for policymakers to formulate the state's security plans and the military future strategy. Hence, strategic culture deals with the cultural context in the light of historical experiences about social behaviours and attitudes, so an analogy of these factors might have become implementable (Bloomfield 2012). For instance, if policymakers formulate a security policy contrary to the strategic culture, it may not be practicable in its true letter and spirit. Such contrast would create unimaginable hurdles in the implementation of security plans. Thus,

understanding improves in determining exact approaches that assemble with a nation's cultural values, and such planning is more likely to be operational in achieving the set desired goals.

Managing Security Challenges. Strategic culture plays a substantial role in how a particular nation's masses understand, and counter expected security challenges. Therefore, the strategic cultures of all the countries around the globe give policymakers insight. The policymakers formulate the policy within this framework and conceptual understanding (Bloomfield 2012). Thus, strategic culture records a nation's behavioural response to external threats, invasions, and emergencies. Representatives can develop defence and security plans by considering the historical context. This understanding assists policymakers in elaborating more applicable strategies for managing challenges such as violence, local conflicts, and atomic explosions.

Arguably, complete insight into the strategic culture is indispensable for grasping the rationales, decision-making, and performances of nations in international relations (Schneider 1989). It supplies constructive insights for foreseeing behaviour, resolving clashes, improving diplomatic engagement, and formulating effective policies. Therefore, strategic culture gives policymakers a framework for framing a more unique and operational approach to international relations and security matters.

Fig 3 : Strategic Culture and Decision-Making Process



2.5 Historical Development of the Concept of Strategic Culture

It is seen that the perception of strategic culture has grown over time. Various social scientists' scholars and researchers presented their evolutionary theories. Since scientists have been dispersed worldwide, there is no single origin point for the concept. However, it came into the limelight after half of the 20th century. Following is a brief overview of the historical development and the evolutionary process of the strategic culture (Artamonov, Lukin, and Musienko 2020).

Early Influences (1950s-1960s)

The beginnings of this phenomenon can be drawn from the works of military historians and strategists. These concerned people investigated the influence of cultural influences on warfare. Prominent scholars and military historians, e.g. Hans Delbrück and Carl von Clausewitz, highlighted the facts about how cultural and moral values and historical experiences refined military strategies and results (Lantis 2009) Their discourses provided the substance for the foundation and comprehension of culture in a country's strategic affairs.

Foundational Works (1970s-1980s).

The perception of strategic culture started gaining more consideration in the 1970s and 1980s through the contribution of eminent scholars. The foremost figure among them was Jack Snyder. In his book "The Ideology of the Offensive: Military Decision Making and the Disasters of 1914" (1984), he accentuated the function of cultural beliefs and principles in modelling military decision (Synder 1984) .

Another substantial contributor was Colin S. Gray, who discovered the correlation between culture and strategy policy in his book *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War* (1996).

Gray emphasised the importance of realising the cultural context in making strategic decisions. (Murray, Bernstein, and Knox 1996).

Anthropological Perspective (1980s-1990s).

Eminent anthropologists, such as Janice Gross Stein and Samuel P. Huntington, worked hard to develop this phenomenon. They stressed the significance of cultural elements in making security plans and ascertaining strategic behaviour (Jeffrey Lantis,. In this framework, Huntington's discourse "The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order" (1997) explored that cultural diversities play a crucial role. He gave historical examples of conflicts and alliances during and after the Cold War era (Huntington 1997).

Expansion of Research (1990s-Present)

During the 1990s and beyond, exploration through research on strategic culture expanded to incorporate a wider range of related disciplines. This was the period when new disciplines in the field of social sciences emerged, e.g., sociology (scientific study of society), political science (scientific investigation of political affairs), and international relations. Prominent scholars Peter Katzenstein (Katzenstein 1996), Alastair Iain Johnston, and Lawrence Freedman presented their discourses to shed light on better understanding of strategic culture. Through their profound research, they brought a revolution in the field of social sciences. For example, they disintegrate Psychology from sociology and cultural study. The rest of the regions also applied and adopted these emerging concepts as a distinct science. Meanwhile, they concluded and explored different strategic cultures of different nations worldwide, like the strategic cultures of the United States, China, Russia, and Japan. Therefore, the abovementioned research has shed light on how cultural factors influence a nation's security policies, military doctrines, and approaches to international relations. It gave an intellectual discourse to enhance

strategic culture's significance in formulating effective policies. It is tested that the outcome of such policies has been result-oriented.

2.6 Critiques and Debates

Despite its numerous advantages, strategic culture has not been free from criticism and diverse debates in the fields of international relations and security policy planning. The following are some of the major critiques that raised questions about the practical implementation of the theory of strategic culture.

Lack of Consistent Definition

The lack of unanimous agreement on its definition is the main assessment and critique of strategic culture. Scholars and researchers have interpreted the concept in diverse ways according to the prevailing socio-economic set-up. Therefore, comparing and utilising the concept in different regional contexts leads to confusion and disputes. Lack of agreement and consensus hinders the development of an integrated theoretical framework of the strategic culture (Johnston 1995).

Determinism versus Agency

The critics argued that strategic culture manages to imply solely upon level of determinism. It suggests that a state's strategic conduct is exclusively based on cultural factors and past experiences. Notwithstanding, by neglecting the political wisdom of the rulers and far sight of decision-makers, political influence of leaders, institutional set-up of the state, domestic politics and governance have been undermined (Gray 1999).

Operationalisation and Measurement

The second problem with strategic culture is the difficulty of executing it and testing it on empirical grounds. It is a multifaceted and complicated notion covering various cultural, historical, and socio-economic factors. Quantification and accurate measurement of these factors might be challenging for policy-making authorities. Therefore, it leads to disputes about the consistency and rationality of empirical studies about implementing strategic culture.

Oversimplification and Generalization

Strategic culture tends to oversimplify or over-generalize a nation's belief system, prevailing values, and behaviour adaptation (Adobor 2021). However, not all societies are homogenous. Instead, many societies worldwide are heterogeneous, and the theory of strategic culture neglects the internal diversity of such societies. It has also undermined the conflicting opinions and contrasting views among the diverse segments of society. Thus, the differences in strategic behaviour are not usually described by the idea of strategic culture (Baylis, Wirtz, and Johnson 2022).

Impact of External Factors

The sole consideration of the internal strategic culture completely negates the impacts of external /international influences. The analysts believe that strategic culture puts much emphasis and reliability on internal culture, which might produce irrelevant decisions. The analysts asserted that geopolitical concerns, international patterns, dynamics, and power politics influence a nation's strategic conduct. Therefore, focusing solely on cultural elements could restrict the analysis of decision-makers. The output may result in an incomplete and inaccurate picture.

Evolving Nature of Culture

It is ascertained that culture is not static; it evolves into a new phenomenon and takes a refined shape (Dennett 2001). The critics believe that the notion of strategic culture is mostly not fully aware of the cultural transformation and adaptations of new trends. The culture also absorbs innovative norms and new practices after the cultural fusion or mixture of diverse cultural interactions. It usually happens circumstantially or as a response to unexpected new challenges, when new trends tend to be included in already existing culture. Therefore, it becomes necessary to incorporate the ever-changing nature of culture and its possible transformation. Some societies possess multiple cultural dynamics; hence, no single parameter is suitable to ascertain strategic culture in formulating international policies.

Alternative Explanatory Factors

The emerging social scientists of the twentieth century suggested that other theoretical frameworks, i.e. rational choice or the realist theoretical framework, provide ample explanations for the determination of the strategic behaviour of a particular society. In this regard, the need for strategic culture becomes out of the question and irrelevant. They asserted authentic and alternative frameworks because these are based on rational designs, material concerns, and power dynamic forces. Resultantly, these theoretical frameworks offer more complete descriptions of a society's behavioural outlook in maintaining international relations. These assessments and critical debates presented a deeper comprehension of the strengths, limitations, and associated complications of the theory of strategic culture.

2.7 Origins of Strategic Culture as a Concept

The emergence of the theory of strategic culture is traced back to the end of the 20th century. Notwithstanding, it was a conundrum of the tireless efforts of social scientists and researchers.

It is observed that there is no single region of its evolution, and multiple factors contributed to shaping the theory of strategic culture. Therefore, several worth mentioning key factors are as follows.

Military History and Strategy

The institution of the military, its historical background and its inheritance drew the need to create an analogy between the strategic culture and the military dynamics. The strategists in this regard, Hans Delbrück, and Carl von Clausewitz, discovered the influence of cultural elements on conflict. Their works stressed the significance of historical experiences, national honour, values and norms in forming military strategies (Lantis 2009). These initial perceptions laid the foundation for recognising the role of culture in strategic matters.

Behaviorism and Social Sciences

The behavioural school of thought evolved in the creation of distinct social sciences disciplines during the middle phase of the 20th century. They further presented novel strategic concepts that later moved away from the material and rational state behaviour considerations. This shift in focus towards understanding the impact of cultural beliefs, norms, and values on strategic decision-making paved the way for the concept of strategic culture. With the start of a behavioural revolution in the field of social sciences, theorists in the West started mapping the impact of culture on different fields. Two prominent theorists, Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba contended that political culture was a subset of society's values related to the political system (Almond and Verba 1963).

Cold War Context

The Cold War era, marked by ideological conflicts between the United States and the Soviet Union, significantly shaped the concept of strategic culture. The different approaches to nuclear

deterrence, arms control, and military strategies adopted by these two superpowers highlighted the role of cultural factors in shaping strategic behaviour. Scholars began to examine how cultural beliefs and values influenced perceptions of security threats and the formulation of national strategies.

2.8 Foundational Works

Several foundational works furthered the development of the concept of strategic culture. Jack Snyder's book "The Ideology of the Offensive: Military Decision Making and the Disasters of 1914" emphasises the influence of cultural beliefs and doctrines on military decision-making and outcomes. This work underscored the need to consider cultural factors in understanding strategic behaviour.

Colin S. Gray contributed significantly to the concept through his book "The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War". Gray argued that culture shapes strategic behaviour and emphasised the importance of understanding the cultural context within which strategic decisions are made (Cohen 1994).

Anthropological Perspective

International relations theorists and strategists proposed the idea that culture has an irreducible influence on strategic decision-making (Johnson, Kartchner, and Lareson 2009). In this context, anthropological perceptions have also prompted the consideration of strategic culture. Eminent social scientists, e.g. Janice Gross Stein and Samuel P. Huntington investigated the role of culture in identifying national security matters and adopting strategies. Huntington's discourse, "The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order" (1996), contended that cultural transformations play a central role in forming alliances and resolution of conflicts in the post-Cold War era (Huntington 1997).

Thus, these multiple influences of the military history, behavioural approaches in the post-cold War scenario, and influential works by scholars have designed the concept of strategic culture (Lantis 2009). With time, the theory has extended to incorporate new insights from multiple disciplines. The foremost contributory disciplines had been anthropology, sociology, psychology, and political science. These disciplines put the finger on the nerves of society to determine a nuanced understanding of cultural factors. Therefore, by subsiding mythology about the inhabitants of a particular nation, these disciplines provided empirical grounds and rationality for the study of strategic culture. Consequently, ultimate decisions about international relations and strategic culture became more concrete and implementable.

2.9 Key Contributions and Evolution of Strategic Culture Theory

The notion of strategic culture evolved during and after the middle of the 20th century. Various scientists from all over the world have contributed to its development. The following are some of the eminent scientists involved in the evolution of strategic cultural concepts.

Jack Snyder

Jack Snyder's discourse about offensive cultural beliefs remained helpful for military decision-making processes. His ideology was instrumental in forming the early theory of strategic culture. His manuscript "The Ideology of the Offensive: Military Decision Making and the Disasters of 1914" (1984) investigated cultural factors and their influences on the offensive strategies' preferences, performances, and outcomes. Furthermore, it also caused the outbreak of World War I (Synder 1984).

Colin S. Gray

Colin S. Gray made meaningful participation in forming strategic culture theory. His research largely focused on the interaction between strategic preferences and cultural dynamics. His

manuscript "The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War" (1996) accentuated the importance of cultural elements and their influences. The cultural values for giving a baseline for strategic behaviour were the main theme of his research (Murray, Bernstein, and Knox 1996). Gray's work depicted the role of culture in forming strategic reasoning, decision-making, political developments, and military conduct.

Peter Katzenstein

Peter Katzenstein's research, mainly based on prevailing customs in forming international relations, provided further insights into the study of strategic culture. His manuscript "Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics" (1996) stressed the fact about cultural patterns. He made an analogy between the two by comparing different states of the world. Katzenstein contended that common beliefs and morals influence a nation's conduct towards its security. Hence, it contributed to formulating strategic culture (Katzenstein 1996).

Alastair Iain Johnston

Alastair Iain Johnston's examined about the strategic culture of East Asian countries. He particularly selected China as his area of research. In this context, his research has challenged the idea of monolithic strategic culture of China. He laid emphasis about the multiplicity and complexity of thought within China. Therefore, to determine a more reflective strategic culture of all the segments of China, he refuted monolithic strategic culture on these grounds. Johnston's manuscript "Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History" (1995) has given valuable insights into the heterogenous cultural factors of China's strategic behaviour (Johnston 1995).

Lawrence Freedman

Lawrence Freedman has made noteworthy scientific additions to strategic cultural perceptions and theory. His research mainly focused on the cultural dynamics (flexible or static) in forming international strategies. His book "Strategy: A History" (2013) explored the interaction between culture, internal political dynamics, and the strategic decision-making processes (Freedman 2013). Freedman tried to present the importance of cultural elements in forming strategic ideas and the tasks of in-depth understanding of strategic culture.

Expansion of Research

With the passage of time, the study of strategic culture encompassed an extended ground. It covered diverse cultures of numerous regions and countries. Scholars dived deep to unearth the strategic cultures of nations whose cultural dynamics were not discussed from all possible aspects, for instance, the United States, Russia, and Japan. By analysing how cultural factors affect their security plans, military principles, and diplomacies to maintain international relations, the emerging research of scientists left imprints for future scientific invention.

Integration of Interdisciplinary Approaches

The theory of strategic culture has also largely benefitted the formation of interdisciplinary disciplines within the field of social sciences (Libel 2020). So, through the emergence of new interdisciplinary disciplines, the strategic culture became enriched due to the academic input from these disciplines. These intellectual pursuits also strengthened and integrated the interdisciplinary approaches. The researchers drew their insights from anthropology, sociology, psychology, and political science to develop a deeper understanding of cultural elements. Thus, the impact of such strategic behaviour might not be biased in establishing foreign relations. Hence, the interdisciplinary study method supplemented the examination of

strategic culture beyond its scope. It later contributed to all-inclusive understanding and complexities.

More arguably, the development of strategic culture philosophy anticipated a growing need of recognition of cultural factors. The scholars formulate a comprehensive understating and assimilation of strategic culture with foreign relations. The military strategy must be aligned with the cultural behavior of society in shaping strategic behavior. Extended work of numerous eminent scientists has refined and expanded the concept of strategic culture. It incorporated insights from multiple social science disciplines and applied the concept to diverse contexts. It is accepted that research is not a static process its debate is evolving and ongoing to shape and refine the phenomenon of strategic culture.

2.10 Theoretical Approaches to Strategic Culture

Numerous theoretical methods and backgrounds evaluate and understand the strategic culture to develop a more meaningful understanding. These approaches generated different views about the stages of evolution, dynamism of strategic culture in the field of internal relations (Schneider 1989). The following discussion pertains to some important theoretic methods to determine a more practical strategic culture.

Constructivism

The theory of Constructivism highlights the role of ideas, value and practicability of norms, and social structure in the formation of strategic culture (Lantis 2003). According to the theory of constructivism, strategic culture is socially constructed. The collaborations of people, shared beliefs and conventions, and other social and religious norms make them interwoven within a societal hub. Furthermore, the advocates of constructivism contend that cultural elements, e.g., historical events, shared identities, and values, largely form a nation's strategic conduct

and decision-making procedures. They emphasise the significance of cultural patterns and values impact on building of perceptions of threats, strategic concerns, and the interpretation of national strategies.

Cultural Determinism

The cultural determinist method suggests that cultural attributes have an extensive and deterministic influence on forming strategic behaviour. It indicates that a state's culture, values, and historic encounters shape its strategic culture, which in later stages largely formulates policies (Lock 2010). Cultural determinists contend that strategic behavior is intensely rooted in cultural values, and in very rare cases, the deviation can be seen in any cultural setting. This approach focuses on identifying and analysing cultural factors as the primary drivers of strategic behaviour.

Cognitive Approaches

Cognitive methods of strategic culture consider the cognitive reasoning, values, and observations of decision-makers. They investigate how cultural viewpoint and cognitive contexts shape how decision-makers observe and understand strategic situations. Cognitive methods highlight the role of cognitive preferences, models, and cognitive filters in guiding strategic decision-making. These methods emphasise the significance of detecting the cognitive scope of strategic culture and how they form policy choices and performance (Schwenk 1988).

Comparative Analysis

Comparative investigation implies investigating and judging the strategic cultures of different nations or regions all over the world. It seeks to identify commonalities, differences, and

patterns across countries (Johnston 1995). Comparative methods apply for the exploration of the fact about cultural elements variation across different contexts. Resultantly, all these elements form strategic behavior developed in diverse ways. This method helps to discover cultural effects that are explicitly related with certain regions and societies. It is also observed that there are some universal patterns too that prevail across different strategic cultures.

Historical Analysis

Historical investigation implies the study of historic development and an evolutionary process of a particular strategic culture. It investigates the impact of historic practices and encounters, experiences, invasions and setbacks, and victories. These developments shape strategic beliefs, patterns, and formulate future practices. Historic investigation facilitates recognizing the path-dependent character of strategic culture. In that scenario, it is ever evolving and adapts or modify over time. It endures the legacies of past events in framing strategic behavior (Synder 1977).

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis investigates the role of linguistic, socio-political narratives, and discourse in the formulation of strategic culture. It generally focuses on the formation of strategic values and morals which go through communication and reinforcement through discourse. This approach investigates the power changing aspects deeply rooted in strategic descriptions. The role of verbal speech and language in forming opinions, characteristics, and policy choices. Discourse analysis assists in recognizing strategic culture to shape and reproduced through interaction and verbal communication processes (Lynggaard and Triantafillou 2023).

Through the lens of these theoretical methods, a comprehensive understanding develops in the formation, dynamic forces, and impression of strategic culture. Researchers repeatedly drawn

multiple means and contexts to attain a more thorough understanding of strategic culture. Because they are mindful of the fact about its utilization in policy making and maintaining of international relations.

2.11 Manifestation of Strategic Culture in Developed Powers

The role of strategic culture in determining power politics may vary from nation to another. It depends on the country's geo-political location attitude of neighbors and its historical, and cultural circumstance. However, there are some common indicators and attributes that can be examined in strategic cultures (Gray 1999). Few prominent examples are as follows,

Emphasis on Military Power

More often, the developed powers of the world relied on strong military capabilities. For national security purposes, it develops a sense of belief in the importance of military strength. They invest substantial funds in defence and security to maintain advanced military capabilities. This strategic culture often exhibits a historical heritage of dispute, imperialism and great power rivalry (Crowe 1989).

Commitment to Alliances and Collective Security

Developed powers of the world often arrange and prioritise to form alliances. Since collective security agreements are considered the key elements of the strategic culture, they pursue building and retaining solid alliances. Alliances or pacts with like-minded nations are prerequisites for improving internal security and project impact. Hence, these alliances provide basic platforms for organisation, allocation of information, intelligence and burden-sharing to utilize collective defence in a pragmatic way (Kupchan 1988).

Global Engagement and Power Projection

Developed nations of the contemporary world hold such ambitions which tend to have a strategic cultural basis. They often follow a dynamic foreign policy that takes the shape of the global order. The main objective is to protect interests and promote national values. This may involve military involvements and interaction, political initiatives, and economic commitments.

Technological Innovation and Modernization

Developed nations often pursue a specific strategic culture that prioritize technological invention innovation, scientific transformation, and upgradation. They often arrange scientific research and development to enhance defense capabilities. They invest in strategic sectors, aiming to preserve technological advancement and military dominance. Likewise, strategic culture also boosts up the technological upgrading of states (Schühly 2022). This strategic culture usually stems from a belief in the significance of advanced expertise for upholding security and economic affordability.

Emphasis on Economic Interests and Trade

Developed and advanced states of the world commonly have a strategic culture that identifies the significance of economic security, trade and commerce for national security and development (Jaruszewski 2017). They prioritize economic contracts and agreements, free trade, and the protection of economic apprehensions abroad. Financial considerations play a considerable role in their external policy decision-making and premeditated decisions more often.

Multilateralism and Institutional Engagement

Developed states of the world are determined to formulate a strategic culture emphasising the multilateralism phenomenon and promoting active engagement in international associations. They further involve controlling global institutions, e.g., the World Trade Organization (WTO), The United Nations and or regional organisations to follow their strategic goals (Martin 1992). These states evaluate the rules-based worldwide order and pursue to form global norms, governance, and organisations of institutions.

It is noted that these strategies are common in developed powers; there can be variations and differences among individual countries based on their specific historical practices and encounters, geopolitical circumstances, national politics, and leadership. Hence, Strategic culture is a complicated, multifaceted and ever-evolving concept (Schneider 1989). Its manifestations and priorities may be changed circumstantially as per the response and shift in international dynamic contrast and internal national priorities. Therefore, strategic culture provides meaningful participation in forming a viable, more enduring multilateralism relationship of states. Such relationships appear more result-oriented and pragmatic in maintaining international relations.

2.12 Strategic Culture of Major Powers

The discovery of strategic culture, specifically among the world's superpowers, offers intense comprehension of the contrasted ways. The state's approach and authority in the global security landscape play an important role (Hudson 2008). This comprehension of strategic culture brightens the subject that drives the state's inclinations in warfare, mediation, and broader international encounters. Hence, strategic culture forms not just a premeditated

decision of a country but also makes broader strategic alignment. It also includes adherence to international law, engagement norms, and the stability between soft and hard power.

Strategic culture also influences global disaster management. States with a future-oriented strategic culture emphasising diplomatic resolution and multilateralism are more likely to seek collaborative solutions to international crises. It is possible through the utilisation of international institutions and leveraging diplomatic channels (Grigorescu and Melin 2017). In contrast to countries whose strategic culture is categorised by unilateralism, prioritising military solutions to such disasters may not be result-oriented. Such inherent differences can provide varied reactions and results to the same international disasters. Therefore, it is seen that human or material losses in different countries are different in such catastrophes. Notwithstanding, strategic culture largely affects the efficacy and coherence of international crisis management attempts.

The formation of alliances is equally manipulated by strategic culture. Strategic culture guides the decision-making -process in a purposeful way, either to enter the alliance or to remain neutral (Kumar and Nti 2004). It gives a blueprint for the nature of cooperation. Whether they are established on mutual security concerns, political alignment, or joint benefits. So, it also reflects a deliberate tendency of the involved states. For example, a nation with a historic strategic culture whose authority and non-alignment might be thoughtful about entering into the obligatory military pact. On the contrary, nations with a strategic culture that believes international pacts are central and important to national protection might keenly seek or improve alliances, even to adjust their strategies to manage their pacts.

Likewise, strategic culture affects a state's viewpoint on international law, norms, and conflict. States with a strategic culture that gives priority to the rule of law, international accords and consensus are more likely to encourage international legal frameworks (Mitręga and Kozub

2019). Such a state adheres even at the cost of temporary national benefits. It is also more likely to engage in norm-setting pursuits, seeking to form the world order in ways that indicate its strategic culture. Likewise, states whose strategic culture is marked by cynicism and scepticism of international organisations may prioritise their national authority over international norms. They must reshape their national strategies to create harmony with international laws.

The contrast between soft and hard power as an instrument for achieving strategic objectives is another area where the impact of strategic culture is noticeable (Henne 2022). Few states prioritise soft power, cultural inspiration, diplomacy in international relations, and economic agenda over military power. They do so in arrangement with a strategic culture that observes the value of obtaining gratitude and maintaining long-term influence at the international level. On the contrary, nations with a strategic culture that stresses the importance of military power and gives value to hard power are more likely to enhance military proficiencies and adopt a more assertive perspective in their foreign relations (Milenković 2020).

Conclusively, strategic culture's influence on foreign security architecture is multifaceted. It affects everything from disaster management and pact formations to adherence to laws and maintaining a balanced attitude between soft and hard power. Recognising these cultural foundations is crucial for assessing state behaviour, framing effective, long-lasting policy, and directing the complex web of foreign relations in an increasingly multipolar world.

2.12.1 China's Strategic Culture

PLA published a volume on the subject, titled *Analysis of China's Strategic Culture*, which explores Chinese strategic culture in depth and contrasts it with “Western” strategic culture (Kartchner, Bowen, and Johnson 2023). In China, Strategic culture moves away significantly from the prevailing paradigms generally observed and adopted in the Western states due to its

legitimacy and central control (Zhang 2002). Such a divergence is captured and well defined in the enduring influence of Sun Tzu's "The Art of War,". The discourse characterises the Chinese valorisation of approach, sensitivity, and application of indirect methods for conflict resolution. Sun Tzu's guidelines advocated for winning battles with reconciliation by affording minimal conflict. Moreover, it served as an understanding of the value of strategic flexibility, perceptions that permeate China's modern premeditated position.

The "Middle Kingdom" perception further formulates China's strategic culture. It infused a sense of historic supremacy and cultural superiority. Such deliberations inform and provide basic guidelines for its diplomatic engagements. This historical narrative privileges China as a dominant cultural and political power. During recent decades, it fostered a strategic viewpoint that helped it recover and maintain its significant position at the global level. This viewpoint manifests China's inclination towards non-confrontational international relations, which tend to emphasise collaboration, coordination, stability, and the gradual contention of authority (Inboden 2022).

In this context, strategic ambiguity is a hallmark of China's strategic culture. It allows for flexibility and suitable grounds for manoeuvring in maintaining international affairs. Such behaviour and political approach allow China to pursue its national interests in a more pragmatic way. Notwithstanding, China adopts without openly revealing its futuristic plans that keep its rivals and partners in a completely uncertain situation. It competes on the international horizon but without showing real aims and ambitions. This tactic is manifested in China's regional assertions in the South China Sea and the Belt & Road Initiative (BRI). Therefore, China's strategic goals revolve around economic growth and regional connectivity (Parepa 2020).

It is established that long-term planning is another important attribute of China's strategic culture. It reflects a 'Confucian emphasis' on persistence, patience, and anticipation about the forthcoming circumstances (Feng and He 2021). China's plans and projects, such as its "Made in China 2025" strategy and determined goals for technological superiority, demonstrate its capability for establishing and pursuing a long-term goal.

Additionally, China's culture highlights combining military approaches with monetary, diplomatic, and informational efforts. In this context, a comprehensive approach, "Three Warfares," is worth mentioning. This approach relates mental warfare, media projects, and legal conflict to form global insights. All these factors produce a favourable narrative in China's favour. Such strategy serves as a shady deal to secure China's interests subtly (Lee 2014). It does not let China's strategic interest to an open conflict with another superpower. Hence, a multifaceted method to achieve planned objectives without diving into a confrontation is a markedly different approach. It is distinct in practice from the more apparent and often military-direct, straightforward confrontational strategies of the Western powers. Furthermore, open conflict tends to stress and highlight the use of influence and the open threat as a leading tool for handling international conflict.

The transformations accentuate the extreme effect of strategic culture on international relations. Identifying these differences is crucial for framing an effective and future-oriented foreign policy (Lantis 2003). It is accepted that China has maintained its rise as a global power for the last two decades. Therefore, its strategic culture will also play a pivotal role in framing the international order. It will preserve and assert both encounters and prospects for engagements in international affairs.

2.12.2 Strategic Culture of European Powers

In such a scenario, the strategic culture of European powers is a rich tapestry interwoven with the world's complex history of regional wars, foreign endeavours, colonial interests, and the disastrous outcomes of the 20th-century (Cornish and Edwards 2005). In this historical backdrop, strategic culture has encouraged an unmistakable inclination for diplomacy, joint engagement of superpowers, and collective security structures. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) institutions exemplify these. Nonetheless, uniformity often correlates with the European planned culture, which signifies changes among individual national interests, reflecting their rare historical trajectories and past experiences.

It is a fact that France and the UK brought a specific European strategic culture legacy. It marked the influence of colonial empires and global influence. Over the centuries, both nations have been infused with a more interventionist and imperialist outlook on the global political horizon (Howorth 2003). This scene is not merely a remnant of history. However, it continues to control contemporary policy choices, exhibiting a commitment to retain military power abroad, especially in third-world poor countries of Africa and the Middle East. This domineering stance is reinforced by a belief in the accountability and capability of these states to plan power globally. Hence, a belief rooted in their historic roles as imperial powers is also evident.

France, holding its idea of "Mission Civilisatrice," or civilising the mission, has historically observed its worldwide role as one of dispersal French morals and culture, which in current times interprets into a readiness to involve and engage militarily. To uphold international standards or defend francophone regions. On the other hand, the UK's premeditated culture, formed by its naval custom and the "East of Suez" role, proves a comparable feeling and

inclination towards worldwide engagement, reinforced by a historic self-discernment as a supporter of the global order (Kennedy 2004).

In this context, Germany's culture, in contrast, remained noticeable by a post-World War II. It gave a thoughtfulness to abstaining from military interventionism favouring political and financial means. It is deeply entrenched in the shared memory of the destruction shaped by the war. Which later led to the partition of the country. Germany's strategic viewpoint is categorised by a strong promise to European integration and a deep-seated hatred of the usage of force in global relations (Longhurst 2018). This pacifist propensity is further strengthened by a constitutional outline that restricts military engagement, reflecting a social agreement on the preeminence of amity and stability.

This deviation within European cultures underlines the difficulty of aligning state policies. It happened in cases of alignment within wider collective safety agendas like NATO. While the association itself is based on the principle of shared defence, the changing strategic cultures of its European associates present nuances to their levels of commitment. France and the UK's willingness to be involved in military operations differs from Germany's. Its culture is more restrained and tactical and emphasises the challenges (Huntley 2022). Furthermore, consultation is an essential feature in formulating a reliable security strategy.

The strategic culture of European countries is not of one similar type but a variety of diverse state cultures formed by their exclusive historical ventures. This variety, while elevating the importance of strategic culture, also offered a constant challenge to the unity of shared security efforts (Cornish and Edwards 2005). It also necessitates ongoing dialogue and conciliation to harmonise the interventionist tendencies of some member states with the pacifist leanings of others. Therefore, a complete understanding of all these variant factors is crucial for cognition

of the dynamics and reasoning of European security processes. Notwithstanding, the continent's role in worldwide geopolitics might not be undermined.

2.12.3 Strategic Culture of the USA

The United States' strategic culture is multifaceted and covers various aspects of heterogeneous societies. It amalgamates historic involvements in either war or peacemaking, ideological basics, and societal ideals. It is an established fact that all these have collectively formed and designed its foreign policy and military strategy in maintaining international relations (Glišić 2020). Deeply entrenched in the state's founding values and its course of actions from being a colonial station to becoming a global superpower. Hence, on rational grounds, the U.S. strategic culture is considered exceptionally a blend of idealism and pragmatism. It encapsulates a strong acceptance of exceptionalism and a growing tendency towards one-sided action and the use of military power to combat at the global level in times of peril (Inboden 2018).

Historical Foundations and Ideological Underpinnings. The US was founded on the ideologies of freedom, democracy, and individual citizen rights. It is accepted that these ideals continue to underpin and be deeply entrenched in its strategic culture (Bartlett 1955). In that scenario, the American Revolution also instilled a sagacity of exceptionalism, the trust that the US has an exceptional destiny to lead the world by upholding liberty, equality and democracy. The sense of exceptionalism served as a driving force for the U.S.'s global engagement. It also manifests an inclination to interfere abroad to promote its culture, values and political interests.

The Manifest Destiny and Monroe Doctrine further demonstrate the early strategic culture of the U.S. It emphasises hemispheric supremacy and territorial extension as reliable means to secure the state's future pursuits. These policies laid the foundation for a strategic culture that

interprets American political leadership. Notwithstanding, the political leadership is mindful of the practical engagement in maintaining global stability and prosperity (Gilderhus 2006).

The Influence of World Wars and the Cold War. World Wars I & II and the Cold War was pivotal in transforming the U.S. strategic culture. It transformed the US culture from separateness to globalism (Fallon 2015). In this context, the ending result of World War II marked the United States' entrance as a global superpower. Because it used significant military and economic resources worldwide. Afterwards, the Cold War engrained such a strategic culture centered on containment and pre-emption. Hence, the installation of military power to combat the Soviet peril, further heavily relied upon the notions of global leadership and the responsibility of the U.S. strategic psyche in this regard was momentous (Jacobsen 1990).

However, the post-Cold War phase witnessed the U.S. wrestling with its role of being the sole superpower. The changing scenario changes the strategic culture that tended to oscillate between interventionism. It was seen in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan and a more self-possessed approach was adopted. Such an approach was also advocated in the aftermath of the Middle East challenges and to tackle the rise of multipolarity for the restoration of its superpower status.

Military Power and Technological Superiority. The key element of the U.S. strategic culture is its stress on expanding its military strength and technical dominance. Stemming from a fact of its ability to maintain international order and deter opponents, the U.S. has constantly invested in powerful armed forces with considerable cutting-edge technology. Such priority on hard power is supplemented by a strategic culture that values invention, flexibility, and the ability to reply conclusively to external intimidations.

The Role of Values and Moral Imperatives. The U.S. strategic culture is also intensely dominated by moral necessities and the promotion of international norms and values. Such global values might have been like American values. Notwithstanding, it led to a strategic approach that pursues the defense of national interests on the one hand and the spread and protection of human rights, egalitarianism, and the rule of law globally on the other hand. However, the claim of these values has often been met with condemnation and accusations of insincerity, mainly when strategic interests have superseded the moral deliberations.

Challenges and Adaptations. The 21st century has posed significant challenges to the U.S. strategic culture, from the rise of non-state actors and asymmetric warfare to the re-emergence of great power competition with China and Russia. These challenges have prompted introspection and adaptation, with debates on the balance between unilateralism and multilateralism, the reliance on military solutions, and the need to address emerging security domains like cyber and space.

2.12.4 Strategic Culture of Russia

The strategic culture of Russia is deeply influenced by its vast geography, historical experiences, and ideological evolution, shaping its approach to foreign policy, security, and military strategy (Doroshko and Tsyrfya 2021). This culture reflects a blend of continuity and adaptation, rooted in the legacy of the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and the contemporary Russian Federation's experiences.

Historical and Geopolitical Influences. Russia's strategic culture is significantly shaped by its historical encounters with invasions and geopolitical rivalries. The Mongol invasion, the Napoleonic wars, and the two World Wars have instilled a sense of vulnerability and a strong emphasis on territorial security and buffer zones. This historical backdrop contributes to a

defensive posture and a preference for strategic depth, as seen in Russia's efforts to maintain influence over its near abroad and its sensitivity to NATO expansion.

The Soviet period further shaped Russia's strategic culture, with the Cold War fostering a mindset of superpower rivalry and zero-sum security paradigms. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent period of political and economic turmoil in the 1990s have left a legacy of distrust towards the West and a determination to restore Russia's status as a great power (Epstein 2022).

Security and Military Strategy. Russia's strategic culture emphasises the importance of a strong state and centralised power, viewing a powerful military as both a symbol of national prestige and a necessary tool for defending national interests (Doroshko and Tsyrfya 2021). This is complemented by a preference for asymmetric strategies, leveraging nuclear deterrence, cyber capabilities, and information warfare to compensate for conventional military asymmetries with NATO forces.

The concept of strategic patience, derived from both historical experiences and geographical vastness, is also a key component of Russia's strategic culture. It reflects a long-term approach to achieving strategic objectives, often through indirect means and the cultivation of strategic partnerships, as seen in its relationships with China, India, and the Middle East (Kerr 2010).

Perception of the International Order. Russia's strategic culture is characterized by a deep skepticism of the US-led liberal international order (Clunan 2018). Viewing itself as a besieged fortress, Russia perceives Western efforts to promote democracy and human rights as encroachments on its sovereignty and influence. This has led to a strategic culture that values multipolarity and seeks to challenge Western dominance in global affairs, advocating for a more equitable international system that recognizes Russia's status as a great power.

Soft Power and Influence Operations. An important aspect of Russia's strategic culture is its emphasis on soft power and influence operations as tools of statecraft (Henne 2022). This includes leveraging historical, cultural, and linguistic ties with neighbouring countries, as well as deploying state-controlled media and disinformation campaigns to shape perceptions and advance its foreign policy goals. Russia's strategic use of energy exports as a tool of diplomacy and coercion also reflects its broader approach to leveraging its natural resources for strategic advantage.

Russia's strategic culture is a complex amalgamation of historical legacies, geopolitical imperatives, and contemporary challenges. It drives Russia's pursuit of security, influence, and great power status through military power, strategic patience, and asymmetric tactics. Understanding Russia's strategic culture is crucial for analysing its foreign policy behavior, responses to global security challenges, and interactions with other international actors. As global dynamics continue to evolve, Russia's strategic culture will play a pivotal role in shaping its strategies and actions on the international stage.

2.13 Strategic Culture of Small States

In the context of international relations, small states, often referred to as small or middle powers, are sovereign states that possess limited influence on the global stage compared to major powers or superpowers (Keohane 1969). These countries do not have the extensive military capabilities, economic might, or geopolitical leverage that characterize major powers such as the United States, China, or Russia. However, small states can still exert significant influence within their regional contexts or through specialized niches in international affairs. Their strategic importance often arises from geographical positioning, the possession of critical resources, or their role in international organizations and alliances.

The study of strategic culture among small states is of considerable significance for several reasons. Firstly, it provides insights into how these states navigate the constraints and opportunities of the international system to safeguard their interests and sovereignty. Understanding the strategic cultures of small states sheds light on their decision-making processes, revealing how historical experiences, cultural values, and societal norms influence their foreign policy and defence strategies (Kovalev 2021). This understanding is crucial for predicting the behavior of small states in international diplomacy, conflict, and cooperation.

Secondly, exploring the strategic culture of small states enriches the broader discourse on international relations by highlighting the diversity of approaches to security, development, and diplomacy beyond the dominant narratives centred on major powers. It underscores the agency of small states in shaping regional dynamics and contributing to global governance, challenging the perception of these states as mere objects of great power politics.

Furthermore, studying the strategic culture of small states can reveal innovative and adaptive strategies that these countries employ to enhance their security and influence. From leveraging soft power and forming strategic alliances to engaging in asymmetric warfare and diplomacy, small states often adopt creative approaches to overcome their limitations (Kovalev 2021). These strategies can offer valuable lessons for other states and inform the development of more inclusive and balanced international policies.

In essence, the definition and examination of strategic culture and the adaptation of strategic culture theory to the context of small states involve an important consideration of how these states, with their comparatively limited resources and geopolitical influence, navigate the international system. This adaptation requires an acknowledgement of the unique constraints and opportunities that shape the strategic behaviours and policy choices of small states. It also

involves understanding how their historical experiences, cultural identities, and societal norms influence their approach to security, diplomacy, and international cooperation.

Unique Constraints and Opportunities. Small states operate under distinct constraints that major powers may not face to the same extent. These include limited military capabilities, smaller economies, and lesser diplomatic influence. However, small states also encounter unique opportunities arising from their flexibility, niche capabilities, and the potential to act as mediators or coalition partners in international affairs (Panke 2012). When adapted to these realities, strategic culture theory explores how small states leverage these opportunities to offset their constraints, often through innovative strategies and alliances.

Historical and Cultural Influences. The strategic culture of small states is deeply influenced by their historical trajectories, including colonial legacies, experiences of conflict, and periods of neutrality or non-alignment (Thorhallsson, Steinsson, and Kristinsson 2018). These historical experiences shape their perceptions of threat and their approaches to national security. Cultural factors, such as national identity, societal values, and political norms, also play a crucial role in defining the strategic preferences and behaviors of small states. Adapting strategic culture theory to small states involves examining how these historical and cultural influences converge to shape their strategic outlook.

Security and Diplomacy Strategies. Small states often adopt distinctive strategies in security and diplomacy to navigate the challenges of the international environment. This can include prioritizing regional security arrangements, investing in niche military capabilities, or emphasizing soft power and diplomatic engagement. By focusing on these strategies, the adaptation of strategic culture theory to small states highlights how they seek to enhance their security and influence without the extensive resources available to major powers.

The Role of Alliances and International Organizations. Alliances and international organisations play a significant role in the strategic culture of small states. These entities can offer platforms for amplifying their voices, securing their interests, and contributing to global governance (Walt 1990). The strategic choice to engage with, support, or challenge these international bodies is a critical aspect of a minor power's strategic culture, reflecting its broader approach to international relations and its place within the global order.

Adapting strategic culture theory to the context of small states requires a comprehensive understanding of the unique ways these states perceive and respond to their international environment. It involves analysing how their strategic decisions are influenced by historical legacies, cultural identities, and the practical realities of their geopolitical situations. This adaptation provides valuable insights into the diversity of strategic thought and action across the international system, emphasising the agency of small states in shaping global security dynamics and international relations.

2.13.1 Role of Geo-Economics in changing the Strategic Culture of small states

The role of geoeconomics in changing the strategic culture of small states is increasingly significant as the global landscape evolves (Lipkan, Kuznichenko, and Ivanov 2023). Geoeconomics, defined as the strategic use of economic instruments to achieve geopolitical objectives, has increasingly come to the forefront of international relations. This paradigm shift acknowledges that economic power can be as significant as military might in asserting influence and shaping global dynamics. For small states, geoeconomics presents an opportunity to exert influence and pursue strategic interests beyond their conventional capacities, allowing them to play more significant roles on the international stage despite their relatively limited military capabilities. In this context, economic tools such as trade policies, investment flows, financial aid, and economic sanctions become instruments of strategic policy, enabling states

to pursue their geopolitical objectives through economic means. For small states, these tools provide a mechanism to enhance their security, influence regional and global affairs, and pursue strategic interests in a manner that would be unattainable through military means alone (Blackwill and Harris 2016).

The strategic use of geoeconomics allows small states to leverage their economic assets, engage in strategic partnerships, and participate in international economic institutions to amplify their voice and influence. By integrating economic considerations into their strategic planning, these states can navigate the complexities of global politics more effectively, aligning their economic policies with broader strategic goals (Luttwak 1990). Furthermore, geoeconomic strategies enable small states to attract investments, develop strategic industries, and foster economic growth, enhancing national security and resilience. Economic interdependence can also serve as a deterrent against conflicts, as states with strong economic ties are less likely to engage in hostilities that could jeopardise mutually beneficial relationships (Mattlin and Wigell 2016).

However, while geoeconomics offers new avenues for influence and security, it also presents challenges, particularly for small states that may find themselves vulnerable to economic coercion from more dominant states. Therefore, these states must develop comprehensive geoeconomic strategies that balance engagement with prudence, ensuring that their economic dependencies do not translate into strategic vulnerabilities (Drezner 2011).

Geoeconomics has emerged as an important dimension of international relations, offering small states strategic opportunities previously beyond their reach. As the global landscape continues to evolve, the role of geoeconomics in shaping international affairs is likely to grow, underscoring the importance of economic factors in contemporary geopolitics. The integration of geoeconomic strategies into the strategic cultures of small states reflects an adaptation to a world where economic power is as crucial as military might in securing national objectives.

2.13.2 Economic Leverage and Strategic Autonomy

Small states, often constrained by their limited military and geopolitical clout, are increasingly turning to geoeconomics as a strategic tool to augment their autonomy and influence on the global stage. By capitalising on their inherent economic assets—be it abundant natural resources, strategic geographic positions, or specialised industrial sectors - these states can carve out areas of influence and negotiate from positions of enhanced strength in the international arena.

Natural resources, for instance, provide small states with significant leverage. Countries endowed with critical minerals or energy resources can wield considerable influence in a world where such commodities are in high demand. By managing these resources strategically, small states can attract investment, secure beneficial trade agreements, and enhance their economic resilience (Baldwin and Kapstein 2020). Strategic geographic locations also offer pivotal advantages. States that control vital maritime chokepoints, trade routes, or land corridors can leverage their positions to facilitate or constrain international trade and energy flows. This geographic leverage can be instrumental in securing economic concessions, development assistance, or political support from more powerful states and MNCs (Rober. D. Kaplan 2013)

Moreover, small states can cultivate specialized economic niches that confer distinct advantages. By developing competitive industries or technological expertise, these states can integrate themselves into global supply chains, attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and establish partnerships with major economic players. Such economic integration not only boosts their domestic economies but also provides them with diplomatic leverage and a more pronounced voice in international forums.

This economic leverage is critical for small states seeking to enhance their strategic autonomy. By diversifying their economic relations and reducing dependence on any single major power,

these states can safeguard their sovereignty and assert their interests with greater confidence. Economic interdependence, in this context, becomes a source of strength, providing small states with the means to resist coercion and navigate the complexities of international relations with greater agency (Keohane and Nye 1987).

The strategic use of geoeconomics empowers small states to assert their autonomy and influence in the international system. By maximising their unique economic assets, these states can enhance their strategic options, negotiate from positions of strength, and play more assertive roles in shaping global affairs. As the interplay between economics and geopolitics continues to evolve, the strategic deployment of geoeconomic tools will remain a vital component of statecraft for small states.

2.13.3 Participation in Multilateral Economic Institutions

The strategic culture of small states is increasingly characterized by their proactive engagement in multilateral economic institutions, signaling a shift from passive participants to active shapers of global economic governance. Involvement in organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), and various regional economic blocs allows these nations to exert greater influence on international economic policy and norm-setting (Narlikar 2016). By actively participating in these institutions, small states can advocate for their interests and concerns, contributing to a more inclusive and representative international economic order. This enhanced engagement not only elevates their stature on the global stage but also provides crucial opportunities to influence the development of rules and practices that govern international trade and investment, thereby reflecting their strategic priorities and economic imperatives.

Additionally, the active involvement of small states in multilateral economic organizations also embodies a kind of strategic recalibration. It is meant to align their monetary policies with

broader geopolitical aims. It gives leverage to their membership in bigger entities, e.g. WTO and AIIB. These states can forge strategic alliances, access critical resources, and participate in decision-making processes that shape the global economic landscape. Such strategic intentions and involvements enable small states to navigate the intricacies of global matters more effectively. It also advocates for improvements and reform the existing policies to see and address the irregularities, anomalies to foster sustainable development. As they articulate and follow their benefits within these multifaceted frameworks, small states contribute to the development of a more stable, adoptable balanced and multipolar world order, therefore, they could accentuate the interdependency of financial and strategic dimensions in the contemporary global relations (Pedi and Sarri 2019).

2.13.4 Soft Power Enhancement

In global affairs, the role of geoeconomics is crucial. It efficiently augments the soft power of small states by providing them with sufficient means. So, they could extend their influence through non-coercive measures and foster positive perceptions globally. By engaging in economic development projects, providing development aid, and making strategic investments in other nations, these states might be able to cultivate conducive relationships that go beyond transactional communications and restoration of mutual goodwill and mutual respect. This facet of geoeconomics makes smaller states to scheme their future plans and values by establishing themselves as a benevolent ally. It creates a network of cooperative players on the global stage. All such actions not only improve their political standing but also create platforms for mutual collaboration that can help their wider calculated objectives. By making geoeconomics an essential component of their foreign policy toolkit, they share their mutual interests (Nye 1990).

The usefulness of geoeconomics in forming soft power is demonstrated by how small states can influence monetary tools to make the socio-economic development speedy and bring stability to other nations. Thus, by producing a political capital initiative, e.g. infrastructure growth, humanitarian help, and capacity-building are instrumental. It projects a nation's future commitment to adopt affluence and global cooperation. For example, when smaller states donate to disaster funds or engage in cultural exchange functions and seminars, they not only disseminate instant needs but try to sow the seeds of long-lasting partnerships with the developed states. These plans resonate well with the public at large. It enhances a state's position in maintaining and establishing itself as an optimistic and reliable partner. As such, the planned strategic deployment of monetary possessions for unselfish purposes can meaningfully bolster a small power's global position and inspiration. It enabled it to nurture a network of associations and corporations that spread far beyond its scope and conventional domain of influence (Alami 2018).

Though, to leverage geoeconomics for soft power requires a planned approach and small states must carefully calibrate their economic outreach to ensure that their investments and aid genuinely contribute to optimistic results in partner nations, thereby producing honest goodwill, transparency, integrity and respect for local requirements and circumstances, and arrangement with broader developing goals are crucial for the achievement of all such schemes at the global level. So, small states can not only improve their soft power but also subsidize with a more unified and helpful global system. Therefore, monetary interdependency nurtures peaceful existence and joint affluence. In this context, geoeconomics arises not only as a means for economic integration but also serves as a strategic advantage in the arsenal of small states. Because it enables them to declare an optimistic and positive role on the worldwide stage (Martin 1992).

2.13.5 Adaptation to Global Economic Shifts

The worldwide economic landscape is experiencing reflective transformations. It is marked by the rise of digital economies and evolving of trade dynamics into a new paradigm. It is also considered as the domineering of addressing climate change globally. In this context, small states are recalibrating their old conventional strategic cultures to connect these vicissitudes. On the global stage, investment in growing sectors e.g., as green technology, digital world transformation is becoming a keystone for enriching their strategic alignment. Acceptance of these advanced and future-oriented sectors not only enhances their resilience but also allows these states to play a more powerful role in determining the evolving global economic directives. They are positioning themselves at the front to attain future growth and sustainability. Small states can influence their knowhow and management to set new values. Potentially by guiding the global economic and environmental strategy instructions.

Furthermore, the strategic hinge towards sectors symbolic of the 21st-century economy permits small states to promote soft power and forge planned partnerships based on common interests. The promise to digital alteration and sustainable strategies also resonates with the global preferences. It offered and opened new avenues for collaboration with a varied range of actors. The major powers, international organizations, and transnational networks are fully aligned with these scenarios. Therefore, such alignment with worldwide trends not only improves the international position of small states, but also offers them platforms to resolve such issues which are pertinent to their particular strategic interests. These include digital ascendancy, weather and maintainable development. Thus, the strategic culture of small states is dynamic and evolves in response to global economic transformation. This will enable them to declare a more marked and active role in worldwide affairs (Kharas & McArthur, 2019).

Geoeconomics is redesigning the strategic cultural inspirations of small states by expanding their means of influence and opening novel opportunities to better assert their interests in the worldwide scenario. Small states are redefining their interests in maintaining international relations through economic influence, divergence of partnerships, active contribution to multilateral institutions, and improvement of soft power. This development reflects a wider trend towards the addition of economic strategies. Within the strategic calculus of the states, it highlights the growing complication of achieving geopolitical purposes of the 21st century.

2.14 Impact of Economic Initiative on Strategic Culture

Foremost economic enterprises possess the capacity to redefine the strategic cultural aspects of a state. It also signals a paradigm shift in its national safety framework and global positioning as a country's evolution from a strategical culture mainly formed by military deliberations to one that underlines the economic potency as an essential to national power. There has been a visible alteration in policy preparations, strategic significance, and even their recognition on the worldwide stage. This move produces a broader empathy and comprehension that economic power reinforces a state's military capabilities, affects diplomatic power, and is vital for the development and pliability of a state against its possible opponents. It admits that economic affluence is not merely an important objective but an essential element of completing national sanctity and influence. It reshaped how states observe intimidations and opportunities and standardize their strategical replies in an increasingly organized world (Nye 1990).

Additionally, this transformation has deep implications for maintaining a state's foreign relations. By participating economic objects with security imperatives, the states can forge more balanced approach and multifaceted foreign policies, enhancing their strategical independence and global impact. These aspirations also inspire all the major states to pursue and contribute in worldwide economic institutions and frameworks. By aligning themselves

with the standards and practices of the global financial system while parallelly supporting their own interests and values. In doing so, they participate in shaping the worldwide economic standards and system of governance. By asserting their activity in a multipolar world order where economic interdependency is as important to maintain balanced in traditional coalitions and power equilibrium. The recognition of economic wits as essential to strategical culture, thus it means a more refined and holistic method to governance in the 21st century. Hence, economic deliberations are fundamentally related to safety and strategical considerations. (Blackwill & Harris, 2016).

Reorientation of Security and Strategic Priorities. The introduction of significant economic schemes marks a transformative stage in a state's strategical alignment. Especially for those traditionally entangled in geopolitical trouble or enduring competitions and rivalries. In such settings, the focus on military readiness and regional integrity slowly expands to include the necessities of economic safety and affluence. Identifying the interdependency of national sanctuary with economic strength, states start to recalibrate their strategical urgencies to protect and enhance the financial position of their power. This recalibration admits that a nation's solidity and development are intricately woven to the safety of its commercial transactions, the dependability of its energy provisions, and the strength of its critical structure. As a result, economic deliberations ranging from trade divergence and energy independence to infrastructure pliability are directly interwoven into a state's national security paradigms. It also reflect a more advanced strategical culture that gives importance to economic prowess together with military power (Drezner 2019).

This development is not just a strategical rearrangement but also a response to the varying dynamics of global power structures. In this context, economy gains much importance progressively, if not surpasses the military supremacy. When the states involve in considerable

economic schemes, they not only aim to reinforce their own economic safety but also to place themselves at vital nodes within the world's economy. This engagement also smooths their incorporation into international trade and business networks. It offers both economic assistance and strategic leverage. Furthermore, by arranging economic sanctuary, states can be more adaptive and more stable in cooperative worldwide relations. It reduces the probability of wars and enhances their strategic independence. In essence, the acceptance of geoeconomic policies signifies a maturing of strategical culture, in which the economic strength is documented as a critical constituent of nationwide power, vital for preserving and enhancing a state's situation in a progressively organised and economically determined world (Norloff 2011).

Economic Development as a Tool for Strategic Autonomy. Financial authorisation through strategical initiatives reconfigures a state's place on the worldwide chess board. It enables to navigate worldwide waters with greater activity and determination. By calming diverse economic sectors and boosting infrastructural outlines, states protect a stronger grip on their economic purposes and shape a more distinct voice in the concert of states. This fresh economic heftiness feeds directly into the strategical field, allowing states to articulate and perform foreign and security policies according to their whims. It resonates more deeply with their inherent strategic character and long-term ambitions. Such economic independence reshapes the state's global engagements, providing influence to advocate for its national interests more forcefully and to forge coalitions that strengthen its strategic bearing and ideas (Narlikar 2010)

Furthermore, the voyage towards financial self-reliance redefines a country's strategic necessities, aligning them more carefully with its essential national benefits. It facilitates a recalibration of urgencies, where financial deliberations rise alongside old-style safety concerns. It gives shape to a more all-inclusive and strategic culture. This development underlines the acknowledgement that a real national power spreads beyond military strength,

including financial strength and resilience. As states attach the power of financial initiatives to strengthen their strategic independence, they not only improve their ability to endure external threats but also place themselves as active architects of their forthcoming era, adept at navigating the complex interaction of global forces to secure their interests and advance their stature on the world stage (Keohane 1969).

Transformation of International Alignments. The nature and structure of multinational alliances are changing dramatically because of increasing economic interdependence. As governments embark on significant economic efforts, they form coalitions that go beyond traditional geopolitical reasons, shifting towards collaborations that offer reciprocal financial benefits and strategic advantages. This realignment frequently results in a sophisticated foreign policy approach, with economic imperatives being critical in defining diplomatic and strategic decisions. Such a change represents a developing global environment in which financial viability is coming to be seen as a vital element of national power, encouraging nations to pursue ties that boost their financial resiliency and depth of strategy (Drezner 2007).

Likewise, these economic-driven alliances can inculcate the states with greater authority in international forums. It enables them to support patterns and strategies that reflect their economic benefits and strategic preferences. Hence, the effects of these alliances can spread beyond mutual relations, manipulating regional strength and worldwide authority structures. As countries recalibrate their pacts based on economic requirements, they participate in a reconfiguration of the worldwide order, emphasising the important role of economic alliance in the contemporary geopolitical ground. Thus, main economic initiatives and strategies not only serve as the substances for nationwide development but also as tools of strategic relocation, allowing states to circumnavigate the intricacies of the worldwide system with improved agility and prudence (Nye 1990).

Enhancement of Soft Power. The successful execution of huge economic plans does, in fact, strengthen a state's soft power, allowing it to wield enormous influence in the international arena without resorting to coercion. States that invest in regional growth not only boost their financial standing, but also present themselves as compassionate leaders devoted to community success. This generosity, based on economic support and coordinated initiatives for development, may help to establish a favorable national image, generate goodwill among neighboring nations, and foster connections that go far beyond transactional encounters. As Nye explains, the core of soft authority is the ability to alter the preferences of others via appeal and attraction, with economic successes providing as a foundation for this persuading capability (Nye 1990).

Furthermore, when governments get more fully involved in the worldwide economy, promoting trade and economic integration, they always contribute to a more integrated and collaborative global framework. In this perspective, soft power projection is more than just cultural diplomacy or international charity; it is primarily about exhibiting leadership in economic governance, establishing environmentally friendly standards, and supporting global economic principles. In doing so, governments strengthen their reputation as constructive global actors, adding a dimension that appreciates and exploits economic power for larger geopolitical goals. This sophisticated approach to strategic culture, which balances hard power with the subtle use of soft authority, emphasises the rising acknowledgment of economic influence as an essential element of modern statecraft and relationships abroad (Nye 1990).

Response to Non-Traditional Security Threats. Engagement in major economic initiatives necessitates a reevaluation and broadening of the traditional security paradigm to include non-traditional threats, which are increasingly recognized as pivotal to national and international stability. Economic projects inherently demand stable environments to thrive, thus propelling

states to adopt comprehensive security measures that address economic instability, environmental degradation, and health emergencies. This development exhibits a particular strategic cultural shift towards the acceptance and justifying an array of dangers that surpass the orthodox military threats. As Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde articulate, security is a multi-layered concept that spreads beyond military features to include political, societal, and ecological dimensions. Thereby requiring a complete approach to safeguard of national interests of smaller states (Buzan and Wæver 1997).

Furthermore, the economic programs catalyze the development of organization and sustainable practices. These are crucial in building flexibility against non-traditional intimidations. Investments in the emerging green technology, healthcare initiatives, protection against disaster are the real revealing indicator of a strategic culture. This method aligns with the wider understanding that the liberal and well-being of a state is indissolubly related to its economic health. More arguably, environmental sustainability and the safety of its populace are also very crucial. By the acceptance of an all-inclusive safety framework, countries can fortify themselves against a range of susceptibilities. They can demonstrate a promise to a liberal and progressive strategical culture that is receptive to the intricacies of the 21st-century (Buzan and Wæver 1997).

The influence of major economic enterprises on the strategic culture of states indicates a paradigmatic shift. The dimension goes towards a more combined view of nationwide security that stabilises military concerns by promoting essential economic development. The evolutionary process reflects an emerging global trend in which the description between financial strength and security requirements becomes blurry. The states embark on transformative economic schemes, and their strategic cultures also become more adaptive by

embracing a nuanced understanding of the security parameters of the 21st century. It knows the crucial role of economic vivacity in the attainment of stability and prosperity.

CHAPTER THREE

Evolutionary Phases of Strategic Culture of Pakistan

3.1 Concept and Importance of Strategic Culture

Strategic culture, an important field within international relations and security studies, offers profound insights into how nations perceive and navigate their security environment (Johnston 1999). It encompasses the deeply embedded beliefs, values, traditions, and practices that collectively inform and guide a nation's foreign policy and defence strategy. It is the lens through which a state sees its place in the world, interprets threats, and chooses between diverse strategic options. The significance of understanding strategic culture lies in its practical implications, as it can help interpret why states with similar material capabilities often adopt different security policies and strategies, thereby shaping the global security landscape (Gray 1999).

Strategic culture is not permanent; it evolves and is shaped by historical experiences, societal values, political ideologies and fundamental events that leave an enduring mark on a nation's collective psyche (Johnston 1995). It integrates the historical memory of a state, the national myths that sustain its identity, the moral values that guide its conduct, and the institutional practices that sustain its approach to security and international engagement. This culture provides a state with a sense of continuity and coherence in its strategic behaviour, even as it navigates the changing dynamics of the international system (Schneider 1989).

The importance of strategic culture extends beyond academic inquiry; it has practical implications for policymakers, strategists, and diplomats (Lantis 2003). By understanding the strategic culture of potential allies and adversaries, decision-makers can anticipate responses to international events, tailor diplomatic initiatives, and develop more effective foreign and

defence policies. With its comprehensive influence, strategic culture affects how threats are perceived and prioritised, the types of military forces a nation is likely to build, the doctrines it develops, and the allies it seeks. It shapes decisions on war and peace, negotiations, and the pursuit of strategic partnerships (Ali 2022).

Furthermore, strategic culture is crucial in transmitting strategic preferences across generations. Through education, military training, political discourse, and public media, the elements of strategic culture are imparted to new political and military elite members, ensuring a degree of continuity in strategic outlook (Ajzenhamer 2020). However, strategic culture is also subject to change, as new experiences, technological advancements, and shifts in the global order challenge existing beliefs and practices, necessitating adaptation and, sometimes, transformation (Halal 1993). Therefore, the study of strategic culture offers valuable insights into the complex interplay between a nation's historical experiences, cultural identity, and strategic choices (Johnston 1995).

3.2 Scope of Analysis: From the Advent of Islam to Contemporary Times

Strategic choices are not just about power and interests. It also reflects influences that impact perceptions, preferences, and opportunities (Neumann and Heikka 2005). Understanding culture is key to gaining insight into events, allowing us to delve deeper into global security dynamics and diverse strategic perspectives worldwide.

3.2.1 Formative Years of Pakistan's Strategic Culture

Historical Roots and Islamic Influence. The strategic culture of Pakistan has been shaped by a combination of historical precedents and Islamic influences that can be traced back to when Islam arrived in South Asia (Fisher 2000). This significant era set the foundation for the region's future development. During this period, Islam came to South Asia through invasions

and extensive trade, leading to its establishment and subsequent rule by Muslim dynasties for centuries. Intensifications of activity facilitated the Islamisation of Southeast Asia along maritime trading routes, linking the region to multiple points in an expanding Muslim world (Feener 2019). The Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire, two of the most important rules, extended Islamic rule over wider areas. They combined diverse cultural traditions into one system, profoundly impacting every part of present-day Pakistan. The partition of Britain's Indian empire and the establishment of Pakistan as a nation where Muslims were the majority marked a significant turning point. It led to integrating Islamic ideologies into Pakistan's domestic ideologies and foreign diplomacy, thereby shaping its global engagements, coalition formations, and methods of addressing disputes in a transformative manner (Afsaruddin 2011).

The arrival of Islam in South Asia marked a transformative era that reshaped the region's socio-political and cultural landscapes. The traders, conquerors and Sufi missionaries played pivotal roles in introducing and embedding Islamic traditions, which became integral to the governance and strategic orientation of the emerging Islamic empires (Islam 2020). More specifically, the governance model of the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal Empire reflects the application of Islamic principles of justice, equity and strategic governance (Tripathi 2023). They balanced their full administrative skills with basic Islamic principles, and hence, the society advanced with art, culture, peace, war, and diplomacy by the same group. The art, judicial system, and literature they left behind laid an Islamic ethos that formed a distinctive Islamic heritage that remains today. To a significant extent, their quality of strategic governance established a tradition that would leave a formative impact on future rulers and polities in the region, granting them a lasting imprint on Pakistan's strategic culture. This enduring legacy of Islamic governance is a testament to the profound influence of Islam on South Asia. (Buliet and Eaton 1995)

Formation of Pakistan: A Culmination of Islamic Identity. The creation of Pakistan in 1947 was more than just a geopolitical reordering; it was also a cultural and ideological placing Islam at the core of the nation (Embree and Gilmartin 1990). Notwithstanding the richness and diversity of its civilisation, the movement led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah started to envisage a sovereign state where Islam could form a central tenet and act as a professed cultural, ethical and institutional glue differentiating the nationhood of Pakistan from India. This formative phase laid the foundations for a strategic culture deeply embedded in Islamic values, with independence, territorial integrity, and the state's Islamic identity as the foundational pillars of Pakistan's foreign and security policies (Ahmed and Akbarzadeh, 2023).

The strategic culture of Pakistan has been described as liable to preserve its Islamic identity, territorial integrity, values and principles of Islam and geopolitically driven pragmatism. The synthesis of Islam and the imperative nature of state interest has thus informed Pakistan's diplomatic relations with Muslim states and international issues, making it a special strategic culture still evolving in contemporary global political constructs. (Jalal 1991).

Islamic Principles and Pakistan's Strategic Culture. A strong emphasis on justice, moral rule of governance and the defence of Muslim territories characterise the strategic culture of Pakistan (Khan, 2023). This draws on the rich heritage of Islamic law and precedents set by Muslim states in history. In the context of Pakistan, 'Jihad' is not a call for violence but a notion of legitimate struggle, mainly to protect the Islamic community and its traditions. This has direct implications for Pakistan's military doctrine as well as its engagement in regional conflicts, where it sees Muslim communities under threat - such as Kashmir, where religious solidarity and land rights merge into the country's claims against India. Also, for example, Indo-Pakistani expressions demand the imposing of 'fiqh' or Islamic jurisprudence nationally. This community reference feel is still visible in the Pakistani national consciousness today,

with the government often elevating itself to the position of being a (Muslim) advocate for oppressed communities on any issue of this kind, be it Palestinian self-determination or global Islamophobia fighting. Such a policy not only confirms Pakistan's strategic culture imbued with Islamic values but also its role and position in the international Muslim community and makes it an iconic Muslim-majority nation (Fair 2008).

Contemporary Relevance of Islamic History in Strategic Culture. Pakistan's blending of its Islamic identity with its strategic culture greatly influences its foreign policy and defence strategy, which reflects a deep-seated fusing of religious values and geopolitical considerations. (Murad and Irfan 2023). The whole structure is unique, especially in South Asia: Pakistan's Islamic personality intermingles with a varied fortune regional environment, influencing how it responds to conflict, diplomacy, and alliances.

It is a strategic culture based on Islamic tenets and practical security requirements, and it runs through the country's relations with neighbouring states, major powers, and the Islamic community (Ajzenhamer 2020). This theme also brings together traditional state interests and faith-based solidarity. It also has further implications for Pakistan's participation in international events. It does so because the country conforms to its position on various international issues, ranging from human rights and Islamic solidarity to anti-terrorism activities. If it is not fully in line with the tenets of Islam and the collective aspirations of Muslim Ummah, then it will not do. Pakistan has been at the centre of global strategic discourse about Islam-centric fundamentalism due to its geopolitical connections to powerful States and internal security degeneration (Singh 2016). Pakistan must engage in international relations and national security policy differently, grounded in Islamic tradition and accommodating modern geopolitical realities. This strategic culture combines the particular with general, straddling construct concrete action plans against state oppositions that attempt to peddle false rhetoric

(by enemy feints or subversive methods of enticement) as well as maintain constraints on illiberal agents by pursuing merely invokes abstract principles on the grounds of prejudice from tunes without involving facts investigating the matter (Fair 2008).

Pakistan's strategic culture's historical and Islamic elements are fundamental to perceiving its policy orientations and strategic actions for today. In such things as these, the historical-religious background permeates Pakistan's strategic resolutions, and regional and global challenges are dealt with accordingly (Kumar 2011). The linkage between Pakistan's Islamic identity and strategic necessities will shape the future course of the country's diplomacy, security and development in a changing international order (Nasr 2004). Understandably, the values immanently expressed in Pakistan's culture from religious and historical perspectives continue to mould its strategic orientation.

Partition and Emergence of Pakistan (1947). The division of British India also resulted in the emergence of realities that are now unfolding, with Pakistan having to address them as a present-day challenge. From the beginning, the formed state was in a regional environment, surrounded by countries with troubled pasts and contentious border regions (Shved 2021). For example, India, with a historical reference of partition and unresolved territorial disputes with China and Afghanistan, with unresolved internal conflict and territorial disputes with Pakistan, have substantially impacted shaping Pakistan's strategic culture. This was a task that demanded an integrated threat and internal struggle approach. Therefore, instead of letting the guard down, Pakistan's strategy is bolstering sovereignty and unity and averting catastrophes. The ordeals of its founding drove that survivalist mentality to be one of its guiding philosophies. In these moments of strife, Pakistan has promoted its national values to get the kind of culture that puts security and readiness foremost in its domestic agenda.

The partition and its aftermath, in turn, formed the basis of Pakistan's alliances and external orientation. Pakistan, seeking security assurances, demonstrated strategic foresight and sought alignment with the United States during the Cold War (Jaffrelot 2016), not in a tactical sense but as core components of its vision of power that recognised weaknesses and accepted the imperatives of relating to more powerful neighbours. So, Pakistan has also been seeking political influence in Afghanistan as part of its security imperatives and driven by its historical links with the Afghan people.

Thus, the sophisticated method of alliance-making and intervention-minded behaviour illustrates the evolution of Pakistan's strategic culture depending on the regional dynamics. The partition of British India in 1947 and the creation of Pakistan as a homeland for Muslims was a momentous event with far-reaching consequences. Pakistan, by the upheaval caused by the partition (displacement, loss of lives and shattered communities), found itself in the seated need to protect the nation. Pakistan's strategic view has continued to evolve in response to changing conditions in the region. However, the legacy of 1947 has coloured the decisions and defence policy right to contemporary times, highlighting the extent to which history is a determinant of the present (Briskey 2022b).

Trauma of Partition. The partition of British India into Pakistan and India in 1947 was a time of suffering, migration and atrocities that were traumatic (Yusin 2009). These also left an indelible impact on how Pakistan would manage alliance systems in the region. The key was diplomacy when trying to manage the balance between adversaries, playing games for the sake of one's interests and ensuring they are protected against any real or perceived threats. A complete comprehension of Pakistan's culture primarily involves understanding that the baggage of partition is always close. Generations come together, and the collective challenges renew a shared resolve to work together and not lose hope. While the country was moving

forward peacefully, a glance into history was able to steer them through the crisis and continue to bring them together.

While running the country past challenges, those collective experiences, to a lesser or greater extent, define their strategy and direction in future. The creation of Pakistan in 1947 ushered in a nation-state bound by Solidifying the link between national identity and Islamic ideals and solidifying a pattern (Fair 2008). This identity formation was quite naturally connected to the origins of Pakistan. What was at stake was the idea of a country where Muslims could live without freely practising their religion and shaping the society according to the principles of their religion, as intended. This basic identity has remained crucial in shaping the decisions made by Pakistan and the policies it followed, making inroads and control - into Kashmir and the relationships it cultivated. When religion is intertwined with governance, Pakistan emerges as a significant community player that affects the way it interacts with other Muslim and non-Muslim countries. The still overriding and basic aspects of what Pakistan stands for in global Islamic fora, its positions in global Islamic platforms, and its orientations to the Muslim world are its heritage (Fair 2008).

Kashmir Conflict (1947). The Kashmir conflict, which started in 1947, has historically played an important role in determining the strategic mindset of Pakistan. It has contributed to a culture of historical grievance and national purpose in the country and deeply shaped its security and foreign policies. Now, the ongoing controversy has strongly supported a narrative highlighting the significance of the integrity and national identity of the country, specifically concerning Kashmir (Zain 2021) Accordingly, Pakistan prioritizes its national readiness and diplomacy regarding Kashmir, which influences its relationship with India and regional states. That this conflict has endured over decades emphasises its importance to Pakistan's strategic narrative,

presenting Kashmir not as steeped in territoriality but as a repository of historical rights and identity. This sentiment strikes a deep chord among the people of Pakistan as well.

Further, the historical and contemporary South Asian patterns of unstable states and uneasy relations (usually featuring or fuelled by the Kashmir dispute) have proved to be a major stumbling block and a test for establishing full harmony with capitalist India (Ganguly 2001). For many decades now, it is the Kashmir region that has forced Pakistan to increasingly focus on building its capacity to control the narrow region it has occupied since 1947, more than toeing China's line on this issue. Pakistan has defended the community, and our global advocacy of Muslim rights has been buttressed by its selfless support for the people of Kashmir in their darkest hour. As a result, these elements have naturalised the very characterisation of Pakistan, its behaviour and conduct, regional and international (Rizki and Muquita 2023).

In short, the Kashmir conflict is a substantive factor of Pakistan's strategic culture. It contributes a part of it owing to its direct relation with the state's experience and traditional values, which shape the country's societal development and internal and external behaviour. The Kashmir dispute is at the core of Pakistan's planning, influencing its military strategies, diplomatic engagements, social outlooks, power dynamics, etc. (Brunt and Farooq 2021).

Pakistan walks on their global relationships with a lighter view, but when being emotional, it is always Kashmir that dictates their strategic priorities. This may have a lot to do with the complexity and importance of the issue in dictating how Pakistanis feel. It informs its policy in many spheres, it keeps it relative in its relationship with India, and it frames it in context regionally and globally. The long-standing conflict has created a sense of urgency among the ranks of Pakistan and compelled them and their foreign policies to respond to the complexity and subtleties of the changing strategies (Ali, Shah, and Ahmad 2019).

The unresolved Kashmir issue continues to be a major point of tension, with Pakistan frequently highlighting it to justify its support for Kashmiris. This issue has deeply influenced Pakistan's diplomatic and security policies, shaping its relations with major global powers and neighbouring countries (Jan and Ahmed, 2022). In addition, the issue has been tied up with Pakistan's identity, ergo the imagined obligation to speak for the Kashmiri cause on international forums. This is both a greater mission for Pakistan, one that transcends its territorial disputes, as well as a broader commitment to Islamic solidarity and support to those regions around the world where there are Muslim-majority populations.

The effect of this ongoing debate has seen Pakistan pivot to focus on its support for the moral and political case of Kashmir in a manner consistent with its identity as a guardian of the rights of Muslims, wherever they may be found (Shaumyan, 2023). That is why the story of Kashmir continues to resonate, shaping Pakistan's policies, its interactions with the outside world, as well as its approach to regional security and cooperation. Thus, the Kashmir dispute is entwined within Pakistan's psychology and defines its understanding of geopolitics and policy-making (Bradnock 1998). The enduring relevance of this issue in Pakistan's planning, therefore, not only underscores its implications for the country's international reputation and regional entanglements but also its global diplomacy. Amidst the evolving dynamics of power among the Asian giants and an ever-evolving global order, the issue of Kashmir is a seemingly unshakeable crucible in both the strategic minds and strategic actions of Pakistan, reflecting how historical experience, national identity and regional realities continue to intersect in ways that Pakistan must consider as part of a broader exercise in strategic planning.

Trauma of Partition and Formation of National Identity. The lasting impact of the partition trauma on Pakistan's identity has greatly shaped its policies and strategic direction. The defensive stance from these experiences highlights the importance of integrity and

sovereignty in dealings with India, where past conflicts heighten security worries. The ongoing sense of vulnerability from the partition fosters an outlook prioritising security, interpreting interactions through a lens of threats heavily influenced by the unresolved Kashmir conflict. This issue represents Pakistan's enduring grievances and its aspirations for the rights and self-determination of Muslims. (Fair 2014)

Influenced by struggles and identity formation, the emphasis on security plays a role in shaping Pakistan's strategic approach, affecting its defence and foreign policies, particularly concerning Kashmir. This conflict goes beyond disputes, embodying Pakistan's significant historical and cultural narratives. These narratives impact its interactions with India and regional strategic dynamics, serving as the bedrock of its stance. Consequently, these foundational elements continue to shape Pakistan's stance, reflecting its experiences and identity in contemporary strategic culture and international relations.

The 1947 partition, which was expected due to external circumstances, e.g. World War II, internal uprising of communal rights and conflicts, finally led to the emergence of Pakistan. The perspective of the newly born state was deeply embedded in a sense of novel identity. In this regard, the unfavourable circumstances greatly shaped the nation's strategic mindset. Within internal diversity, Pakistan's Islamic identity promoted unity and managed ethnic diversity and cohesion during the lifetime of founding fathers, e.g. Quaid-e-Azam and Liaquat Ali Khan. Hence, during the early decade, the very existence and identity had fused a faith that largely influenced the nation's future perspective. Therefore, the state's founding fathers pursued and prioritised security/sustainability by maintaining alliances with contemporary superpowers. SEATO and CENTRO alliances provided an umbrella during the initial crisis period. Pakistan sought not only economic aid and grabbed military armaments but also attained an identification as a Muslim state globally. It is worth mentioning that this

identification was under the umbrella of Western powers. Dealing with multiple challenges required a tricky balance between bearing an Islamic identity and its geopolitical existence worldwide. It called for innovative policy approaches to maintain secure internal and external interests. Hence, striving for security through solidarity while maintaining sovereignty needed nuanced decision-making with political foresight. Despite the multi-faceted challenges due to the complex and ideal geopolitical position, Pakistan was impatiently involved in such platforms, which aimed to advocate co-religionists' perceptions across borders. It was adopted with religious dedication and practicality (Nasr 2004). The challenge of upholding an integrated national identity on one side and accommodating demographic importance on the other had been rather challenging. Pakistan's strategic theory concern was predominantly about security, while the internal multi-faceted challenges needed sensible governance and implantable strategies.

However, in the contemporary scenario, Pakistan optimistically and carefully addresses security threats that have never prevailed in past decades. These are terrorism and political and economic instability (Khan and Liu 2019). The most recent project, the CPEC, embodies this developing mindset by acknowledging Pakistan's geo-strategic importance while preserving the basic Islamic roots for maintaining internal religious identities. Even so, the policy was executable to encourage regional advancement and economic growth. This shift emphasises Pakistan's efforts to comprehend the complex requirements of geopolitics precisely. It is argued that it also bolstered the state's importance and well-being among the neighbouring countries in a changing world (Khan and Liu 2019). The CPEC evolution has deeply influenced Pakistan's importance by wrapping the partition damage and subsequent economic and political crises in Pakistan. These became the foundational strategies to continue to shape future defence policies. The perceptions of threats to maintain unity and administrative abilities have also been improved. During the present development of Pakistan, the political actors have

smoothly manoeuvred this policy to tackle the century's challenges. Therefore, the strategic culture reflected its journey, Islamic values, and continued pursuit of security, political sovereignty, and economic prosperity.

3.3 Early Conflicts and the Shaping of Strategic Outlook

3.3.1 1965 War: Implications for Strategic Culture

The brief yet brutal 1965 conflict between the hostile neighbours had a profound and long-lasting impact on Pakistan's strategic thinking. The traumatic showdown served to strengthen the belief that Pakistan's very survival depended on its willingness and ability to deter Indian aggression at all costs. To ensure national security in the face of the existential peril believed to emanate from New Delhi on all disputed border matters, strategists concluded that maintaining military supremacy should become the top priority of the government going forward. Additionally, planners determined that adopting an anticipatory defence posture instead of a reactive one could help Islamabad gain and preserve the upper hand in future crises. The conflict also highlighted the significance of international alliances and diplomatic support, as global reactions to the war influenced Pakistan's subsequent foreign policy orientation and its approach to international engagement (Paul 2015).

In the aftermath of the 1965 conflict, Pakistan intensified its focus on military modernisation and strategic alignment. It sought to bolster its defence capabilities and foster alliances that could provide security assurances against future threats. The war's impact extended beyond the military domain, shaping the national psyche and public opinion and embedding a sense of vigilance and resilience in the face of external aggression (Khan, 2023). This period has shifted towards a more pronounced security-centric strategic culture, emphasising the need for military readiness and strategic autonomy.

Moreover, the 1965 war reinforced Kashmir's centrality in Pakistan's strategic calculus, intensifying the commitment to the Kashmir cause as a core national interest. The conflict solidified the narrative of Kashmir as an unfinished agenda of partition, further embedding the dispute in Pakistan's national identity and strategic priorities. The war's legacy has shaped Pakistan's strategic culture, influencing its defence policies, diplomatic initiatives, and regional engagements, particularly concerning India (Ghose and James 2005).

Strategic Reassessment and Military Modernization. Trailing the 1965 war, the reassessment of military strategy steered Pakistan to create a more balanced and versatile military that could deal with all kinds of strategic difficulties. The nation knew that its subsequent purchases of defence were influenced by the awareness that there are two crucial determinants of victory: high-tech frontline equipment and mobility for operations. Such collaboration is not new in Pakistan, but the country must continue to play an active part in it. Now more than ever, alternative sources have moved. Defence collaboration was outgrowing the limitations of geography and political alignment, proving a very real success story for Pakistan. National security in the modern world requires integrated defensive planning, combining the forces of sea, land, and air (Germond 2015). Lessons learned during the war led to a change in tactics combining land, sea, and air forces (Khalid, 2011). In addition, the experience pointed out how crucial Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) support can be if you are to stay informed of what is happening around you and thus maintain the initiative. As a result, investment in these areas rose. In addition, the 1965 war served a strategic purpose within the Pakistani military and its civilian leadership. The following years gave greater attention to strategic assets and indigenous defence industries. The aim was to reduce Pakistan's dependency on external suppliers and ensure it could rely entirely on its resources for crucial defence technology (Khan, 2004). These efforts were intended to make

Pakistan more secure and more capable of deterrence. They sought to ensure the country could effectively defend its sovereignty and protect its strategic interests.

Nationalism and Unity. A surge of nationalism swept through Pakistan after the 1965 war, turning it into a unified body of different ethnic, linguistic, and religious communities that had only one aim: to defend against what was seen as aggression. For the thirteen years following that conflict, this diversity in unity was stamped on strategic culture, determining how defence was grasped (Fair 2014). The war cemented in the public consciousness the need for military and civilian cooperation, showing as well just what a psychological asset popular morale and support for the enhancement of defence capabilities within Pakistan. After the struggle, there was a strong push to enforce national unity and collective awareness by integrating these ideas into educational programs, controlling media narratives, and organising memorial activities to reinforce this message (Rizvi 2000). Threats from India have haunted Pakistan's strategic thinking ever since. It has also influenced the country's defence stance and its diplomatic relations. This War of 1965 also helped to form defence policies and strategic studies in Pakistan, with the research and analysis that think tanks, colleges, and military schools took up increasingly focused on national security as well as strategic planning matters (Cheema 2012). This academic and intellectual engagement has further nurtured Pakistan's strategic culture, providing a deeper insight into regional and global security dynamics and guiding policy-making.

Doctrine of Deterrence. The lessons learned from the 1965 war significantly impacted Pakistan's strategic thinking, solidifying the importance of maintaining equilibrium in South Asia. They faced a numerically predominant adversary that emphasised the need for an appropriate approach to counter hostility, even though a sort of conventional military parity prevailed. This strategic reevaluation emerged from acknowledging that conventional forces

alone may insufficiently safeguard against fundamental dangers, propelling the quest for nuclear capacity as a credible means for deterrence.

In this context, Pakistan's nuclear initiatives sparked by insecurity were further exacerbated after the 1965 war with India. The situation further became alarming after India's surprise atomic successful tests in 1974. These developments imposed an emergency to reshape strategic policies. Hence, in that scenario, the 1998 announcement of Pakistan's bomb competence ushered it into an influential posture. The successful attempt at atom bomb testing emphasised deterrence to India. The repercussion of mass destruction through weapons would have been disastrous. Hence, a novel doctrinal evolution needed political foresight in determining robust structures. A logical policy framework was essential to address the risks of the atomic war between the two neighbours. (Sattar, 2007).

Additionally, the urgency placed on anticipation of expected wars shaped Pakistan's tactic to control weapons, non-proliferation discussion, and regional diplomacy. The quest for strategic equilibrium through deterrence defined Pakistan's policy of dealing with arms control worldwide and bilateral relations with great powers and neighbours. In this context, Pakistan's strategic mindset adapted to embrace the intricacies of nuclear deterrence, moulding its defence strategies, military doctrines, and diplomatic manoeuvres to fit the complex realities of the contemporary international system (Khan, 2010).

International Alliances and Diplomacy. Post-1965 was a period in the history of Pakistan marked by a significant change in its strategic orientation. The country has adopted more diversified strategies, combining military preparedness with vigorous international diplomacy. Recognising the constraints of its geography and economic conditions, Pakistan increasingly made international ties a central feature of its strategic culture. The war's outcome stressed

different aspects of requirements for the country: without logical limitations and international cooperation, it is inevitable that military efforts cannot accomplish national interests.

Strategic relations, mainly with China and the United States, became the mainstay of Pakistani foreign policy and defence strategy. The US alliance with Pakistan was a source of much-needed military help and backing for Pakistan: it also furthered American interests northward against the Soviet Union's exclusivist designs on Pakistan. Similarly, China's friendship became a significant pillar for Pakistan's foreign relations, a balance with India and a way of expanding Pakistan's strategic depth. Far from mere business deals, such relationships were of the essence in its efforts to chart through the complications of regional and world politics in a manner that helped it sustain its independence. They were testaments to its strength in international affairs.

Moreover, these alliance gave due importance to diplomatic initiatives embedded in Pakistan's strategic culture. An interest was demonstrated with the cooperation with other state in the multipolar world. It proved the ability of Pakistan to have impartial foreign relations in a world that has constantly changing alignments globally. Furthermore, they also reflect the pragmatic makeup of Pakistan in utilising its strategic location and linkages for national interests, the least concerning the issues of the Kashmir dispute and broad regional security questions. Keeping in view the changing geopolitical dimension in international relations, diplomatic relations and global engagement remained the hallmark of Pakistan's Strategic Culture.

3.3.2 1971 War: Implications for Strategic Culture

Post-1971 war compelled Pakistan to revisit its security paradigm due to the internal crisis and the role of a foreign country in the separation of East Pakistan. Pakistan realized that there was a greater need to focus on nationalism and internal issues. They compelled the elites to revisit

strategic orientation and strategic re-drafting. Moreover, the focus was more on developing military capabilities in conventional war scenarios. It was the 1971 war scenario and the Indian test of Smiling Buddha that Pakistan felt the need for nuclear development. Nuclear deterrence was included in the national security agenda, thus making a shift in Pakistan's strategic culture.

The 1971 war gave Pakistan the realisation to tread very carefully, especially in its diplomatic and international relations-based engagement. That moment in the war saw the country start moving toward relevant diplomatically potent engagements and strategic partnerships building with not only Muslim-majority countries but also other superpowers like China and, most relevantly, the United States. Such involvements would, therefore, serve as strategic buffers against a repeat of international isolation while utilising the country's strategic depth and diplomatic sway in international fora. Thus, after the war, Pakistan tried diversifying its international relations, bringing its strategic culture much more in tune with geopolitical pragmatism and multilateralism.

Re-evaluation of National Identity and Unity. The post-1971 reorientation of national identity and unity brought extremely seminal changes in Pakistan's policy for governance and interprovincial relations. The government came to understand that the aftereffect of marginalisation was not something to be desired, and thus, the need for national cohesion resulted.

Military Strategy and Defense Posture. The 1971 war made Pakistan realise a reorientation in its defence strategies toward modernising its armed forces. To avoid being defeated militarily again, Pakistan stepped up its effort to acquire a credible nuclear deterrence, which materialised in the successful nuclear tests in 1998. The nuclear tests were timely also because they addressed India's nuclear development directly and made a strategic shift for the protection of Pakistan's security posture as well as regional deterrence.

The war lessons brought Pakistan further to fortify military training, operational preparedness, and logistics so that the armed forces could deal adequately with challenging and changing security situations. Efforts were put into strengthening command and control, intelligence gathering, and mobility of forces; there was a greater demand for an enduring and responsive military force capable of changing with the fluid security setting. The demand for a balanced and integrated approach to national defence also led to the adoption of a far more all-inclusive security strategy, incorporating elements of asymmetric warfare, strategic partnerships, etc. Military alliances and defence cooperation agreements with China, the United States, and others remained central to fortifying Pakistan's strategic depth and defence capabilities against emerging regional and global threats.

The Doctrine of Credible Minimum Deterrence. The adoption of the doctrine of credible minimum deterrence marked a new paradigm in Pakistan's strategic posturing. Due to the regional complexities, this was considered the most refined approach towards national security, considering the international norms and standards in the use of nuclear weapons. To ensure territorial integrity, the policy for a balanced approach between conventional and nuclear strategies helped Pakistan to deter its potential adversary.

Shifts in Foreign Policy and International Alliances. After the 1971 war, the immediate challenge was developing strong diplomatic engagements and forming alliances. The important aspect of the 1971 war was engagement with China, which was considered a global power because both countries shared a common interest. Moreover, Pakistan also focused more on strengthening its relations with the Muslim world to ensure collective Islamic solidarity and representation of Islamic values at the international level. Pakistan wants to ensure its strategic interests and enhance its voice in the global forum through diverse partnerships related to critical matters and issues relevant to national security and developmental goals.

Civil-Military Relations. The war of 1971 exposed deep weaknesses in civil and military institutional coordination, further shaping their respective places in Pakistan's governance and strategic decision-making process. In the immediate aftermath of the war, the military became an influential force in the country's political arena, constantly legitimising its intervention to achieve national stability and security. Beginning with the trend observed, the period saw the military increasingly playing an important role, and sometimes even a dominant role, in making Pakistan's foreign policy and security strategies. Simultaneously, it underlined the need for a strong and comprehensive national security policy that must cut across the conventional civil-military divide (Faruki 1972). This has ensured further institutionalisation, coordination, and joint decision-making between the civilian and military leadership through established structures. However, it has tended to favour military power because it is seen as more effective in terms of institution and plays a crucial role when considering security-related matters. The civil-military dynamic is part of Pakistan's strategic culture, which determines the state's response to internal and external challenges. Optimum civil-military synergy remains a persistent quest with implications for Pakistan's democratic governance, policy coherence, and strategic autonomy

Indo-Pak Rivalry and the Kashmir Dispute. The loss of East Pakistan and the advent of Bangladesh in 1971 underscored even more acutely the sensitivity of the Pakistani establishment to territorial integrity and the Kashmir issue. The perception of an existential threat from India began to gain currency. Pakistan's strategic orientation increasingly focused on deterrence, defence preparedness, and public diplomacy championing the Kashmir cause. However, again, the very fact that the conflict had demonstrated the depth of the dispute and, beyond that anew, underlined the imperative of internationalising the Kashmir issue left Pakistan on an even greater war footing to try to gather world opinion in its favour against what it saw as Indian hegemony.

The Kashmir dispute remains the linchpin of Pakistan's foreign policy in subsequent years. Accordingly, it had shaped alliances and enmities for the country. In its quest to chart through the subjective geopolitics of South Asia, the conflict has determined Pakistan's major relationships with the world's major powers, its neighbours, and other Islamic nations. The strategic importance and the symbolic value of Kashmir in Pakistan's national narrative ensure that it is at or near the top of the issues of Indo-Pak relations and has figured significantly in Pakistan's strategic decisions and military planning. The persistence of the Kashmir dispute and its centrality in Pakistan's strategic culture only underscores the fact that the Indo-Pak rivalry may be an unfolding process. A robust equilibrium pattern is found despite numerous peace initiatives and *détentes*; a cycle of competition and conflict-readiness prolongs the basic tensions and unsolved issues, defining the strategic landscape in the region.

1971 war brought multifaceted transformation into Pakistan's strategic culture by transforming its defence orientation, followed by its national identity and position at the international level. There was a considerable shift in the foreign policy, military strategy and deterrence doctrine. The lesson learnt from the 1971 war was to re-orientate strategic thinking regarding national unity, engagement at the global level and regional reorientation. A need was felt for comprehensive security by incorporating national cohesion and traditional security as part of holistic national security in the Changing regional dynamics

3.4 Pakistan's Strategic Posture and Global Alliances

There is a strong reliance on Pakistan's foreign policy and national security on the strategic posture and alliances at the global level. Pakistan is living in a complex regional environment, and it has always managed security dilemmas while striking a balance between its military preparedness, strategic partnership, and diplomatic engagement. Pakistan's strategic posture

and regional and global alliances have always been detrimental to resolving conflicts, economic development and action as a platform for international diplomacy.

In the changing nature of International Politics, Pakistan has always fostered alliances with regional and international players, and each of these alliances mirrored this partnership in the changing geopolitical environment. Pakistan's relationship with the Western powers, USA, China, Russia, and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was based on pragmatism, where Pakistan was always looking for strategic depth for its national security against India, which is considered as the main threat. These foreign policy options largely influenced Pakistan's strategic options and economic and political journey, besides its military capabilities, highlighting how diplomatic relations, national security and development intertwined in the comprehensive national strategy.

3.4.1 Cold War Era: Alliances and Strategic Realignments

There was a telling impact on Pakistan's strategic culture during the Cold War due to its geographical proximity and location at the crossroads of important regional and international players. Pakistan aligned itself with the USA against the spread of communism and joined the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). Pakistan was offered military and economic support while extending its support to the USA against the USSR. 1979 marked the era of intense engagement of Pakistan in Afghanistan with the support of the USA to check the invasion of the USSR. This further ensured the regional security environment where Pakistan played a key role. Pakistan's interest was multifaceted where on one side, Pakistan wanted to boost its economic and military might, and on the other side, it wanted to secure its western border. As Pakistan emerged from the Cold War, its strategic culture evolved, marked by an enduring emphasis on military alliances, strategic autonomy, and the sophisticated management of regional and global relationships.

Alignment with the United States. Pakistan's alignment with the United States, marked by its participation in the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), played a pivotal role in shaping its strategic culture during the Cold War era. The alliance with the US was driven by shared interests in countering Soviet influence in the region and provided Pakistan with critical military and economic support. This strategic partnership significantly influenced Pakistan's security policies, military doctrine, and stance in the regional geopolitical landscape, positioning it as a key ally of the West in South Asia (Rizvi, 2000; Cohen, 2004).

Over time, the relationship between Pakistan and the United States evolved, navigating through periods of close cooperation and strained ties. While the Cold War dynamics provided the initial framework for their alliance, subsequent events, such as the Soviet-Afghan war, further cemented their partnership, with Pakistan playing a central role in supporting US objectives in the region. However, the end of the Cold War, changing global priorities, and domestic developments in both countries introduced complexities into the bilateral relationship, impacting the strategic calculations on both sides (Fair, 2011; Markey, 2013).

Despite the fluctuations in their relationship, the strategic alignment with the United States has left a lasting imprint on Pakistan's strategic culture, influencing its perceptions of security threats, its approach to regional diplomacy, and its military modernisation efforts. The historical legacy of this partnership continues to resonate in Pakistan's strategic thinking and policy formulation, reflecting the enduring impact of global alliances on national strategic postures (Jones, 2003; Jalal, 1990).

SEATO and CENTO: Foundations of a Strategic Partnership. The participation of Pakistan in SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization) and CENTO (Central Treaty Organization) marked a significant chapter in its foreign policy, aligning the country with

Western powers in the broader context of the Cold War's geopolitical struggles. These alliances represented the central strategy of the United States for containment of communist influences and strengthening allies against any perceived Soviet aggression. For Pakistan, these alliances constituted something more than just a product of diplomacy; they constituted strategic necessities providing concrete advantages regarding military aid and economic support, which could be critically evaluated for national security and development objectives (Rizvi, 1983; Sattar, 2007).

In addition to material benefits, SEATO and CENTO gave Pakistan more than materials in terms of integration into the global alliance system, opening up an avenue for international diplomatic engagement and recognition. SEATO and CENTO helped Pakistan make its military strong with superior weapons and training, which matters most in Pakistan's regional security concerns vis-à-vis India. Second, economic aid and development cooperation related to the accords also played a strong role in Pakistan's initial state-building period in stabilising and developing its economy (Kux, 1992; Jalal, 1990).

However, engagement with SEATO and CENTO brought complicated implications for Pakistan's regional and internal strategic posture. To an extent, alliance with Western military pacts placed Pakistan at loggerheads with neighbouring countries and influenced its regional policies and outlook. Long after their formulation, the legacies of these alliances have continued to influence Pakistan's strategic culture, bringing forward the complex interaction of global alignments and considerations of national security (Noorani, 2008; Blood, 1990).

Strategic Implications of the Alliances. Beyond the more obvious military and economic gains, its participation would have a strategic bearing on Pakistan's foreign policy and long-term security profile. While these alliances provided Pakistan with significant support against perceived external threats, they also required Pakistan to align closely with US strategic

interests, often at the expense of its regional autonomy and relationships. This alignment with Western powers was instrumental in shaping Pakistan's anti-communist stance, contributing to its ideological orientation and strategic priorities during the Cold War era (Hilali, 2005; Jones, 2003).

Furthermore, Pakistan's participation in these alliances showcased the country's strategic significance in global politics, particularly in the context of the U.S.-Soviet rivalry. While this elevated Pakistan's international profile, it also entangled the country in the complex geopolitics of the Cold War, at times constraining its policy options and exacerbating regional tensions, especially with neighbouring India. The reliance on Western military support also influenced Pakistan's defence planning and procurement strategies, shaping its military doctrine and capabilities in ways that have had lasting effects (Cohen, 2004; Markey, 2007).

However, the alliances also had unintended consequences, sometimes limiting Pakistan's flexibility in responding to changing regional dynamics and pursuing its interests. The perceived alignment with Western interests occasionally alienated Pakistan from its neighbours and other non-aligned or Soviet-aligned countries, complicating its regional diplomacy and strategic manoeuvring. As a result, while SEATO and CENTO played crucial roles in developing Pakistan's strategic culture, they also highlighted the challenges of balancing external alliances with national interests and regional realities (Riedel, 2011; Haqqani, 2005).

Balancing Global Alignments and Regional Aspirations. This needs to balance global alignments with regional aspirations has moulded Pakistan's strategic culture into embedding pragmatism and flexibility heavily within its foreign policy and military strategy. Through alliances with the United States, membership of SEATO and CENTO offered help. It made Pakistan an important crossroads in world politics during the Cold War, so it had to

accommodate its policies to align with the major power interests, often at the cost of regional autonomy. (Sattar, 2007; Jalal, 1990).

Therefore, Pakistan had to pursue an increase in its security and development objectives while minimising the adversities accompanying geopolitical positioning as determined by its geospatial interaction. This was possible through the strategic use of its alliances for military advantage and economic benefits and diplomatic efforts that ensured friendly relations with neighbouring countries in the context of an enduring rivalry with India. Such experience of balancing these often-competing imperatives has contributed toward developing a strategic culture that values both strategic depth and diversification of partnerships and the pursuit of strategic autonomy. (Rizvi, 2000; Paul, 2005). Moreover, Pakistan's efforts to balance its global alignments with regional aspirations underscored the importance of diplomatic agility and strategic foresight in navigating the complex landscape of international relations. This aspect of Pakistan's strategic culture continues to influence its contemporary foreign policy, reflecting a legacy of seeking to maintain sovereignty and strategic relevance amidst shifting global and regional dynamics. (Fair 2014).

Long-Term Impact on Pakistan's Strategic Culture. The long-term impact of these alliances on Pakistan's strategic culture was profound. They established the United States as a cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign and security policy, a relationship that has endured fluctuations in global politics and shifts in the strategic landscape. The experiences of navigating the complexities of SEATO and CENTO have imparted valuable lessons in diplomacy, strategic alignment, and pursuing national interests amid global power dynamics. This period in Pakistan's strategic history underscores the enduring importance of alliances, strategic partnerships, and the continuous need for balancing global engagements with regional imperatives

3.4.2 Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 marked a watershed moment in South Asian geopolitics and, more broadly, in the Cold War landscape, with all its profound implications for Pakistan's strategic culture. As the ideological and military confrontations between the Cold War's major protagonists increasingly spread towards Afghanistan, Pakistan reached an unprecedented new high of strategic challenge. Pakistan weathered the storm and lists support for the Afghan Mujahideen, the development of the concept of strategic depth, and the long-run impacts on its strategic culture and regional security dynamics.

The Onset of the Soviet Invasion and Pakistan's Response. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 represents a conjunctural moment in Pakistan's strategic history. It began an important paradigm shift in Pakistan's foreign policy and strategic posture. General Zia-ul-Haq's regime used political leverage to ally Pakistan with the United States to face the perceived threat from the Soviet Union. This alliance resulted in large military and economic aid, which excessively increased Pakistan's defence and made the economy boom (Hussain, 2005; Riedel, 2014).

Pakistan reacted to the invasion with a confusing strategy: direct support was given to mujahideen fighters inside Afghanistan, and at the same time, general alignment was made with the Western powers. The strategy could help not only push back Soviet influence in the region but was also exploited by the country to bring itself forward in the international fight against communism. Through collaboration with the CIA concerning support to the Afghan resistance, the relationship between Pakistan and the US continued to close, military ties improved, and coordination in terms of intelligence was strong (Coll, 2004; Rashid, 2000).

However, engagement in the Afghan War had long-term effects on Pakistan's internal security and regional dynamics. The cross-border flow of arms and militants from Afghanistan has promoted cross-border militancy inside Pakistan and has introduced new security and stability risks. Among them is the restoration of proxy warfare and strategic depth, crucial components of Pakistan's regional policy. Almost everything that Pakistan views as strategic culture has its roots in the experiences gained during the Afghan war: it will continue to shape much of what Pakistan does in its regional security thinking and its anti-terrorism initiatives for many years. (Markey, 2008; Rubin, 2002).

Support for the Afghan Mujahideen. Such support for the Afghan Mujahideen fundamentally shaped Pakistan's strategic and foreign policy directions, basing its legacy within proxy warfare and interventionism in its strategic culture. This entangled Pakistan in the heart of global geopolitical currents, and international stature and strategic relevance drastically increased, especially vis-à-vis the United States and the broader anti-Soviet coalition (Kux, 2001; Haqqani, 2005). This network of training camps and supply routes in Pakistan on behalf of Afghan Mujahideen meant not only a general outcome of the Soviet Afghan War but also further implications for the Pakistani internal security landscape. The general flow of weapons, fighters, and ideologies resulted in the militarization of Pakistani society and in the emergence of jihadist groups, which many of them then redirected focus to the issue of Kashmir and other internal conflicts (Rashid, 2008; Tellis, 2008).

At the same time, Pakistan's strategic involvement in Afghanistan created a very complex relationship between it and the Afghan factions, which has complicated its post-war influence and relations with subsequent Afghan governments. The legacy of Pakistan's support for the Mujahideen continues to influence its policies towards Afghanistan, shaping its approach to regional security, counterterrorism, and its role in peace processes. The enduring impact of this

period on Pakistan's strategic culture underscores the interplay between foreign policy decisions and domestic security concerns, highlighting the long-term consequences of involvement in proxy warfare (Fair 2014).

Concept of Strategic Depth. The concept of strategic depth became a pivotal element in Pakistan's defence planning, reflecting a shift towards more indirect and asymmetric approaches to security. This doctrine influenced Pakistan's military strategy, intelligence operations, and broader geopolitical manoeuvres, prioritising influence in Afghanistan to counterbalance Indian power (Rubin, 2002; Rashid, 2008). However, the pursuit of strategic depth also entailed significant risks and complications. It intertwined Pakistan's security interests with the stability and political dynamics of Afghanistan, making Pakistan's security increasingly reliant on factors beyond its direct control. Moreover, this policy deepened Pakistan's engagement in regional power plays and proxy conflicts, which had long-term implications for its domestic and regional stability (Fair, 2014).

The strategic depth doctrine also faced criticism and reevaluation, particularly in the context of changing regional dynamics and the complexities of the post-9/11 world. The debates within Pakistan's strategic community regarding the feasibility and effectiveness of the concept, the evolving nature of threats, and lessons derived from existing and past engagements in Afghanistan signify how historical experiences continue to impact strategic culture even after three decades. (Nawaz, 2008; Tellis, 2012).

Legacy of the Soviet Withdrawal. The pull-out of the Soviets and its aftermath had huge implications for Pakistan's strategic culture, shaping its security policies and regional engagements for years to come. The armed groups that started as part of the anti-Soviet campaign gradually took on the militant networks challenging Pakistan's internal security and state-to-state relations in the region (Rashid, 2000; Coll, 2004).

The refugee situation, with millions of Afghans seeking shelter in Pakistan, played a significant role in shaping the nation's strategic calculations. This crisis brought about complex socio-economic and security implications. While the refugee populations added diversity to Pakistan's cultural and demographic landscape, they also raised intricate questions about resource distribution, absorption, and intermittent security concerns.

Military's Ascendancy in Strategic Decision-Making. The military's ascendancy in strategic decision-making during and after the Afghan conflict had far-reaching implications for Pakistan's governance and its approach to security and foreign policy. The Soviet Afghan War was a pivotal moment in the evolution of Pakistan's strategic culture, profoundly influencing its subsequent security and foreign policy orientations. Involvement in proxy war and the supporting non-state actors during this conflict became salient elements of strategic stock and share for Pakistan, revealing the supposed utility of these approaches in advancing national interests under otherwise constrained circumstances. The strategic culture left by the war considered non-state actors a useful tool in asymmetrical warfare; the hatred of India and the mutual nurturing rivalry will make this a significant consideration for its projects in South Asia. (Rashid, 2008; Tellis, 2000). The conflict also accentuated Pakistan's reliance on external alliances for security assistance and geopolitical leverage. During this period, the strategic partnership with the United States reinforced the notion that international alignments could be instrumental in addressing national security challenges. However, the aftermath of the war and the changing global dynamics post-Cold War prompted Pakistan to reassess its strategic dependencies and seek greater autonomy in its foreign policy decisions (Nawaz, 2008; Jones, 2003).

Besides, the war's end, as well as the new regional security environment, fed Pakistan's drive towards nuclear deterrence, in obvious words, in pursuit of security against existential and, in

its view, existential threats. Once nuclear capabilities are acquired, these could go on to counterbalance India's conventional superiority and discourage external aggression at the same time. This has shaped Pakistan's strategic culture towards strategic deterrence and national self-reliance in defence. (Khan, 2012; Chari, Cheema, & Cohen, 2007).

Regional Security Dynamics and the War's Aftermath. The Soviet Afghan War has indelibly impacted regional security dynamics, and because of that war, South Asia's geopolitical landscape will be changed to its very core. The essential element of Pakistan's involvement in Afghanistan, seeking strategic depth, has far-reaching effects on security and foreign policy issues, generally leading to durable regional tension and conflict patterns. Militant groups became a tool of foreign policy. Although this was seen as an advantage in the beginning, it eventually developed into multiple security dilemmas, one that presented an internal violence issue and terrorism emerging within Pakistan (Markey, 2008).

This persistence has brought a recalibration of strategic priorities, including Pakistan's relations on counterterrorism and internal security vis-à-vis regional diplomacy. The legacy of war also continues to shape the present and future of Pakistan's relationships with India and Afghanistan, the two most important neighbours, as it shapes its strategic postures and fuels mutual suspicion and competition. Pakistan has had to confront the impact of past policies, and in this context, its regional engagement approach and a continued search for stability and security have become a quest for survival (Riedel, 2011).

However, the geopolitical changes that have ensued from the war and its aftermath have compelled Pakistan to up strategic engagements, especially with China, to function as a counterweight against perceived adversities within the regional surroundings and to seek out what would be of interest against the rapidly changing circumstances worldwide. These altered relationships highlight Pakistan's continued efforts to navigate regional security complexities

while fostering strategic autonomy and countering the challenges of historic strategic choices (Small, 2015; Yusuf, 2018). The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and subsequent Pakistani involvement in supporting the Mujahideen presented a turning point in the development of Pakistan's strategic culture. This epoch restructured Pakistan's security environment with serious reverberation for regional and global geopolitics. The continued impact of the conflict on Pakistan's strategic orientation lies in the heritage it has bequeathed: the proliferation of armed groups, the concept of strategic depth, and the military's dominant role in strategic affairs. However, the lesson and legacy of the Soviet Afghan War continue to resonate through the complexities of Pakistan's attempts to understand and address contemporary security challenges.

3.4.3 Post-Cold War Era and the Nuclear Dimension

The end of the Cold War ushered in a new era in global politics and security that momentarily affected the strategic orientations of parties involved in the bipolar contest. This marked a new transition point in Pakistan's journey as it began looking to redefine its strategic posture in the face of emerging regional challenges and an evolving nuclear landscape for South Asia. It finally came in 1998 with the series of nuclear tests conducted by Pakistan, whereby it had changed its strategic stance to a deep level.

Background to the Nuclear Tests. The backdrop to Pakistan's nuclear tests in May 1998 is thus rather closely linked with the broader security environment of South Asia and the enduring rivalry with India. This incident portrayed Pakistan's perceived vulnerability, necessitating the evolution of a potent deterrent against future threats (Bhutto, 1998; Khan, 2012). The nuclear tests carried out by India in May 1998 presented an immediate and stark challenge to the security architecture of the region, and this obliged Pakistan to demonstrate its nuclear capability. The decision to conduct reciprocal tests was not merely reactive. However, it was

embedded in a broader strategic context that included Pakistan's desire for strategic parity, national pride, and the imperative of deterrence. The nuclearisation of South Asia thus marked a significant transformation in the region's security dynamics, introducing a nuclear dimension to the already complex India-Pakistan rivalry (Perkovich, 1999; Rehman, 2012).

Moreover, the international response to Pakistan's nuclear tests and the subsequent sanctions imposed by various countries shaped Pakistan's foreign relations and its strategic calculus. In the years following the tests, Pakistan sought to establish itself as a responsible nuclear state, advocating for global nuclear disarmament while also emphasising the right to self-defence. The nuclear tests had enduring implications for Pakistan's defence doctrine, its international standing, and its approach to regional security and diplomacy (Ahmed, 2015; Khan, 2010).

Evolution towards Credible Minimum Deterrence. This quest of Pakistan to become a peer competitor of credible minimum deterrence and its evolution in the strategic doctrine pictures is a very pragmatic approach towards nuclear policy, balancing imperatives of national security with realities of an economy and international non-proliferation norms. The principle clearly states that effective deterrence does not imply matching the adversary's arsenal but comprises reliable capability to inflict unacceptable damage in retaliation (Khan, 2012; Sattar, 2017). To some extent, credible minimum deterrence was also Pakistan's response to the changing strategic landscape of South Asia, underlined by India's conventional and nuclear muscles. This doctrine was an attempt to send the message that its nuclear weapons were just for deterrence, not for warfighting, and hence trying to put off an arms race in the region and establish strategic stability. (Ahmed, 2015; Sattar, 2017).

Additionally, credible minimum deterrence allowed Pakistan to clearly and rationally express a nuclear posture, which has fed Pakistan's attempt at seeking international approval as a responsible nuclear-armed state. The policy stands at the epicentre of Pakistan's nuclear

diplomacy, hence an expression of commitment towards a no-nuclear war and aversion to risk in proliferation. In this context, Pakistan's nuclear policy and the regime of credible minimum deterrence remain important drivers of its national security policy and its interaction with the global security system (Sattar, 2017; Lodhi, 2011).

Strategic Rationale. Pakistan has a strategic rationale behind adopting credible minimum deterrence: it is deeply rooted in its geostrategy and historical context imperatives. Accepting the disparity in conventional forces vis-à-vis India, establishing a security paradigm that would deter aggression and ensure national survival in the face of superior conventional forces sought by Pakistan (Krepon & Thompson, 2009; Paul, 2010). This doctrine also responded to the larger security environment at a regional level, characterised by long-standing antipathies, unsolved territorial disputes, and escalators potential of conflict. In this way, by having a believable nuclear deterrent, Pakistan aimed to instil in potential adversaries a sense of caution in launching possible conventional or nuclear confrontations and contributing to regional stability. (Paul, 2010; Hymans, 2010).

Doubtless, the economic aspect of the doctrine can also be overemphasised. Where resource allocation vies with hotly contested development requirements, credible minimum deterrence allows strategic equilibrium without costly escalation of an arms race. It thus helped Pakistan judiciously allocate resources by balancing imperatives of defence and economic development, reflecting a strategic calculus aimed at long-term national interests and stability. (Hymans, 2010; Jones, 2017).

Development of the Nuclear Doctrine. Formulating a nuclear doctrine for Pakistan was a sensitive exercise, reflecting the specific imperatives of the new nation and a constantly changing environment on non-proliferation at the international level. It rested squarely on survivability, reliability, and effective deterrence principles to ensure that the Pakistani nuclear

arsenal could survive a first strike and retaliate effectively, deterring potential adversaries from such strikes. (Khan, 2012; Narang, 2014).

A crucial investment in missiles and delivery systems has been created as an arsenal of long-range ground- and sea-based missiles with extensive diversionary launch systems able to reach major strategic targets through a diversified and wide array of arsenal. This includes ballistic missile capabilities and sea-based launch systems that support robust second-strike capabilities (Khan, 2012; Narang, 2014). The nuclear doctrine of Pakistan also stemmed from its commitment to international norms on non-proliferation, even when the country was not a signatory to the Treaty on the NPT. A credible minimum deterrent by the Pakistani nuclear program helped them stress their status as a responsible nuclear power. It underlined that their nuclear program responded to security needs rather than any aspirations of regional hegemony. (Ahmed, 2013; Hymans, 2010).

International and Regional Implications of Nuclear Tests. The nuclear tests, associated with articulating the credible minimum deterrence doctrine, carried major international and regional implications. The nuclearisation of South Asia, thus, sparked and triggered issues related to an arms race and the stability of the regional security architecture. Internationally, the tests resulted in sanctions and diplomatic pressure on Pakistan in the context of global non-proliferation efforts. While the tests put Pakistan on the nuclear map, they also needed a rethink of its place in the strategic calculations of regional as well as global powers.

Impact on Pakistan's Strategic Culture. The doctrine of credible minimum deterrence has had a significant impact on Pakistan's strategic culture and has settled the nuclear capability within the country's national security structure. This fundamentally changed the content of doctrines on military uses, diplomatic postures, and crisis management approaches by integrating nuclear deterrence as a core component of its strategic framework. Pakistan, to

project a posture of strength and resolve, deterring aggression and increasing bargaining power within the international environment, integrated nuclear deterrence into its strategic framework. (Khan, 2012; Ahmed, 2013). This doctrine shaped the response of Pakistan against the challenge of regional security, particularly against potential rival India, hence this nuclear deterrence became the important aspect in maintaining peace and power balancing in South Asia.(Khan, 2012; Narang, 2014).

Civil-Military Dynamics. The civil-military dynamics in Pakistan, specifically surrounding the nuclear program, outline a dual stewardship of sometimes contentious relationships between civilian authorities and military leadership over strategic decision-making. The development and operational control of nuclear weapons have further cemented the military's role as a core stakeholder in national security and has often placed it at the helm of strategic affairs (Khan, 2010; Siddiq, 2007). Civilian influence over nuclear policy in Pakistan has evolved, but the military is still deeply entrenched in the nuclear decision-making process. This is due to the technical and operational know-how that must go into running the nuclear arsenal and the history of military participation in politics and security policy in Pakistan. The balance of civilian and military input into nuclear policy suggests much about Pakistan's democratic governance and the power of transparency and checks in strategic matters. (Khan, 2010; Nawaz, 2008).

Similarly, patterns of civil-military relations also appear in the civil-military dynamics that mark Pakistan's nuclear policy. The significant steps to make any further civilian involvement and oversight even surer, the mainstream feature of the military role on strategic security issues, underscores the lingering imbalances in civil-military relationships. Such a dynamic is crucial to Pakistan's strategic culture. It has implications for its ability to pursue consistent policies,

govern crises well, and diplomatically negotiate on nuclear and security policy issues. (Khan, 2010; Siddiq, 2007).

National Identity and Prestige. The nuclear tests of 1998 have deeply affected Pakistan's national identity and prestige on the international level, rounding off several decades of striving for strategic parity in a region full of complex security dilemmas. At the same time, the detonation of successful nuclear devices was a strategic compulsion but also a giant achievement in science and technology as it portrayed Pakistan as a technologically advanced nation that was proud of scientific understanding. The nuclear capability boasted by Pakistan resonated well within Pakistani social circles, fostering national pride and cohesion. The nuclear tests were, therefore, not only a national event but also a unifying milestone that galvanised public opinion around a symbol of national strength and resilience, in this case, in the face of internal divisions and external pressures, strong enough to join the nuclear power club. A test of Pakistan's sovereignty and capacity to protect national interests against external threats raised the country's stature and self-image domestically and internationally.

Moreover, the nuclear tests and associated implications that went with the recognition of Pakistan as a nuclear weapon state put it on a higher pedestal in the world, even though it was met with sanctions and condemnation initially. This pride allowed Pakistan to bargain international affairs on the grounds of increased self-confidence, which added to its strategic discourse and diplomatic approach. Its incorporation into Pakistan's national narrative and how it managed to sculpt its identity give depth to the various impacts of nuclearisation-beyond deterrence and security-but touched aspects related to national pride and international status.

CHAPTER FOUR

Changing Nature of Conflicts and Transformation of Pakistan's Strategic Culture

4.1 Counterterrorism and Regional Stability Concerns

The century's onset marked a change in how global security is viewed, moving away from traditional conflicts between nations to the widespread dangers posed by terrorism and unconventional warfare. This shift has implications for countries worldwide, prompting them to reconsider their approaches and adjust to the new world of non-traditional security risks. Pakistan, located in a region marked by instability and conflict, has felt the effects of these shifts, dealing with challenges that require changes in its direction. (Tellis, 2008).

The increase in extremism and cross-border terrorism has led Pakistan to give importance to counterterrorism within its strategic planning, moving away from its usual concentration on threats from other states. Dealing with the nature of terrorism, which involves groups outside government control and international connections, has made it necessary for Pakistan to adopt an approach that includes military, political and socio-economic measures. This change reflects a security trend where countries face the challenges posed by non-traditional threats to regional and worldwide stability. (Fair 2014). Considering these difficulties, Pakistan has implemented actions to strengthen its counter-terrorism abilities and promote regional collaboration. These actions include campaigns against organisations on its soil, sharing intelligence with nearby nations, and engaging in global efforts to combat terrorism. The adjustment of Pakistan's approach towards traditional dangers highlights the intricate connection between domestic security issues, regional interactions, and worldwide anti-terrorism endeavours, demonstrating the country's flexible tactics for adapting to evolving conflict landscapes. (Tellis, 2008).

Counterterrorism Focus. The strong emphasis on combating terrorism has greatly shaped Pakistan's stance, incorporating a strategy to tackle the complex challenges posed by contemporary terrorist activities. This all-encompassing approach involves military, intelligence, and law enforcement measures coupled with programs focused on addressing extremism through economic development and counter-narratives. The need to adjust to the changing tactics of groups has pushed Pakistan to improve coordination among agencies and promote understanding that the battle against terrorism goes beyond borders and demands a united global endeavour. (Riedel, 2010).

Furthermore, Pakistan's efforts in combating terrorism have had an impact on its policy and relationships with other countries, especially neighbouring Afghanistan and major powers such as the United States and China. Balancing the need to work with allies while managing the consequences of these counterterrorism actions has been a part of Pakistan's strategic decision-making. Moreover, the emphasis on counterterrorism has influenced aspects within Pakistan, including opinion, political discussions and relations between civilian and military sectors as the country grapples with the human and economic toll of prolonged anti-terrorism efforts. (Fair 2014). Pakistan's emphasis on counterterrorism has transformed its military and security approaches and repositioned it as a player in the worldwide fight against terrorism. These changes highlight the intricacies of Pakistan's landscape, where both conventional and unconventional dangers intersect, necessitating reactions and subtle tactics to safeguard national security and maintain regional stability in a world that is becoming more interconnected.

The region's complex network of stability issues requires Pakistan to take a comprehensive approach to addressing its current security requirements and future strategic objectives. The longstanding conflict over Kashmir with India impacts not just military and diplomatic tactics

but also deeply influences the national psyche of Pakistan, moulding public sentiment and the country's identity. Pakistan's endeavours to bring international attention to the Kashmir matter and pursue a peaceful resolution through diplomacy demonstrate its strategic aim to handle this disagreement without resorting to all-out conflict, acknowledging the severe risks associated with nuclear brinkmanship. (Paul 2015).

4.2 War on Terror and Its Strategic Implications

The 9/11 incident changed the dynamics of international security. Pakistan was one of the most affected countries due to its presence and border with Afghanistan. The era again compelled Pakistan for another time to become an ally of the USA in the war against terror. Pakistan's position was changed due to the policy of re-aligning its strategy against those who were supported against the USSR. This brought a challenge for Pakistan to balance its act with the Taliban and the USA. The backlash brought resistance and the creation of multiple organizations from the segments of the Taliban against the Pakistan Army and its people. Pakistan and the USA collaborated to share intelligence, conduct joint training, and enhance counterterrorism capabilities. They also carried out combined operations against the Taliban.

4.2.1 Local and Regional Implications

There were several local and regional implications for Pakistan after 9/11. It was a challenge for Pakistan to balance between USA/NATO forces and the local sentiments of the people in the war against terror. While the influx of military support strengthened Pakistan's capabilities, it raised concerns about sovereignty and created dependencies. Domestically, this alignment heightened tensions as discussions arose regarding the consequences of collaborating with the U.S. in terrorism efforts. On a level, Pakistan's role in the anti-terrorist coalition has influenced its relationships with neighbouring countries, particularly Afghanistan, where U.S.-led NATO

forces were involved in a prolonged conflict. This partnership also influenced Pakistan's position within the world as it tried to balance its alliance with the U.S. against the sentiments of its people and the broader Muslim community (Hussain, 2005; Markey, 2007).

4.2.2 Transformation of Pakistan's Strategic Landscape

Pakistan's strategic landscape underwent changes due to the shift towards counterterrorism and collaboration with the United States. This led to a transformation in the doctrine and operational priorities of Pakistan, which were traditionally focused on warfare with India. The armed forces had to adjust to challenges such as warfare, counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations. However, this transformation had its share of challenges and controversies. There were concerns about how it impacted Pakistan's sovereignty and internal opposition against perceived influences on national security policies. There were certain resentments and repercussions for Pakistan in the regional context while maintaining its relations with Iran and Afghanistan. However, while bringing challenges, the shifting policies and cooperation between the USA and Pakistan also brought significant benefits for Pakistan. This optimistic outlook on the future of Pakistan's relations is a key takeaway from the region's geopolitical dynamics.

This period highlighted Pakistan's challenges while maintaining strong relations with the USA, meeting expectations, aligning Pakistan's security policies against its adversary India and maintaining order within its borders. The objective of its relation with The consequences of Pakistan's collaboration with the United States went beyond counterterrorism aims as it transformed dimensions of Pakistan's domestic and international landscapes. The influx of equipment and financial support notably bolstered Pakistan's capabilities in combating terrorism, enabling it to carry out operations against militant factions. Furthermore, alliances

with other nations helped to form its reputation on the world stage, thus providing a platform for expressing its views and concerns on global and regional issues.

Moreover, the Pak-USA relation in post 9/11 incident faced criticism and skepticism from the larger part of the population. There was criticism of the sovereignty of Pakistan due to drone attacks by the NATO forces inside Pakistan's territory. This further triggered anti-American sentiment by some segments of society and resulted in public demonstrations. At the regional level, Pakistan also faced criticism from Afghanistan and Iran. Hence, Pakistan faced challenges on almost all fronts. The partnership between the USA and Pakistan drew criticism, especially within some of the world's countries. The interaction with the USA during the war on terror marked a shift in the strategic mindset, internal affairs, regional affairs and diplomatic relations at the international level. The decision-making of Pakistan was affected after joining the war against terrorism, and at some times, a dilemma was created due to internal and external pressures. The disputes and collaborations with the Western world, especially the USA, underscored the intricacies. The relations between the USA and Pakistan remained suspicious as the United States blamed Pakistan for playing a double game and sheltering the Taliban in tribal areas. These suspicions created doubts and, at times, created more tensions between the two countries as Pakistan also blamed the US for its drone strikes and killing of innocent civilians, which compromised the sovereignty of Pakistan. This was considered a symbolic interference inside Pakistan's territory, which resulted in tension between civil and military relations.

The alliance formed by Pakistan certainly has certain implications for Pakistan's internal situation. The immediate challenge of counterterrorism sheds away the other security issues like political instability etc. There were complex difficulties for Pakistan under internal and external threats, as supporting the US against the war on terror brought some positive aspects

for Pakistan and challenges in increasing internal security efforts and handling the local situation. It created a dilemma for policymakers to balance national interests as Pakistan could not handle major setbacks. This affected the policy domain and left an impression on the domestic and strategic outlook in global affairs. Due to the change in the global landscape and regional dynamics, relations between the US and Pakistan were cordial. Pakistan supported the US in the war against terrorism, and on the other hand, Pakistan had to balance its own security interests while supporting the US.

4.2.3 Post-9/11 Strategic Adjustments

Pakistan's foreign policy is shaped largely by geographical and historical considerations, its political and social system, economic dependence and military vulnerability, its relative power position concerning the adversary, the policies of other countries and the world's contemporary environment. Historically, Pakistan's foreign policy was primarily focused on India, but the events of 9/11 dramatically altered the geopolitical landscape, making Pakistan a front-line State in defending U.S. interests in the region. The country had already suffered due to the Cold War; this new situation placed Pakistan in a position where it had to defend itself against the barrage of allegations and look for closer cooperation from friendly countries to avoid international isolation. Besides, it is also believed that the country's elites decided to support the U.S. because of their desire to receive economic and military assistance and gain political support to legitimize the then-undemocratic regime of General Parvez Musharaf.¹ Given all that, Gen. Musharaf laid the foundation of a strategic partnership between the U.S. and Pakistan and promised to cooperate on the issues of terrorism and to prevent nuclear proliferation (Hilali 2001). Pakistan has cooperated with the United States in several ways by granting logistics facilities, sharing intelligence, and capturing and handing over al-Qaida terrorists. (T. Hussain 2005).

Dealing with Internal Security Issues and Counterterrorism.

Pakistan's partnership with the United States during the war on terror posed internal security challenges. The country faces urgent threats from groups such as the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) that ruthlessly attack civilian targets. To counter these urgent threats, Pakistan has implemented a counter-terrorism strategy consisting of operations, intelligence initiatives, and law enforcement measures aimed at eliminating terrorist networks operating within its borders.

Pakistan's efforts against terrorism were diverse, including scale campaigns in areas like the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), known as havens, for terrorist activities. Military operations, like Zarb e Azb and Radd ul Fasaad, were carried out to root out terrorist strongholds, recover weapons and establish government authority in affected regions. These efforts were not about action but also involved engaging with communities, providing rehabilitation programs and promoting economic development in areas impacted by insurgency. In addition, Pakistan had to find a balance between fighting terrorism and maintaining stability while handling the relationship between the military and civilian authorities. The military's prominent role in security operations sometimes caused tensions with governments regarding security policies and governance matters. During this time, changes and institutional reforms were made to enhance Pakistan's counterterrorism capabilities, such as setting up military courts for terrorism cases and implementing the National Action Plan against terrorism.

The War on Terror had far-reaching effects on Pakistan's strategies and policies. Collaborating with the United States in counterterrorism efforts impacted Pakistan's security environment, foreign policy direction and domestic politics. Dealing with terrorism challenges alongside managing international relations has continued to influence how Pakistan shapes its strategic

approach and policy choices. In the battle against terrorism, Pakistan plays a crucial role in safeguarding its security interests while maintaining regional stability and cooperating internationally. The lasting impact of the War on Terror shapes Pakistan's outlook, showcasing the balance between domestic security issues and worldwide geopolitical changes. This era emphasises the need for tactics, strong alliances and holistic approaches to tackle the challenges of terrorism and extremism.

Current Trends in Strategic Thinking. Recently Pakistan's elite has changed their mindset to strike a balance between the USA and China in their strategic thinking and foreign policy making. These are compelled by Pakistan's strategic objective and economic and security considerations. This intricate juggling act mirrors the evolving landscape of politics as countries strive to diversify their relationships to navigate intricate international dynamics.

4.3 Strategic Partnerships in a Multipolar World

Navigating US-China Rivalry. Focusing on the fallout of this growing U.S.-China rivalry is especially important within the already fraught South Asian security environment, where the U.S. has invested in India to counter-balance China. At the same time, Pakistan has developed close ties with China. Pakistani policymakers are trying to keep their options open as they await articulating the incoming U.S. administration's approach towards China and the broader region . The speed with which the U.S.-China rivalry intensifies and the bipartisan nature of U.S. opposition to China has created an especially precarious situation for Pakistan. It is in Pakistan's national interest to avoid placing all its eggs in the China basket and to resist potential pressure to side with China in the latter's strategic rivalry with the United States .

Strategic Autonomy and Regional Integration. Pakistan is increasingly focusing on regional integration and cooperation to pursue strategic autonomy. Engaging with neighbouring

countries and regional organisations allows Pakistan to diversify its strategic partnerships and reduce dependency on any single power. Initiatives like the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) provide platforms for collaboration on various issues, from economic development to counterterrorism. By actively participating in these regional frameworks, Pakistan aims to enhance its strategic depth, promote stability, and foster economic growth. It reflects a strategic culture that values sovereignty and collaborative engagement in a multipolar world.

The United States: A Complex Legacy. Pakistan's alliance with the United States has a complex legacy, rooted in the Cold War dynamics and further complicated by the post-9/11 War on Terror. This relationship has been characterised by periods of close military and economic cooperation and instances of tension and mistrust. Despite the challenges, the United States remains a key strategic partner for Pakistan, particularly regarding security cooperation, counterterrorism efforts, and economic aid. The bilateral relationship, however, is continuously evolving, influenced by the changing priorities of each country, regional security dynamics, and global strategic shifts. In recent years, Pakistan has sought to recalibrate its relationship with the United States, focusing on broader cooperation beyond security. Efforts are underway to enhance economic ties, expand trade, and foster educational and technological partnerships. This approach reflects a strategic culture that recognises the importance of economic strength and development as pillars of national security.

China: Deepening Strategic Partnership. Conversely, Pakistan's relationship with China has deepened significantly, evolving into an all-weather strategic partnership. This relationship is anchored in mutual strategic interests, with China viewing Pakistan as a crucial partner in its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Pakistan seeing China as a reliable ally capable of balancing India's regional dominance. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project

under the BRI, symbolises the depth of this partnership, encompassing a wide range of infrastructure, energy, and development projects.

The strategic partnership with China has implications for Pakistan's strategic culture, underscoring a shift towards economic diplomacy and geoeconomic considerations. CPEC, in particular, is seen as a transformative project that can catalyse Pakistan's economic development, enhance its energy security, and strengthen its regional connectivity. This partnership reflects Pakistan's strategic culture of adapting to global power politics, where economic interests are increasingly intertwined with strategic considerations.

4.4 Navigating Between Traditional Allies and Emerging Partners

Pakistan's approach to engaging with the United States and China focuses on skill and flexibility, allowing the country to build relationships with both nations while avoiding conflicts. This strategy is evident in how Pakistan handles regional issues, taking a stance that considers its interests and those of its key allies. For example, Pakistan uses its location and diplomatic ties to promote discussions and collaboration on security matters in the region, such as the peace process, which is important to both the U.S. And China.

Moreover, Pakistan's strategic partnerships with the U.S. and China are not solely focused on security. They also play a pivotal role in promoting economic growth. Initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and trade relationships with the U.S. are instrumental in Pakistan's development. These partnerships provide crucial investments, technology transfers, and market access, all vital for Pakistan's economic progress. By fostering these connections, Pakistan strives to build a diverse economy that can effectively withstand external pressures.

As the dynamics of international relations continue to evolve, Pakistan's strategic approach will inevitably need to adapt. This adaptation will be crucial for Pakistan to effectively navigate the

changing geopolitical landscape and maintain its strategic interests. The country's future strategic path and global role greatly depend on how it manages its ties with the United States and China. To achieve this, Pakistan must continuously adjust its strategies based on a grasp of its interests, regional environment and worldwide developments. By staying practical and adaptable, Pakistan can strengthen its position, safeguard its security, and promote progress in today's intricate and interlinked world.

Implications for Pakistan's Strategic Culture. The evolution of Pakistan's strategic culture, a product of its interactions with the United States and China, is a testament to the country's adaptability in the ever-changing geopolitical landscape. This evolution, marked by a shift towards partnerships, technological advancements, and diplomatic engagements, underscores Pakistan's commitment to enhancing its national security and strategic influence.

Pakistan's strategic positioning, particularly in its interactions with India, is significantly influenced by its relationships with the U.S. and China. The support from these global players not only aids Pakistan in modernising its capabilities and attracting economic investments but also enables effective engagement in international diplomacy. This external support is crucial as Pakistan navigates its rivalry with India and asserts its interests in regional affairs. In the future, maintaining autonomy will continue to be an aspect of Pakistan's strategic culture. As global power dynamics evolve, preserving independence in policy will be critical for Pakistan to manage tensions effectively and align its strategic objectives with broader national interests.

The experiences and knowledge gained from managing its relationships with the U.S. and China will guide Pakistan's decisions, influencing its approach to new challenges and opportunities on the global stage. The developments in Pakistan's mindset, marked by balancing alliances and new partnerships, underline the complexities of navigating world geopolitics. The strategic ties with the United States and China hold importance in shaping

Pakistan's goals and responses to regional and global issues. As Pakistan adjusts its mindset to fit the century's demands, these alliances will be crucial in defining its journey towards security, stability and prosperity. Thus, Pakistan's strategic culture explores how legacies, geopolitical needs and future ambitions intersect in shaping a nation's strategic vision.

4.5 Addressing Non-Traditional Security Threats

In the security landscape, Pakistan is facing a range of traditional security challenges beyond traditional military threats. Understanding the connection between resilience and different aspects of security, such as economic, cyber, environmental and human factors, Pakistan's strategic approach has broadened to encompass a wider security framework. Economic security endeavours promote stability through diversification and sustainable progress, while cybersecurity measures protect national infrastructure from digital risks. Environmental security plans tackle the impacts of climate change and natural disasters by emphasising resource management and disaster preparedness. Furthermore, efforts towards human security focus on enhancing welfare and unity to strengthen resilience against various challenges. Together, these initiatives showcase Pakistan's strategy, bolstering its security in an era of intricate and interrelated challenges.

Cybersecurity. With today's advancements, safeguarding cybersecurity has become an aspect of national defence. Pakistan acknowledges the significance of protecting its cyber systems from dangers that could threaten its security and economic well-being. Strengthening cybersecurity involves fortifying defences against cyber assaults, securing information infrastructure, and nurturing a workforce to combat cyber threats. These endeavours demonstrate Pakistan's dedication to addressing security challenges and ensuring the robustness of its cyberspace.

Recently, the Pakistani government has taken steps to enhance its cybersecurity capabilities. Establishing the National Center for Cyber Security (NCCS) signifies a move to consolidate Pakistan's cybersecurity research and development efforts. Similarly, the National Cyber Security Policy 2021 showcases the nation's determination to create a framework for safeguarding its assets and critical infrastructure (Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication 2021). Moreover, Pakistan's active participation in cybersecurity forums and collaboration with other countries highlights its proactive stance in combating cyber threats internationally. Through fostering cooperation and exchanging practices, Pakistan strives to bolster its cyber defences while contributing to cybersecurity endeavours. These actions play a role in strengthening Pakistan's cyber defences, protecting its space and safeguarding its economic and national security concerns amidst changing cyber threats.

Environmental Security. In developing countries, such as Pakistan, climate change poses a serious challenge to social, environmental and economic development and leads to migration within and across Pakistan's national borders. The effects of global climate change in Pakistan are already evident in the form of the growing frequency of droughts, flooding, increasingly erratic weather behaviour, changes in agricultural patterns, reduction in freshwater supply and the loss of biodiversity. Mitigating and adapting actions are considered to be the two key ways of combating climate change. The more immediate and pressing task for the country is to prepare itself for adaptation to climate change. These policy measures address issues in various sectors such as water, agriculture, forestry, coastal areas, biodiversity, and other vulnerable ecosystems. Notwithstanding the fact that Pakistan's contribution to global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is small, its role as a responsible member of the global community in combating climate change is dedicated by giving due importance to mitigation efforts in sectors such as energy, transport, forestry and agriculture

Pakistan's National Climate Change Policy and the Ministry of Climate Change establishment demonstrate the country's commitment to addressing threats through well-thought-out policies, measures, and strategic actions. These initiatives include enhancing capacities for climate-related challenges, carrying out large-scale afforestation projects such as the Billion Tree Tsunami, and improving disaster preparedness and response mechanisms (Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Climate Change, 2021).

Furthermore, Pakistan's involvement in climate agreements like the Paris Agreement and active participation in environmental discussions highlight its dedication to collaborative international endeavours in combating climate change. The country's strategic approach now considers security a domestic policy issue and an essential aspect of its global diplomatic interactions and international obligations. These efforts show a shift in strategy and security planning, acknowledging the importance of a healthy environment for sustainable development, societal welfare and overall security.

Enhancing Disaster Resilience. Due to its vulnerability to various natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes and droughts, exacerbated by the effects of climate change, improving Pakistan's disaster resilience is part of its approach. To address this vulnerability, Pakistan is committed to improving disaster preparedness through strategies that include disaster risk management, upgraded early warning systems, and community engagement in preparedness and response activities.

Human Security. Pakistan is one of the most populous countries in the world. According to the 2017 census, the country's population has grown by 2.4 per cent over the last two decades. Over half the population is below the age of 30 years. This large youth demographic is both an opportunity and a challenge. While it has stressed public services, natural resources, and the economy, Pakistan's youth bulge can help the country achieve exponential economic progress

if its potential is galvanised and concentrated in productive endeavours. A dedicated focus on youth is essential for our future progress. In the past, population management has suffered from a lack of political ownership, the ineffectiveness of national awareness campaigns, and social taboos. In addition, Pakistan is also one of the fastest urbanising countries in South Asia. In another two decades, nearly 50 per cent of Pakistanis will be living in our major cities. Urban migration requires immediate attention through population stabilisation and management, futuristic urban planning, and proportional investment in the development of the rural economy and smaller cities to decrease urban migratory pressures on larger metropolitan areas (National Security Division 2022).

4.6 Influence of Islam on Contemporary Strategic Culture

The foundation and basis of Pakistan strategic culture lies in the religion of Islam. Pakistan being an ideological state keeps Islam as the basis of the state. Same is reflected in Pakistan's Security and foreign policy. The decision making of Pakistan is affected by the values and teaching of Islam like justice unity and integrity. Pakistan's role in the conflict zone where Muslims are affected like Palestinian cause and the struggles of Rohingya Muslims, emphasizing moral duty is navigated through Islamic principles.

The influence of Islam on Pakistan's culture significantly impacts various aspects of its national security, foreign relations, and societal norms. Islamic values such as justice, unity, and moral integrity guide Pakistan's decision-making and diplomacy, playing a crucial role in promoting solidarity among Muslim-majority nations and shaping its global position. This influence is evident in Pakistan's foreign policy, which often mirrors unity by supporting causes for Muslims worldwide. Within the country, Islam's impact is clear in Pakistan's efforts against terrorism and its initiatives to promote cohesion. The government's actions to combat ideologies and encourage a particular interpretation of Islam underscore the importance of

religious beliefs in security strategies. These initiatives are designed to strengthen security and preserve Pakistan's identity, which is integral to its core values. As Pakistan navigates challenges, the lasting impact of Islam on its culture remains essential, guiding both domestic and international actions towards a future aligned with Islamic ideals.

The Role of Islamic Identity in Shaping National Security Policy. The influence of identity on Pakistan's security strategy is crucial and deeply embedded in its strategic customs. This religious identity does not shape its internal security landscape. It also influences its foreign policy, military tactics and engagements with Muslim and non-Muslim nations alike. Pakistan's foundation, built on the notion of providing a homeland for Muslims in the subcontinent, ingrained a strong Islamic foundation into its national structure. This religious identity plays a role in shaping security policy choices, diplomacy efforts and Pakistan's role as a key player in the Muslim world. (Nasr 2004).

Pakistan's strong Islamic identity plays a role in shaping its approach to issues concerning the Muslim Ummah, impacting its positions on conflicts and crises across the world and influencing its alliances and partnerships. A clear illustration of this is Pakistan's support for Kashmir and Palestine rooted in its dedication to solidarity, justice and the right to self-determination. This reflects how intertwined religion and politics are in Pakistan's decision-making processes (Malik, 2018). Moreover, Pakistan's military doctrine and threat perceptions are also influenced by its identity. Here, religious and nationalistic narratives intersect to delineate who is considered a 'friend' or a 'foe.' The military's incorporation of symbols and language highlights the perceived importance of Islam in legitimising defence strategies and fostering unity against threats. (Rizvi 2002).

Islamic Identity and Internal Security Policies. The impact of identity on the security strategies of Pakistan is complex, forming the basis for legal and governance systems grounded

in Islamic beliefs. These policies strive to establish a structure that reflects doctrines, as evidenced by the incorporation of Sharia regulations into Pakistan's legal system and the focus on Islamic teachings to uphold ethical standards. (Nasr 2004). The range of interpretations within Islam poses an obstacle that could result in disagreements and discord. Government initiatives to promote an interpretation of Islam aimed at combating extremist beliefs sometimes trigger tensions with sects and religious groups. These conflicts may lead to disputes or resistance against state actions, which are seen as showing a preference for one viewpoint over others. (Fair 2008). To uphold security and foster social unity, the government must skillfully manage the interplay of religious beliefs. This delicate balancing act involves promoting an identity while respecting diverse doctrines. Such a balanced approach plays a role in averting radicalisation and ensuring that the advancement of principles enhances national unity instead of deepening internal rifts. (Jalal 1991).

Impact on Foreign Policy and Diplomatic Relations. Pakistan's strong Islamic identity significantly shapes its policy and diplomatic interactions with fellow Muslim-majority nations. The country's commitment to unity often leads it to advocate for Muslim causes, such as supporting the establishment of a Palestinian state and addressing the challenges faced by Rohingya Muslims. This emphasis on solidarity sometimes takes precedence over considerations, demonstrating Pakistan's dedication to brotherhood and ethical values in its international relations.

Furthermore, Pakistan's active involvement in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) underscores its importance as a player in the world committed to advancing shared Islamic interests. Its ties with countries in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE are strengthened by a sense of kinship that fosters economic, military, and diplomatic partnerships. These relationships prove crucial during times of crisis, showcasing support rooted in Islamic

principles. (Paul 2015). However, Pakistan's approach to policy is not solely based on its identity. It carefully combines unity with national interests, skillfully navigating the region's complexities, sectarian differences and global power dynamics. This balanced strategy ensures that Islamic identity plays a role in safeguarding Pakistan's interests in a complicated and sometimes unstable global environment.

Military Strategy and Defense Posture. Pakistan's military strategy and defence stance are heavily influenced by its identity, which influences how the country approaches conflicts and collaborations. The military is seen as safeguarding the nation's beliefs and territorial integrity, incorporating these ideals into its framework to boost national cohesion and spirit, especially when it perceives itself as safeguarding Islamic values or land (Brown and Nasr 2006). The invocation of Islamic motifs, such as jihad, underscores some aspects of Pakistan's military engagements, particularly in regions like Kashmir and historically in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union. Although the Pakistani government unequivocally condemns terrorism and extremism, the strategic use of Islamic rhetoric and historical support for groups identified with Islamic resistance, like the Afghan Mujahideen, illustrate the important relationship between religious identity and military tactics. These actions reflect a broader narrative where Islamic principles are mobilised to legitimise and rally support for military endeavours deemed to defend core Islamic values or territories.

While Islamic identity serves as a motivational and unifying force, it also introduces complexities into Pakistan's military strategy, especially when interfacing with global norms and combating extremism within its borders. The challenge lies in navigating the fine line between leveraging religious identity for strategic coherence and unity and avoiding the pitfalls of extremism that could undermine national and regional security. The interplay between

Islamic identity and military strategy continues to be a dynamic element of Pakistan's defence posture, reflecting its historical legacy and contemporary geopolitical challenges.

Challenges and Opportunities. The interplay between Pakistan's Islamic identity and its national security policy encapsulates a delicate balance between leveraging shared religious values for national unity and addressing the inherent challenges this identity brings to the geopolitical landscape. The cohesive force of Islamic identity can galvanise public support, enhance morale, and provide a shared sense of purpose, crucial during external threats or military engagements. This unity, underpinned by a common religious framework, can be a significant strategic asset, offering a layer of coherence and continuity to Pakistan's national security policies (Fair 2014).

Nevertheless, blending these elements also brings difficulties in a nation known for its sects and past incidents of religious fanaticism. The risk of radicalisation and sectarian rifts requires handling and the advancement of minded middle-of-the-road interpretations of Islam that support the country's security goals and democratic principles. The government needs to play a role in navigating these aspects to stop extremist groups from hijacking Islamic identity, which could jeopardise both domestic harmony and global interactions. (Brown and Nasr 2006).

Essentially, Pakistan's Islamic identity serves as a two coin when it comes to security; it brings unity and strength on one hand yet poses the risk of division and exploitation on the other. Effectively leveraging the aspects of this identity while managing its drawbacks calls for policymaking, inclusive governance and fostering a diverse and accepting societal culture. As Pakistan strives to establish itself, its ability to navigate these complexities will shape its strategic path forward, ensuring that Islamic principles align with a strong and progressive national security approach.

Islamic Principles and Pakistan's Defense Strategy. The ethical and moral guidelines that guide military actions are deeply rooted in beliefs highlighting virtues like courage, selflessness and safeguarding the ummah (Muslim community). These principles shape soldiers' behaviour and influence the military's strategic choices and operational principles. The notion of jihad, commonly interpreted in Islam as a fight against injustice, is frequently cited to support endeavours focused on safeguarding Pakistan's borders and Islamic heritage. (Khan 2012).

Moreover, Pakistan's defence strategy is influenced by the overarching value of ummah solidarity, impacting its involvement in disputes concerning Muslim communities. Pakistan's backing of issues like the Palestinians in the Middle East or Muslims in Kashmir demonstrates its dedication to Islamic brotherhood, moulding its international diplomatic and military stances. This unity goes beyond symbolism and directly affects Pakistan's assistance, diplomatic partnerships, and occasionally military actions or aid. (Rizvi 2002). However, incorporating principles into defence strategies challenges discerning between justified defence and unauthorised aggression and ensuring that military actions adhere to Islamic ethics and international law. The interpretation of teachings within the framework of warfare and state governance necessitates a detailed comprehension and responsible implementation to prevent the exploitation of religious rhetoric for political or militaristic purposes. As Pakistan continues to navigate its position on the stage, harmonising its defence strategy with principles remains an ever-evolving process that mirrors the complex interplay among religious identity, strategic needs and ethical considerations. (Brown and Nasr 2006).

Moral and Ethical Framework of the Military. The integration of values into the ethical framework of the Pakistan Armed Forces has a significant impact on how they carry out their operations and shape their strategic direction. The armed forces view their responsibilities through the teachings of Islam, which emphasise conduct in warfare, highlighting not only the

physical protection of the nation but also safeguarding its moral and spiritual beliefs. This viewpoint is reinforced through training programs incorporating teachings to develop soldiers who excel in their military roles while guided by strong ethical principles. Additionally, the concept of jihad, often seen as a struggle for Islam and country defence in circles, motivates troops and gives meaning to their involvement in conflicts, with a sense of divine mission. However, military leaders must ensure this idea is correctly understood and aligned with laws to avoid misinterpretation that could lead to unjust aggression. (Malik 2012).

The challenge for Pakistan's military is maintaining this balance between religious motivation and adherence to universal standards of conduct in warfare, ensuring that its actions are effective in the nation's defence and reflective of the ethical standards inherent in its Islamic identity. By successfully integrating these Islamic principles into their ethical framework, the Pakistan Armed Forces aim to foster a force that is disciplined, morally upright and respected both domestically and internationally.

Justification of Defense Initiatives. The rationale behind defence efforts in Pakistan is closely linked to the nation's identity and beliefs. When viewed as self-protection and safeguarding the populace, Jihad offers an ethical basis for the country's military and defence tactics. This viewpoint is especially significant given Pakistan's conflicts, competition with India and endeavours to uphold its independence and territorial boundaries. (Nasr 2004). Pakistan's strategic deterrence is often viewed through a religious lens, emphasising the importance of maintaining peace and preventing aggression rather than focusing on offensive capabilities. Nuclear weapons are seen as a tool to protect against threats in line with Islamic beliefs that value life preservation and resistance against oppression.

Additionally, Pakistan's defence strategies and military actions in dealing with state groups and counter-terrorism efforts are also justified by using Islamic rhetoric that highlights the

government's duty to safeguard its people and uphold justice. This narrative aims to connect security goals with the religious values of Islam, garnering support from the predominantly Muslim population. In essence, Pakistan's defence policies, rooted in principles, demonstrate an approach that blends religious morals with practical security requirements. While these values offer a foundation for defence strategies, Pakistan must balance these narratives with contemporary statecraft practices and global relations to ensure its defence stance is morally upright and strategically effective.

Diplomatic Stance in International Conflicts. Pakistan's diplomatic position on conflicts affecting Muslim communities is deeply ingrained in its Islamic identity and the principles of solidarity within the Ummah. The nation's support of Kashmir, Palestine and other regions is presented in terms of safeguarding the rights and honour of Muslims in line with ideals such as justice, brotherhood and resistance against oppression. This standpoint shapes Pakistan's foreign policy decisions by prompting collaborations with Muslim-majority nations, involvement in bodies like the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and vocal support for Muslim causes on international stages. Through these actions, Pakistan does not assert its role as a player in the Islamic community but also seeks to utilise collective Muslim unity to enhance its influence on global matters. Furthermore, this diplomatic strategy guides Pakistan's defence tactics by aligning partnerships with countries that share perspectives on critical issues concerning Muslims. While this has bolstered Pakistan's ties strategically, it also demands manoeuvring amidst geopolitical intricacies and sectarian differences that may impact regional stability and international diplomacy.

In essence, Pakistan's approach to disputes involving nations demonstrates a blend of Islamic values. Its strategic goals highlight its dedication to unity within the Islamic community amidst the complexities of international relations.

Challenges in Application. Incorporating principles into Pakistan's defence strategy serving as an ethical foundation presents significant challenges in its implementation. The complexities of relations and internal security inherently make decision-making processes more intricate when religious principles come into play. One major obstacle lies in ensuring that the interpretation of teachings aligns with strategic needs without diluting the essence of those religious values. This task is particularly challenging due to the varying interpretations of Islam within Pakistan, which can contribute to tensions and impede unity.

Furthermore, balancing upholding principles and addressing practical strategic requirements is crucial, especially in scenarios where the two may appear contradictory. While Islamic teachings stress justice and safeguarding the realities of actions, counter-terrorism efforts can introduce dilemmas and involuntary consequences. Successfully navigating these challenges demands a sophisticated comprehension and careful application of principles in shaping and executing defence strategies.

Although Islamic principles provide a framework for Pakistan's defence strategy, their implementation must be handled thoughtfully to prevent deepening internal divides or undermining strategic goals. By incorporating these principles into its priorities, Pakistan can strengthen the ethical credibility of its defence stance, showcase Islam's lasting impact on its strategic norms, and bolster its dedication to a defence strategy that is both efficient and morally upright (Rizvi 2002).

4.7 Geo-Economic Implications on Strategic Culture of Pakistan

Including geographical factors in Pakistan's mindset represents a notable change in how the country approaches its national security and global interactions. Focusing on initiatives such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) indicates a transition where economic

progress is increasingly seen as an aspect of national power and regional sway. By utilising its position at the intersection of Central Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East, Pakistan aims to reposition itself as a centre for connectivity and economic vitality, using its strategic location to boost its geopolitical significance. (Hussain 2017).

Pakistan's commitment to geo strategies aligns with trends prioritising economic interdependence and infrastructure development in international relations. By focusing on improving infrastructure, energy connectivity, and trade connections through initiatives such as CPEC, Pakistan aims to anchor its security and foreign policy to prosperity and cooperation. This approach does not seek to boost growth but also aims to foster a conducive environment for regional stability and collaboration, positioning Pakistan as an advocate for economic integration rather than conflict.

Moreover, the shift towards geo priorities has a profound impact on Pakistan's ties, opening up new possibilities for alliances and regional engagements. As Pakistan strengthens its partnership with China through CPEC, it navigates relationships with major powers and neighbouring nations with a delicate balance. It balances traditional security concerns with the need to cultivate economic collaborations. Viewing the landscape through a geo lens highlights Pakistan's practical acknowledgement that economic strength plays a crucial role in national power, essential for ensuring long-term security and prosperity in an increasingly interconnected world. (Zaidi and Saud 2020).

4.8 CPEC and Economic Corridors as Strategic Assets

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is an example of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), showcasing how geo-economic strategies influence Pakistani culture. This initiative goes beyond cooperation to form a partnership that enhances Pakistan's role in the

regional geopolitical scene. Through infrastructure projects bolstering energy security and creating trade routes, CPEC goes beyond economics to become a strategic endeavour. It contributes to reshaping Pakistan's goals by emphasising the importance of using economic opportunities to achieve national security objectives. This shift highlights the recognition within Pakistan that economic strength is closely tied to its sovereignty and regional influence.

Moreover, CPEC has been a catalyst in transforming Pakistan's approach to regional engagement and diplomacy. The project enhances Pakistan's significance to China and positions it as a crucial node in the broader Eurasian connectivity vision under the BRI. This heightened importance, courtesy of CPEC, empowers Pakistan to navigate regional dynamics with assurance, leveraging economic partnerships to fortify its strategic interests. Therefore, the corridor has become a defining element in Pakistan's policy, signifying a shift towards prioritising economic factors in its quest for stability and prosperity. This transformation marks a departure from security-centric strategic approaches, heralding the recognition of the significance of economic interdependence in contemporary statecraft.

Essentially, CPEC represents the merging of goals and strategic ambitions, highlighting how geo-economic strategies greatly impact Pakistan's mindset. The project does not pledge to boost development and infrastructure growth but also aims to redefine Pakistan's national security strategy. By integrating progress and stability into its agenda, CPEC emphasises the vital role of economic corridors in shaping modern geopolitics. Acknowledging endeavours as elements of national security planning marks a new chapter in Pakistan's strategic outlook, where economic strength is increasingly seen as a key factor influencing geopolitical power and regional dominance.

4.9 Geopolitical and Geo-economic Implications

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) represents a pivotal transformation in the strategic landscape, signifying a shift towards infrastructure-driven alliances and development-oriented partnerships. This project aligns with China's broader Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) objectives, aiming to enhance regional connectivity, foster economic growth, and stabilise geopolitical relations through infrastructure investment and trade facilitation (Wolf, 2020). For Pakistan, CPEC is not merely an economic lifeline but a strategic endeavour that repositions the country within the global and regional geostrategic framework, potentially altering its geopolitical destiny and economic trajectory (Small 2015).

From a perspective, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) strengthens the bond between Pakistan and China, countering India's influence in the region and offering support during heightened tensions. This initiative underscores Pakistan's importance to China as a trusted ally and key partner for China's access to the Arabian Sea and its maritime security concerns. The collaboration reflects a dynamic shift in global diplomacy, where mutual economic reliance is increasingly viewed as a stabilising force. Regarding geoeconomics, CPEC is set to drive Pakistan's development by upgrading infrastructure, initiating energy ventures and fostering industrial partnerships that are anticipated to boost growth employment opportunities and trade activities. The corridor's success depends on its capacity to integrate Pakistan fully into both global supply chains, thereby enhancing its trading capabilities and financial stability. Furthermore, CPEC's focus on connectivity initiatives and economic zones has the potential to promote unity by cultivating cooperative ties that surpass historical animosities and geopolitical rivalries (Hussain 2017).

Strategic projects such as CPEC represent the blend of geopolitics and geoeconomics, where building infrastructure and fostering partnerships serve as tools for impact and stability. As

Pakistan manoeuvres through this changing terrain, CPEC presents prospects and hurdles that demand policymaking to optimise advantages while managing the dangers linked to geopolitical complexities and economic interdependencies.

Geopolitical Implications. CPEC's geopolitical impact is far-reaching, reshaping the South Asian and global landscape. By strengthening Pakistan's ties with China and other Asian nations, CPEC is a key component of China's strategy to extend its influence across Asia, Europe, and Africa. This connectivity enhances China's trade position and elevates Pakistan's role as a bridge between the Middle East, Central Asia, and South Asia. Consequently, CPEC has the potential to significantly alter power dynamics by fostering new partnerships and reshaping existing ones.

Moreover, the development projects under CPEC, particularly the Gwadar port, have significant military and naval implications. Gwadar's strategic location on the Arabian Sea gives China a foothold in the region, potentially altering security dynamics and influencing the strategic considerations of the United States and India in the Indian Ocean. This development has sparked discussions about the need for a revised strategy and security cooperation approach among players, underscoring the intricate relationship between economic ventures and military strategies.

Goeconomic Implications. The economic and strategic impact of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) runs deep, signalling a change in Pakistan's landscape. This endeavour is poised to drive progress across sectors by addressing long-standing infrastructure gaps and energy shortages that have hindered the country's growth over time. Through CPEC, a range of development projects, including roads, railways, ports and energy facilities, aim to bolster connectivity within Pakistan and its neighbouring regions, promoting trade and fostering unity.

This comprehensive infrastructure upgrade is anticipated to boost Pakistan's economy by improving market access, cutting transportation expenses, and attracting investments. These developments are expected to fuel industrialisation efforts and pave the way for job creation. The projected economic expansion linked to CPEC is viewed as a means towards achieving stability and resilience - a critical step for Pakistan in its quest for strategic independence and reduced reliance on external financial aid (Gill 2019).

Moreover, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) highlights the use of pathways as tools of geoeconomic strategy to blend economic projects with larger geopolitical goals. In Pakistan's view, CPEC is more than a business endeavour; it represents an alignment with China, signalling a shift towards economic and security focuses in Asia. This alignment demonstrates how interconnected economics and security indicate a strategic mindset prioritising economic partnerships and infrastructure diplomacy as crucial elements of national influence and regional harmony (Wolf 2020). The CPEC represents a shift towards an approach in Pakistan's mindset, highlighting the importance of economic infrastructure and collaboration in moulding the nation's future. If CPEC is effectively carried out, it has the potential to establish Pakistan as a hub for connectivity and trade, elevating its strategic importance and fostering a more economically interconnected and secure region.

The Convergence of Geopolitics and Geoeconomics. The convergence of geopolitics and geoeconomics, exemplified by initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), marks a significant shift in how nations perceive and engage with their environments. By amalgamating progress with strategy, CPEC presents a sophisticated diplomatic and national security approach, where the construction of physical infrastructure paves the way for both economic prosperity and strategic alliances.

CPEC goes beyond trade routes and transportation networks; it reflects a movement towards regional economic unity, potentially fostering peace and collaboration among neighbouring nations. By promoting border trade and energy sharing, CPEC has the potential to ease regional tensions and create interdependencies that discourage conflicts, fostering a more interconnected and harmonious South Asia (Small 2015).

Furthermore, the project highlights how nations are shifting toward using tools to boost their influence. In a time when economic strength is increasingly linked to power, CPEC illustrates how infrastructure development can be a foreign policy tool, enabling Pakistan to play a more significant role on the global stage while addressing its economic challenges.

4.10 Challenges and Future Directions

Navigating Geopolitical Shifts. Pakistan's evolving geopolitical landscape challenges navigating its relationships amidst global power dynamics. The rivalry between players such as the United States and China greatly influences Pakistan's foreign policy choices and strategic orientation. Amid these nations vying for supremacy in South Asia, Pakistan must skillfully manage its alliances to safeguard its interests while avoiding conflict entanglement.

Evolving Threats and Strategic Adaptations. The landscape of warfare is experiencing a shift due to advancements in technology. For Pakistan, embracing this era of warfare is not just a matter of choice but a necessity. It requires an understanding and integrating emerging technologies like cyber capabilities, artificial intelligence (AI), and unmanned systems into its military strategies. The potential of these technologies to reshape combat approaches, improve decision-making processes, and introduce new vulnerabilities is immense. To stay ahead in the game, Pakistan must focus on investing in research and development, nurturing skills, and

establishing guidelines for using advanced technologies in military activities, a task that cannot be delayed.

Economic Sustainability and Security. Ensuring an economy is crucial for security, especially in nations like Pakistan. To achieve this, a comprehensive approach is needed. Economic weaknesses can directly impact stability and regional power. Pakistan must tackle trade imbalances, foreign debt, and investment conditions. This involves broadening the economic base, decreasing dependency on one sector or market, and fostering an atmosphere for creativity and business ventures. These measures, when implemented comprehensively, can reassure us about Pakistan's economic future. (Hussain 2020). Furthermore, initiatives such as CPEC present opportunities for expansion. However, to ensure that the economic advantages reach a wide range of people and remain long-lasting, oversight is crucial. Pakistan must bolster its fundamentals to navigate economic challenges effectively, maintain its developmental objectives, and fortify its strategic independence. This oversight will provide a sense of security about the distribution of economic advantages.

4.11 Historical Continuity and Change in Strategic Culture

Pakistan's strategic landscape has changed, blending elements of history with developments over time. The lasting impacts of partition, regional disputes, and alliances have deeply influenced Pakistan's mindset centered on national security and territorial boundaries. However, as global and regional dynamics have shifted, Pakistan has adjusted its approach to address emerging challenges such as security threats, economic connections and technological progress. This progression highlights the nature of thinking in response to evolving realities while drawing from past experiences.

The Enduring Influence of Islam on Pakistan's Strategic Thought. Islam still influences Pakistan's thinking, impacting areas like defence strategies, foreign policies and national identity. This religious impact is visible in how the country supports causes, its diplomatic positions and the ethical guidelines for actions. As Pakistan deals with the challenges of today's landscape, blending values with strategic needs remains a key aspect of its strategic mindset. This integration offers guidance and helps maintain legitimacy and unity within the nation (Fair 2014)

Future Trajectories and Strategic Considerations. As Pakistan's strategic mindset evolves to meet future challenges and opportunities, it must embrace the potential benefits of technological advancements. Adapting to changes in geopolitics, economic demands, and technological progress will require the development of forward-looking strategies. Striking a balance between security concerns and the drive for growth, harnessing the power of technological advancements in defence, and managing complex international relationships will be crucial in shaping Pakistan's future strategic stance. Furthermore, the integration of its heritage with modern strategic requirements will continue to influence Pakistan's path forward, impacting its global role and its pursuit of security and prosperity (Rizvi 2014).

4.12 National Security Policy

Geopolitical and Geoeconomic Implications. The National Security Policy of Pakistan outlines its strategic framework to address challenges and opportunities arising from its economic landscape. It emphasises the importance of recognising the connection between dynamics and economic factors, stressing the use of potential to enhance national security. The policy acknowledges the role of corridors such as CPEC in promoting stability and prosperity, signalling a shift towards utilising economic partnerships for strategic benefits. This highlights a growing realisation within Pakistan circles that economic strength and geopolitical influence

are closely linked, requiring an approach to national security planning that incorporates economic considerations. (Hussain 2017).

Shift from Military-centric to Economic-centric Security Approaches. The introduction of the National Security Policy in Pakistan not only marks a change in the country's mindset but also demonstrates strategic foresight. It shifts from a predominantly military-focused perspective to a more balanced emphasis on economic considerations. This transformation signifies a progression in thought, acknowledging the importance of economic growth and prosperity as essential elements for national strength and security. By prioritising development, infrastructure enhancement and regional connectivity, Pakistan is laying a foundation for effectively addressing traditional and emerging security threats. This strategic shift reflects a trend in Pakistan's approach to security, adapting to evolving global and regional challenges by integrating military preparedness with economic development.

The impact of CPEC on Pakistan and the surrounding region is significant and holds transformative potential in both geoeconomic terms. By improving connectivity, promoting growth, and influencing dynamics, CPEC stands out as a crucial development in shaping global strategic landscapes. As CPEC advances, its effects on the South Asian geoeconomic landscape will become more evident, providing insights into how strategic economic projects can drive transformation. The fusion of geopolitics and geoeconomics within CPEC showcases shifts in power dynamics and emphasises the vital role that economic corridors play in shaping the future direction of international relations. The intertwining of geopolitics and geoeconomics within CPEC is not just a strategic approach to security, but a comprehensive strategy to navigate the complexities of today's global system. This evolution underscores the significance of considering multiple factors when determining how global and regional affairs will unfold,

highlighting the need for a holistic understanding of the interplay between security, economics, and geopolitics.

CHAPTER FIVE

An Overview of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

CPEC is one of the major developments in the BRI, whose overall goal is to enhance economic cooperation and interconnectivity between Pakistan and China. CPEC is an approximately \$62 billion initiative that covers several areas of infrastructure development, transport systems, clean energy development, telecommunication, and the industrial regions that boost trade and economic progress for the two countries (Arshed et al. 2022). Geopolitically, CPEC is not just the story for Pakistan and China but a blueprint for Middle Eastern and Asian countries like Iran and Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics to boost trade and expand economic ties (Parveen & Shah 2020). Its centre lies quite far away from it; the distance from Gwadar Port in the south-west of Pakistan to Kashgar in China's Xinjiang province is approximately 3,000 km, and the corridor is an important maritime link between China and the Arabian Sea, which enables China to get to the markets of the world faster (Garlick 2018). This connectivity promises to improve the cost of operating trade, improve the importance of routes for transport and become a significant social and economic development in the region with emphasis on the more strategic advantage of Pakistan in China's worldwide view (A. Khan, 2021).

The vision of CPEC is to improve the lives of the people of Pakistan and China by building an economic corridor promoting bilateral connectivity and construction, as well as exploring potential bilateral investment, economic and trade, logistics, and people-to-people contact for regional connectivity. It includes:

- Integrated Transport and IT systems, including Road, Rail, Port, Air and Data Communication Channels
- Energy Cooperation
- Spatial Layout, Functional Zones, Industries and Industrial Parks

- Agricultural Development
- Socio-Economic Development (Poverty Alleviation, Medical Treatment, Education, Water Supply, Vocational Training)
- Tourism Cooperation & people-to-people communication
- Cooperation in Livelihood Areas
- Financial Cooperation
- Human Resource Development
- Science and Technology and Information Technology (MoPD&SI, 2022)

5.1 Impact of CPEC on Pak-China Relationship

CPEC is a vital bridge that strengthens the Pak-China relationship. It is the bedrock of the firm foundation of friendship and partnership that the two countries have rejoiced for years (Nisar, Ali, and Asif 2021). CPEC is seen as an economic initiative and a political strategy, not as an isolated occurrence, since these two components of the deal show that Pakistan and China have standard views regarding regional development and security. To aid and secure the trade routes and enhance economic incorporation, CPEC is a critical player in China's BRI strategy in the region. It ensures that China has a way to adequately access South Asia, which gives it direct access to the region for its trade and resources, such as energy, without having to cross the Pirate-infested Strait of Malacca, which ultimately enhances the sense of security (McCartney 2021). It is a tremendous opportunity for Pakistan that is highly acceptable for the country due to its current economic condition and need for a revival. The CPEC activities in terms of investments, together with technology and infrastructure transfer, can promote economic growth in Pakistan, resolve the problem of power shortages, and enhance the country's industrial and agricultural productivity (Ali et al. 2018). In addition, all the projects concerning CPEC will provide thousands of jobs that will contribute towards economic growth in Pakistan

while reducing poverty. The strategic location of Gwadar port as a prominent trade link in CPEC places Pakistan in a significant position in the international trading system. It can make it a central point in global trade. Aside from the economic aspects, CPEC projects have helped to bring about a strategic alliance between the two countries – China and Pakistan – on issues that concern their regional and global peace and security and their developmental prospects (Javed and Ismail 2021). CPEC has enhanced cordial relations between the two countries by establishing mutual trust and increasing understanding. Besides, the efforts of both countries in the context of CPEC projects have enabled them to address various regional political issues more effectively and to be an indivisible force in the face of external threats.

CPEC is far more than merely a compilation of development projects; it represents the relationship of mutual understanding and trust between the two countries. It reflects a mutual determination to sustain regional connectivity, economic success, economic growth, and peacefulness in both regions. CPEC holds the potential to revolutionise not only Pakistan's economic regional scenario but also that of the entire region (Hussain, Khan, and Muhammad 2021). The initiative becomes an excellent example of a successful international effort and what can be achieved through collaboration and a shared vision of future development and prosperity.

5.2 Historical Ties between China and Pakistan

The relationship between China and Pakistan remained cordial after Pakistan gained independence in 1947. During this period, their connection started, and the countries found a fruitful relationship that has gone on for centuries. These early contacts were made possible due to the geostrategic position of Pakistan as an intermediary between South Asia and China and proved to be the first stepping-stones for friendly relations and interdependence between these two states. These historical bonds were strengthened to become a formidable partnership

between the two states of mutual benefits and a desire to advance continuity in the region. The historical background of Pakistan and China's relations is as old as the history of the relationship between the two countries, from 1947 to the recent strategic partnerships and alliances (Jaleel and Habibullah 2021).

5.3 The Legacy and Relevance of the Silk Route

The Silk Route's history plays a significant role in the global dialogue on promoting cultural and economic integration across continents. It symbolized one of the earliest globalization that linked varied areas from China to the Mediterranean and allowed not just the exchange of goods such as silk, spices, and precious stones but also represented the transfer of art, general belief, technologies, and even the societies it connected (Winter 2020). Despite this transformation in times of globalization, the Silk Route's character has been reestablished and reinvented via the BRI, with one of its major components being the CPEC. CPEC will focus on developing and increasing trade and communication infrastructures to connect significant parts of the world, as was the case during the Silk Route. It is planned to contribute to the economic and cross-border integration within the region and establish more connections between people, thus creating from square one the function of the ancient route in the relationship between people and culture (Afaqi and Askari 2022).

Furthermore, one can also account for the Silk Route's historical values that portray how trade corridors determine the destiny of geopolitical developments. Undoubtedly, the CPEC will change the region's dynamics, make Pakistan a more strategic country, and improve China's relations with various nations of the Asia continent. This helps to explain why the Silk Route leaves behind beneficial knowledge, which sets an example for the current CPEC's economic corridor as a means to bring peace and economic prosperity to societies through a common culture and intercultural dialogue (Silin et al. 2018). The history of the Silk Route holds a

special meaning for countries and regions like Pakistan, which has been the pivot of communication between South Asia and the Middle East. This historic network significantly impacted the region's multicultural environment, a wide range of spoken languages, and numerous architectural feats –proving that plenty of cultural ties are linked to many generations of trade between these civilisations (Khan 2021).

Furthermore, the Silk Route's contribution to the early globalisation process presents an important framework for understanding how economic and cultural ties can facilitate the realisation of meaningful relations between distinct people and states on the global level. This historic legacy establishes the enabling and beneficial character of contemporary initiatives like CPEC that aspire to achieve the same levels of economic dynamism, cultural immersion, and regional interdependence in a unified world (Iqbal 2018).

5.4 The Silk Route's Pivotal Connection to CPEC

CPEC project is an initiative regarded as evidence to boost the value of the Silk Route's fundamentals and the vision of shared affluence, tailored to contemporary geopolitical realities. Historically, CPEC opts to share the Silk Route's legendary status to introduce a new age of economic growth and cross-cultural values (Khan and Liu 2019). The intention of modernization of the Silk Route is not to be confined to rejoicing the benefits alone but to set an example and create a mutually beneficial economic corridor for all the nations involved by any means. Knitting together its geographical synergies and utilising historical trade precedents, they are building a vast network of roads, railways, pipelines, and digital links that allow for frictionless trade and cultural exchange akin to ancient treasure.

In addition, the CPEC reflects China and Pakistan's strong vision and will to go beyond bilateral cooperation against their inherent traditions, leading towards mutual development and regional

connectivity. Hence, CPEC aims to reinvent history as a clear signpost towards economic renaissance and regional integration invoking the Silk Route spirit, thereby reflecting on how standard historical frames of reference could be transformed into narratives of mutual interest in contemporary times (Akhtar et al. 2021). CPEC's operationalisation has been executed in a phased approach; initial phases included energy projects that could help bridge Pakistan's chronic power deficits and infrastructure developments to enable regional trade. These essential BRI initiatives aim to build a trade and economic network spanning Asia, Africa, and Europe. They aim to promote policy coordination among participants and intensify their friendship. (Hussain 2017). It is more than an infrastructure development scheme; it boasts a tactical dimension that creates the much-needed economic interdependency and geopolitical convergence between China and Pakistan in the long run. CPEC is an economic development and strategic asset project that promises to develop the Pakistani transport infrastructure and energy production capabilities, promote Pakistan's economic situation, bring about regional unification, and position Pakistan as a significant regional player (Khan and Liu 2019).

In addition, CPEC reflects the changing dynamic of the Sino-Pak relationship, from classical diplomatic camaraderie to multifarious strategic and economic cooperation. This exemplifies how we seek to uphold a partnership that fosters economic well-being and strategic security for our countries, but it is also a testament to how we are both focused on negotiating the world's complexities in the modern era (Faisal 2020).

5.5 Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Part in CPEC

It indicates the new paradigm that characterised the Sino-Pak relationship, which is no longer the traditional diplomatic bilateral diplomacy but rather diverse strategic and economic corroboration. This not only highlights the goals our two countries aim to accomplish through our multifaceted partnership, which aims at economic prosperity and strategic security, but it

also underlines our countries' concern with navigating the growing complexities of the 21st century.

This partnership regarding CPEC turns Pakistan into a vital geostrategic location, turning the country into a bridge across geo-continent regions and a link in trade revenue that traverses continents. This seems to have been in line with its past role as a passage of the silk route, which has been perhaps revived in modern times. In this regard, for China, CPEC is not merely an economic venture, but rather, more importantly, a strategic one which is aimed at achieving a strategic transportation line, opening direct access to the Arabian Sea, and diversifying the Malacca Strait vulnerability for China (Hussain 2017). For instance, incorporating CPEC into the BRI tent shows the project's relevance in encouraging cooperation in trading, developing political trust for political cooperation, and stabilising the Asia-Pacific region. It is the result of China's "community of shared future for mankind" policy, which outlines the need to build cooperation that fosters new economic zones for mutual growth and development (Khawaja and Raza 2022).

BRI's Vision and Objectives. The BRI can be best defined as a socio-economic connectivity strategy that resurrects old trails of international commerce used during the ancient Silk Road. They are not just limited to the creation of infrastructure but also to encouraging policy coherence among member countries, improving trade and investment, encouraging the integration of the finance sector, and cultivating people's relations (Huang 2016). Promising to form as many railways, highways, harbours, and digital roads as possible so that geography cannot limit business deals, capital, and ideas, BRI aims to make them flow more easily. It is geoeconomic in vision, aimed at facilitating development and eradicating poverty with the help of connectedness (Thürer et al. 2020).

As the grand vision of the BRI unfolds, CPEC emerges as more than just a current set of works in progress. It serves as a crucial pilot project for the larger political and economic goals of the BRI: integration, economic cooperation, and sustainable development of Pakistan and other regional countries. CPEC's role as a pilot project underscores its potential impact on the growth and integration of the concerned regions.

Integration of the Silk Route Spirit. CPEC is a new silk road embracing this archival strategic global vision to revive and expand the golden age of the ancient silk route and put into practice a new-looking modern-era world silk expressway. Due to it being a pilot connectivity project, CPEC seeks to improve physical connectivity, optimise trade corridors, and promote cross-border cultural interaction to promote economic development in Asia and worldwide, representing the true essence of the Silk Route. CPEC is anticipated to usher in positive changes for China and Pakistan. It presents new opportunities for boosting trade and investment relations, making the economies more dynamic, and fostering cultural exchanges and cooperation. With initiatives like CPEC, this modern-day trade route paints a picture of a connected world where nations are bound by the threads of business, culture, and shared prosperity. (Javed and Ismail 2021).

Altogether, CPEC can be seen as a significant advance in reopening the Silk Road and using its ideas and actuality to overcome contemporary difficulties and seize opportunities in the twenty-first century. The project shows that infrastructure and economic connection, namely the Strategic partnership, can break down geographical barriers and move forward to a new level of integration that should continue the legacy of the Silk Route by bringing it to new heights.

Strategic Objectives. CPEC should be regarded as an essential development in the sense of the impulse of reopening the Silk Road and utilising the Silk Road and its reality in facing the

difficulties and challenges of the modern world and grasping opportunity in the twenty-first century. The strategic partnership of the project demonstrates that infrastructure and interaction through the ballast of economic relations can overcome geographical barriers and begin a stage further. It is necessary to proceed to the beginnings of the Silk Route and bring it to various degrees of the new stage.

Economic Development and Connectivity. The over-arching goal of CPEC is development centred on boosting the economy and the connectivity matrix. Since its beginning in 2013 and up to the present, the initial investment that has been made in CPEC has amounted to over \$60 billion and encompasses many projects necessary for the two countries and for the regional development of building infrastructure in the shape of roads, railway, ports and airports, generating and distribution of energy (Khan and Liu 2019). The communication infrastructure is instrumental in advancing Pakistan's economics as it seeks to fill essential voids that have previously opened major setbacks for the country. Pakistan is to become a connecting link in regional integration and will act as a transportation artery for China to gain access to the Arabian Sea to reestablish the short and cheaper sea routes of the Middle East, Africa and other parts of the world.

The energy sector is strategic and critical under CPEC; the primary objective is to initiate numerous energy projects to cater for the chronic energy crisis in Pakistan. Similarly, through building energy production from coal, hydro, winds, and solar, CPEC aims to deliver a consistent energy supply to Pakistan that, in turn, will help to enhance the industrial growth and living standard of the citizens, as well as to support a continued economic growth rate (Ali et al. 2018). These other initiatives are believed to produce thousands of employment opportunities, which will help eradicate poverty and attain economic stability.

Silk Route's Economic Corridors' Revival. The geographical advantage that Pakistan occupies at the centre of Asia, Europe, and the Middle East is utilising the CPEC to achieve interconnectedness of the economy, which will boost the economic interrelation among the countries. This is expected to turn the 'Herald' initiative into a vital economic corridor for globalising Central Asia's otherwise geo-strategically significant landlocked regions through Gwadar port with a sense of revival of the ancient Silk Route spirit. This transformation entails economic upliftment in Pakistan and the entire South Asian region with other parties to create a prosperous society (Nazir 2021). However, the energy sector of CPEC, which touches on the key importance of energy in Pakistan, contributes in bringing positive change in industrial energy potentiality to boost the country's competitiveness. Through providing sustainable energy sources, the CPEC provides a favourable environment for industrialisation and further growth and development, which the Silk Route also encouraged with its activity of trade promotion (Hussain 2017).

Therefore, CPEC envisions itself as a project that extends beyond being an economic corridor; it envisions itself as a project that marks the beginning of a new age of economic transformation and cross-continental cooperation reminiscent of the dawning of the age of the Silk Route. By linking economic cooperation with civilisation and academic links between the countries, CPEC is poised to transform the region's socio-economic future and result in a new age of shared economic destiny based on historical connectivity and relations (Niyangoda, Keppetipola and Bowatte 2021).

Empowering Bilateral Ties. The relations bolstered through CPEC denote a complex relationship paradigm that is not confined and limited to solely economic elements. CPEC is a component of China's striving BRI scheme through which Beijing has consolidated and diversified its transportation networks, which has planted the seeds of establishing its global

economic dominance. For Pakistan, strategic cooperation with China is the salvation to restart the economy's growth and improve the infrastructural conditions that meet the requirements of the state. This credit stress is a sign of a geo-economic trend in international relations, in which the improvement of infrastructure assets and economic cooperation turn into diplomacy and an instrument of influence (Khan 2022). Moreover, the economic and societal connectivity through CPEC has enriched people-to-people relations, delineating better cross-cultural acquaintance and proximities among people of China and Pakistan. Museums, exhibitions, performances, concerts, education exchange, language courses, and cultural programs are building friendly ties. CPEC security measures include defence and security cooperation between Pakistan and China – a key pillar reiterating the assembling of security provisions that complements the Corridor Defense; it is a security-focused and not merely an economic relationship between the nations (Garlick 2018).

The economic connectivity between China and Pakistan concerning CPEC has effects at the regional and international levels, showing that economic corridors can dramatically shape the new era of structural realignments in global politics. In recent years, the development of CPEC brought not only the prospect of economic development and integration but also a new round of bilateral entente reserved and more profound than before, which seems to define the region's strategic landscape in the coming decades (Khan 2021).

Regional Integration and Cooperation. The CPEC project, a remarkable and expansive endeavour within the BRI ambit, not only holds the potential to boost relations between states but also inspires hope for a future of improved international cooperation. Going beyond self-interest, profit, and power, CPEC aims to revive the spirit of the Silk Routes, centred on shared accessibility that binds all in a common destiny of mutual uplift. (Rehman 2020). It was intended to bring a revolutionary change to the backbone of the economy of Pakistan and

China, as well as the neighbouring states of the region, by encouraging unparalleled volumes of trade, investment, and infrastructure advancement. Through its corridor projects, information highways, communication railways, and energy and oil pipelines are key projects aimed at enhancing the movement of people and goods from South Asia to Central to other parts of the world to spur the region for a new economic era (Rauf 2021).

The desire to connect the old Silk Route countries through the CPEC is symptomatic of a vision that seeks to revive the ancient trade arteries of the continents. In the past, these routes were not mere transport arteries but avenues for exchanging goods, ideas, knowledge, and technology.

In the past, these routes were not just transportation arteries but also conduits for exchanging goods, ideas, knowledge, and technology. CPEC, in its contemporary paradigm shift, seeks to replicate this role, strengthening the diplomatic relations of the nations it encompasses and fostering mutual cultural relationships among them. CPEC's role in improving regions by enhancing transport facilities and goods flow and ensuring FDI across countries is a testament to the interconnected global economy's potential for growth and development (Nisar, Ali, and Asif 2021).

Furthermore, cooperation and integration through CPEC and other BRI are more about building a shared future destination. This vision is economically self-serving but socially responsible since it seeks to uplift all the countries involved to eliminate the gap between the developing and the developed nations, thus financially empowering the participating countries. For example, the development of Gwadar Port in Pakistan contributes not only to the changed geopolitical position of Pakistan but also can be seen as a significant factor in changing the position of the Central Asian states, isolated geographically from the global seas and oceans from a peripheral position of the system of international relations. Likewise, the energy sector

of CPEC has the potential to eliminate the power crisis in Pakistan and may have an engagement in exporting excess energy to other zones, thus ensuring energy sustainability and diplomacy (Rehman 2020). The focus on reviving the links with the Silk Route countries likewise aligns with promoting peace, stability, and security. Various analysts define economic development as a significant means that leads to regional stability, and through the promotion of economic cooperation, which is realised through CPEC, political and military cooperation, which is undesirable in the given region, is curbed (Rasool and Ahmad 2021). Therefore, this economic corridor is not merely a physical or infrastructure connection between cities and towns but a development and diplomacy relations bridge that may convert adversaries into friends. It also stands as a testimony to the maxim that people must work together for their benefit if they want to live side by side in peace.

It is necessary to underline that CPEC's goals, as the strategic vision of the development of the Silk Route countries, reveal the concept of advancing the integration process of cooperative development. This project vividly illustrates how policy and infrastructure determine diplomacy and cultural relations, leaving a powerful example of diplomatic relations in economic relations in today's development projects.

5.6 CPEC Main Elements

5.6.1 The Focus on the Advancement of Infrastructure

Modern Silk Route Infrastructure

The concept behind the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is nothing less than a dream to reinstate the lost glory of the ancient Silk Route to reconstruct the regained global framework of connectivity, economic cooperation and cultural ties across continents (Ibrar et al. 2019). These strategic actions are expected to facilitate regional integration and create a

climate of unity instead of competing with one another. While reviving these age-old trade corridors within a new paradigm, CPEC aims to weave a tapestry of interconnected nations, whereby each nation shall derive benefits in terms of improved bilateral trade, connectivity, infrastructure, and overall economic integration (Hussain 2017). This is why the building of CPEC as a complex of multifaceted projects has pledged to revive the Pakistani economy and spearhead the process of regional economic cooperation. The corridor aims to facilitate market access, improve trade and logistics, and catalyse economic integration between the adjacent areas. This initiative fits into the BRI framework, highlighting economic integration as the key to fostering and sustaining harmony and order. It mirrors the planned interconnectivity through projects like Gwadar port development and the cross-border energy pipelines that form the basis of a mutually beneficial story of regional development anchored on mutual economic gains (Ali 2022).

Moreover, CPEC represents one of the most significant shifts in geo-economic terms; it refers to the process of growth and prosperity by working together. By liberalising the energy sector, supporting industrial ties, and promoting infrastructural development, both the success and limitations of CPEC signify that a new paradigm of economic diplomacy is possible: that of win-win propositions and their reciprocity that underpins cooperative interstate relations. This economic interaction built through special connections and trade structures shows that it can greatly reduce regional tensions, making a cooperative instead of a competitive environment dominant. Concisely, it proves that through its strategic objectives based on CPEC, integration and cooperation in international relations marks a shift towards a new paradigm. What this corridor represents is not simply an infrastructural project but the ideal of integrated development seeking to reconfigure the geography of power (Kuszevska and Agnieszka 2021). CPEC dreams of a future of cooperation, stability, unity, and a commitment to

interconnectivity. It embodies the spirit of a shared past through a new form of the Silk Route and intends to transform the region's landscape for shared prosperity and progress.

Gwadar Port Expansion and Development. Tactically, Gwadar Port provides an advantageous position for China in terms of rearranging the sea supply route to reduce the dependency on the traditional longer sea lanes through strategic chokepoints such as the Strait of Malacca. This direct access is going to bolster the energetic strengthening of China with an impressive, adjoining, and expeditious trade corner in the same framework of BRI (Hussain 2020). Beyond the port operations for Pakistan, this development has ushered in a wave of other economic activities within different sectors working to augment industrial boosterism, boost the nation's tourism sector, and improve regional trade integration.

Gwadar has developed sophisticated equipment for handling goods, warehousing, and transport to streamline its transportation system and connect it through a global supply chain. The planned Free Zone should promulgate Gwadar as an economic hub for regional and global players and international businesses and investments, encouraging the diversification of industries while creating new employment chances for the residents. This economic boost aligns with other community welfare-oriented development projects, as local development matches Gwadar's steps up as a commercial city (Nazir 2021). Similarly, the plan of constructing the Gwadar deep seaport highlights its importance based on security aspects of sea power that would strengthen the Pakistan naval fleet and ensure its strategic depth in the Arabian Sea. The concept of the port in the current context goes beyond trading, as it forms a part of the overall realisation of the strategic interest in the nation's safety and stabilisation of the region (Rehman, Ashfaq, and Naeem 2022). As part of CPEC, Gwadar Port signifies a strategic change for Pakistan, joining the determent of investment in trade, security, and investment. The site enshrines the objective and spirit of using geography to enhance people's

living standards, similar to what the great ancient trail of the famed Silk Route signifies today, symbolising the linkages and interconnectivity today.

Karachi-Lahore Motorway (M-9). This Karachi Lahore Motorway (M-9) clearly exemplifies Pakistan's transformation and growth features by stretching a long distance and connecting two vital economic hubs. This motorway is not merely a story to be told; rather, it holds a significant and fine strategy for the future by planning efficient road connectivity to enhance and upgrade the economy. At the industrial level, this M-9 motorway is considered a boon that has uplifted the economic interdependency among the central and marginal cities. This uplift has improved the import-export of goods and skilled the people, which has also reduced unemployment (Ullah, Alam, and Baig 2022). Additionally, the ideal location of the M-9 motorway has made it an important component for Pakistan and Chinese and international markets. It is undoubtedly a vital role that has linked the developing network, improved trade, boosted the economy, and upgraded continental business across Asia.

Socioeconomic implications of the Karachi-Lahore motorway extend beyond macroeconomic issues to the local bodies and communities it passes through developing skills, proposing employment opportunities, and access to markets for local products has the ultimate and obvious benefits of the nature of sustainable development; socioeconomic inclusion meets local equity and training (Aman et al. 2022). At the same time, integrating environmental measures into the project design emphasises the goal of achieving sustainable development that balances business development with the environment. Specifically, the Karachi-Lahore Motorway (M-9) under CPEC is a multi-faceted advance corridor catering to monetary, collective and ecological needs. This recapitulates the strategic use for vast monetary and regional assimilation, which includes the spirit of connectivity that is the trait of the ancient Silk Road.

With the advancement of Pakistan, the M-9 Motorway stands as a verification of its industrialised ambitions and a beacon of its strategic aspirations in the CPEC.

KKarakoram Highway Uplift. Under the CPEC project, the upgrading of the Karakoram Highway (KKH) is a flying change to improve regional connectivity and economic integration, with technology affecting shared aspirations and partnerships between China and Pakistan - Hailed as a miracle, the KKH development is crucial in weaving an economic fabric between these two allies, reinvigorating the ancient Silk Road ethos in a modern context, and giving way to prosperity develop throughout the region (Naithani and Agarwal 2023).

Developing these important strategic connections extends beyond just infrastructure development; It envisions routes of opportunity, encourages trade, promotes tourism and promotes social and economic development along its entire path. The modernisation of this route, the role of regional trade, the sixth southern centre of attraction as this enterprise, and the opportunity for local investment in the trade operation, especially in the growth opportunity.

In addition, the social and cultural impact of the project is profound, linking different communities and cultures, creating greater understanding, and enhancing people-to-people contacts between China and Pakistan. The infrastructure is poised to unlock the tourism potential of the region's scenic beauty, rich history, and cultural heritage, attracting tourists from around the world and strengthening local livelihoods (Khan 2022). Similarly, it also incorporates strong environmental awareness, integrating sustainable practices to conserve Karakoram's pristine environment. This holistic approach emphasises the goal of not only fostering connectivity and economic development but also ensuring environmental protection and sustenance in line with global environmental standards (Rizvi 2002).

The Expansion and Post-Advancement of Rail Network. The modernisation and expansion of Pakistan's rail network under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is part of a project aimed at redefining the economic mobility landscape in the region and is poised to expand well-being in the community. Railway uplift, especially the Main Line-1 (ML-1) project, shows a transformational approach to overcome the existing limitations of Pakistan's railway system by increasing the speed, capacity and reliability of rail services; the ML-1 project is expected to boost economic activity, increase productivity and stimulate job creation, making passenger carriers a more competitive and attractive alternative, thereby for freight reducing export costs and contributing to environmental sustainability by providing a clean alternative to other means. (Hussain 2017).

The integration of the Gwadar port as a link in the national railway network can be considered an example of the project's larger geo-economic vision. As the rail extension interconnects Gwadar with major domestic and international trade routes, the vision is to develop it into a city with multi-fold economic importance essential for regional trade and commerce. This connectivity is believed to open new economic axis, improve trade accessibility for Central Asian states that are mainly primitive, and cement Pakistan's role as the hub in the trans-regional economy and strategy (Khan 2022).

In addition, railway development under CPEC is expected to lead to greater regional integration, which is in line with the objective of the Belt and Road Initiative to create a common economic zone through improved infrastructure and connectivity. This vision extends beyond just economic participation. This includes promoting cultural exchange, mutual understanding, and geopolitical cooperation, which lays the foundation for a more connected and prosperous region (Zhang, Wang, and Okafor 2022). Modernising Pakistan's railways and ambitious expansion under CPEC mark a brilliant pace to revive old trade links and strengthen

modern economic and strategic partnerships. As this initiative unfolds, it promises to transform Pakistan's transportation system, broader regional development, and shared prosperity.

5.6.2 Energy Sector Expansion

The access to investments and expertise in Pakistan's energy sector through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a testament to the far-reaching vision of the project, overcoming the most important hurdles for Pakistan to address one of the economic developments. The energy diversification and expansion program addresses the long-standing problem of insufficient energy that has hampered industrial production and economic growth, various types of coal-fired power generation, and hydroelectricity power, including solar, wind and other renewable energy sources. Through a series of initiatives in the energy sector, CPEC is set to further strengthen Pakistan's energy production, ensuring its energy-stable diversity. Furthermore, successfully incorporating renewable energy sources complements the development and sustainability goals that must be achieved. It will make Pakistan use renewable energy sources and favour Pakistan in addressing the grave concerns of energy needs. This innovation can fight against climate change at the global level and reduce reliance on fossil fuels (Ali et al. 2018).

One of the many projects under the umbrella of CPEC, namely the energy sector, shows the deepening of interaction and cooperation between China and Pakistan. China made CPEC successful by investing in Pakistan's energy infrastructure because reliable energy is needed for corridor-related infrastructure. This synergy between the two countries happens to emphasise the shared benefits stimulated through CPEC, leading to strategic economic development beyond mere friendship between China and Pakistan (Hussain 2017). Under CPEC, Pakistan's energy sector development has the ultimate aim to revive the country's technology and economy, a boost that is the need of the hour. The project can ensure energy

security, diversify energy sources, and align with sustainability goals, enhancing Pakistan's development trajectory and strengthening the relationship between China and Pakistan.

Inexhaustible Energy Projects. The highlighting of renewable energy projects, especially wind farms in Sindh and Punjab under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), signals a significant shift towards sustainable development in Pakistan. These initiatives are in line with global trends towards environmental sustainability and energy. By exploiting wind power in these provinces, central to Pakistan's strategy to secure economic growth and promote regional cooperation, Pakistan aims to reduce its dependence on imported fuel to increase energy independence and contribute to environmental creation encounter protection (Khan and Liu 2019). Under the CPEC program, the focus is on recognising the role of sustainable energy in economic development and empowering regional connectivity. Investments in wind turbines, especially in the windward corridors of Sindh and Punjab, reflect Pakistan's efforts to harness its local renewable resources. This infrastructure is a power generation and a symbol of Pakistan's commitment towards green and sustainable energy. For example, the Jhimpir wind power plant in Sindh is a testament to that this commitment has been created, leveraging Chinese investments and expertise to increase Pakistan's renewable energy capacity, implying that a collaborative partnership aimed at promoting sustainable development (Soomro et al. 2023).

Renewable energy has a broad strategic direction, making Pakistan's energy sector more resilient and sustainable. It has also reduced reliance on fossil fuel imports, contributing to greater trade balances and lower carbon footprints. Besides, shifting towards renewable energy under CPEC is a beacon for local entrepreneurship. It is an example of how infrastructure development policies can be integrated with the environment and sustainability, thus creating favourable conditions for sustainable community well-being. Renewable energy projects,

especially wind farms in Sindh and Punjab within the framework of CPEC, encompass a comprehensive strategy to meet Pakistan's energy challenges, environmental commitments and developmental goals (Ahmed, Memon, and Kamboh 2020). They envision a future where energy is the catalyst for economic growth, regional employment, and sustainable development and are therefore key to achieving the CPEC vision of a resilient, connected, and governed region well embedded in sustainable development principles has been realised.

Wind Farms in Sindh and Punjab. With a positive emphasis on renewable energy in the CPEC programme, several key agreements have been signed between Chinese and Pakistani companies. These agreements focus on developing wind energy infrastructure, especially in the windy areas of Sindh and, to a lesser extent, Punjab.

Jhimpir Wind Power Plant. The Jhimpir wind farm is considered a landmark project in Sindh, which is part of a larger wind farm. The project included contracts with Chinese companies to develop and operate wind turbines. For the most part, Chinese banks eased the economy on concessional terms. It was one of the first projects to be announced under the CPEC, and several approaches have been implemented in the last few years, with Phase I announced around 2015 (Soomro et al. 2023).

Sindh Wind Energy Projects. Several projects have been initiated in Sindh province, such as wind turbines around Jhimpeer, Gharo and KT port areas. These involve joint ventures with Chinese engineering and construction companies, while others are through China Exim Bank. These projects got off to a spectacular start, with the opening of the Sachal wind farm in mid-2017, followed by others. All these projects have increased Pakistan's wind potential, with the Sachal wind farm alone providing 50 MW. The cumulative impact of these initiatives is a significant increase in regional renewable energy production.

Though specific projects in Punjab are few in the public discourse, the province is exploring the possibility of developing wind energy through Chinese partnerships. Feasibility studies and pilot projects are part of this research phase. While the formal delivery of wind projects in Punjab under CPEC has been limited, indicating that it remains an area of development, the region is now more focused on solar projects. (Ali 2021). The development of the Punjab wind power sector under CPEC is in its infancy, and future development is expected to follow the successful model implemented in Sindh agreements under CPEC to develop its power sources after importation. It also encourages reducing their dependence on fuel and energy. Likewise, formal cooperation with China to address security and environmental concerns facilitated these projects' economic and technical aspects. It built two states, underlining its commitment to sustainable development and climate action. This move towards renewable energy, particularly wind power in Sindh and potentially Punjab, represents a major shift in Pakistan's energy policy, i.e., global environmental and local economic development goals.

Solar Power Parks in Punjab and Balochistan. Solar energy parks in Punjab and Balochistan are other developmental projects undertaken by CPEC. The main focus of these projects is on sustainable energy generation. These parks are one of the many essential sources to solve energy scarcity in Pakistan. They are also in line with global trends in energy production and, therefore, significantly impact the energy of the country's management and environmental sustainability.

Punjab's Quaid-e-Azam Solar Park. The Quaid-e-Azam Solar Park at Bahawalpur in Punjab is one of the most important projects in the CPEC energy strategy. Established as Pakistan's first large-scale solar power plant, it marks the country's shift towards renewable energy. Spread across 500 hectares, the park boasts a capacity of 100 MW of electricity, with plans to expand to increase its capacity significantly (Asad et al. 2022). If this plan contributes to

electricity, it will reduce scarcity and set a precedent for future regional renewable energy projects.

Balochistan's Solar Energy Endeavors. The emphasis on solar energy is equally evident in Balochistan, where several projects aimed at harnessing the high-quality solar energy available in the region, such as the Quetta Solar Project, build on the potential of Balochistan, which will go a long way in highlighting Pakistan's renewable energy sector. Balochistan's strategic location and climate provide favourable conditions for solar power generation, thus playing an important role in the country's strategy to diversify energy sources and reduce its dependence on imported fuels. (Ali 2021).

Strategic and Environmental Implications. The solar parks in Punjab and Balochistan under CPEC are proof of Pakistan's commitment to adopt renewable energy solutions. These schemes not only meet the immediate needs of energy but are also a model for sustainable development, providing long-term strength to the country. It has also contributed to safety and environmental goals so far. The strategic importance of these parks goes beyond energy production, such as providing energy security, reducing carbon emissions, and enhancing socio-economic development in their communities. Furthermore, Pakistan can upgrade its energy independence by incorporating such projects into the national grid and positioning itself as a forward thinker in the global transition towards sustainable development. (Hussain 2017).

5.6.3 Coal, Hydro, and Solar Energy Initiatives

CPEC has positioned itself as an essential transformational project in Pakistan through a huge investment in coal, hydro, and solar energy infrastructure to fulfil Pakistan's energy needs and economic development and promote economic growth.

Coal Energy Initiatives: Power Projects of Thar Coal. CPEC has placed itself as an essential transformational project in Pakistan through a huge investment in coal, hydro, and solar energy infrastructure. It seems to fulfil Pakistan's energy needs and economic development and promote economic growth. A key component of the CPEC energy program is the exploitation of the Thar coal reserves, one of the world's largest coal reserves in Sindh's Thar Parker district, Pakistan, spanning more than 9,000 square kilometres. The Thar coalfields hold 175 billion tons of coal. It generates natural energy from local coal-fired power plants, such as the Anglo Thar Block II Power Plant in China and the Mechanical Engineering Corporation's (CMEC) Thar Block I project. It represents a significant step towards harnessing the country's coal reserves for power generation. These projects are promising to provide economic benefits and energy sufficiency. On the contrary, these are environmental threats concerning greenhouse gas emissions and water consumption. (Masih 2018).

Hydro Energy Initiatives: Hydropower Projects on the Indus River. In parallel with coal power, CPEC also emphasises improving Pakistan's hydropower potential, especially the hydropower projects along the Indus River. It offers many opportunities for hydropower along its rivers, which helps enhance the country's renewable energy mix and sustainability of significant hydropower projects under CPEC. It includes the Karot-Kohala hydroelectric project, which can connect significant hydropower to Pakistan's electricity. These projects provide renewable energy and support water management, flood control, and irrigation. The hydropower projects along the Indus River align with Pakistan's commitment to increase renewable energy, reduce carbon emissions, and reflect the transition to energy in a clean and sustainable solution (Hussain, 2017).

Solar Energy Projects in Punjab. CPEC, while recognising the potential of solar energy in Pakistan, especially in sunny states like Punjab, has considered solar projects to consume clean

energy sources. Quaid-e-Azam Solar Park in Bahawalpur, Pakistan's largest solar power plant, has been implemented. The park's development reflects the strategy of stimulating the abundance of solar energy in the region, contributing to the diversification of Pakistan's energy sources, reducing reliance on fossil fuels, and harnessing solar energy. These projects aim to address energy scarcity, reduce energy import costs using conventional energy generation, and reduce the associated environmental impact. The successful energy system in Punjab serves as a model for expanding solar deployment elsewhere and highlights the role of renewable energy in achieving energy security and sustainable energy (Asad et al. 2022). The energy crisis in Pakistan has weakened the country's economy, with an energy shortfall reaching up to 6000 MW. Fortunately, Pakistan lies close to the Sun Belt and receives very high irradiation. To this end, at the beginning of 2014, the Pakistani government sanctioned a solar photovoltaic project, namely Quaid-e-Azam Solar Park, rated at 1000 MW. In this study, a cost-benefit analysis for the Quaid-e-Azam Solar Park has been developed. The model uses RET Screen software. A literature review pointed out that most of the previous research on cost-benefit analysis for solar projects has been mainly carried out on smaller power plants. The study's outcome shows promising results, with a simple payback period of 5 to 6 years. Furthermore, this analysis can serve as a guideline for future solar photovoltaic projects in Pakistan. It can help develop and utilise the country's huge solar potential, thus aiding in the reduction of energy shortage (Asad et al. 2022).

The development of coal, hydro and solar energy projects under the umbrella of CPEC shows that many measures have been taken to enhance the security and improve the efficiency of Pakistan's energy infrastructure. The Thar coal plant uses available coal, the Indus Hydropower plant uses renewable water, and Punjab's solar power plant uses local solar co-power, so these projects contribute to Pakistan's energy diversity, sustainable development and self-reliance.

The integration of sustainability is essential to ensure that the pursuit of energy security is linked to environmental and social welfare policy.

5.6.4 Special Economic Zones (SEZs) Under CPEC

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has heralded a new era of economic growth and industrialisation in Pakistan by establishing special economic zones (SEZs). These zones promote foreign investment, the development of goods, increase exports, create employment opportunities, and technology transfer. They are designed to grow and are thus important to Pakistan's economic stability. (Hussain and Rao 2020).

SEZs with Regards to CPEC. Special economic zones are a broad CPEC plan to diversify Pakistan's economic base and integrate it into the global economy through preferred policies and infrastructure. Several locations have been identified in the country, focusing on gaining advantages related to regional strengths and market power. (Hussain and Rao 2020).

Rashakai Economic Zone, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). With its ideal location near Peshawar, the Rashakai Economic Zone is poised to become one of the most important industrial zones in KPK. Capitalising on its proximity to the Afghan and Central Asian markets, Rashakai expects to promote economic activity in the region, focusing on sectors such as pharmaceuticals, textiles, food processing, etc.

Hattar SEZ, Haripur. The Hattar Special Economic Zone at Haripur extends the wave of industrial development to the Hazara region of KPK, aiming to build the industrial potential of the region, offering opportunities in areas such as marble and granite, food and beverages, steel and alloys, etc. The Hattar SEZ is expected to boost the region's economy for employment and to develop skills. Its development strategy emphasises sustainable practices and projects to ensure long-term economic and environmental sustainability. (Hussain 2017).

Dhabeji SEZ, Thatta. Located in Thatta district of Sindh, Dhabeji SEZ is strategically important due to its proximity to Karachi Port and Port Qasim, which provides important connectivity to maritime trade routes. It is envisaged that the area will become a hub of transport lighting, technology, textiles, chemicals, and foodstuffs for manufacturing industries by leveraging its locational advantage. Dhabeji aims to attract capital, increase export competitiveness, and generate greater employment, thereby contributing to economic development in surrounding communities as well,

Allama Iqbal Industrial City, Faisalabad. The Allama Iqbal Industrial City in Faisalabad was named after the national poet and philosopher Allama Iqbal, who strives to become the cornerstone of industrial development in Punjab. The SEZ focuses on textiles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and technology and aims to benefit Faisalabad's industrial base and workforce. The city is designed to provide a competitive and conducive environment for its business and foster innovation, efficiency, and product promotion of exports.

Bostan Industrial Zone, Balochistan. Another cornerstone in Balochistan is the Bostan Industrial Zone, a crucial step that involves and highlights Pakistan's largest province into the national mainstream. It has targeted the domains the industry of livestock, minerals processing, and agriculture. Bostan intends to exploit the antique and exceptional geological position and resources of the province of Balochistan. The area has captured the attention of investors, stimulating economic growth with an insight into spacious local capacity and the better and finer livelihood in the region. This zone's development is expected to have a capacity and capability to develop the industrial zone socio-economically (Farooqui and Aftab 2018).

The availability of Special Economic Zones under CPEC is an important milestone in Pakistan's economic strategy, allowing for technological, economic and regional development that will support a favourable business environment, facilitating industrialisation and creating

job opportunities. Thus, these SEZs are pivotal to bringing revival in the economic landscape of Pakistan to ensure that the benefits of industrial development are distributed more broadly and in line with the country's long-term development goals.

5.7 Implementation Phases of CPEC: Early Harvest Projects and Key Impact

Early harvesting under CPEC has been prioritised to accelerate their profitability and spur further economic activity and growth. These projects mainly focus on Pakistan's critical energy needs and infrastructure gaps critical for economic stability and growth; the Early Harvesting Projects (EHP) contain mixed energy projects, road projects, and rail and infrastructure projects to uplift Pakistan's developmental productivity and connectivity.

Energy sector EHPs were particularly important in improving the severe energy shortage in Pakistan, which has hindered economic growth. These projects include coal, hydro, solar and wind power plants to diversify the energy mix and ensure electricity supply. Completing this energy project has significantly reduced the electricity problem, facilitated the implementation of infrastructure and improved the lives of its residents (Khan and Liu 2019). Likewise, other milestones related to EHP and infrastructure projects include upgrading highways and railways to improve connectivity between various provinces of Pakistan and neighbouring countries. These developments are crucial for the expansion of trade and transportation. In addition, the development of Gwadar Port under the EHP has initiated a strategic commercial hub, providing the shortest route for maritime transportation and open access to international markets for a better living.

Key Projects and Their Impact

Several key projects under CPEC have distinguished themselves in reshaping Pakistan's economic and strategic alignments. With their multilayered benefits, these projects energise the industrial sector to inculcate regional development and cooperation.

Energy Projects: The completion of power plants under CPEC has significantly increased Pakistan's energy generation capacity (Ali 2018). It is also worth mentioning that the state website highlights the economic deficit, characterised by a lack of economic activity, by restricting the economy through infrastructure modernisation and development.

Transport Infrastructure. Karakoram Highway Phase II and Lahore Orange Line Metro are great examples of transport projects that have improved accessibility and transportation. The highway has tremendously facilitated trade routes to China and boosted cross-border trade. A metro train transformed urban development in Lahore city, reducing congestion and pollution while making a better living.

Industrial Cooperation. The establishment of SEZs like Rashakai and Allama Iqbal Industrial City highlights the role of CPEC in boosting industrial growth. These projects create a favourable environment for sector growth, attract foreign investment, create employment and encourage technology transfer and are expected to be an important component of Pakistan's industrial base and export potential into the front (Ahmad, Kaleem, and Satti 2018).

Consequently, Pakistan's economic revival depends upon the early harvest and subsequent major projects under CPEC, holding a strong foundation for the country. These projects promote industrial and technological development, interconnectivity, and economic independence by addressing critical energy and infrastructure needs; CPEC is playing out as a transformative force for Pakistan, promising a future of prosperity and regional cohesion.

5.8 Economic Implications of CPEC Projects

The invaluable economic implications of CPEC extend beyond the immediate infrastructural surge to catalyse a high level of economic sustenance and regional integration. CPEC, through the twinning of capital and technology, has activated Pakistan's economic sectors, attracted Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and is highly expected to revive the country's economic landscape.

Boost to GDP: The inception of infrastructure and energy projects through CPEC has had a multilayered effect on Pakistan's economy, industry, and development, leading to GDP growth. These projects' construction and operational phases create jobs, spur demand in related industries, and improve productivity by alleviating energy and infrastructure constraints. (Ali et al. 2018).

Trade Expansion: Pakistan's trade capability has tremendously improved by implementing improved and modernised infrastructure, transportation networks, and general port facilities. It has also reduced costs and transit times. CPEC can be an exemplary model to bring revolution by transforming Pakistan into a trade hub, rejoicing its geostrategic location to facilitate trade between China, Central Asia, the Middle East, and beyond (Siddiqui et al., 2023).

Investment Attraction: Pakistan has the potential to become the centre of attraction for SEZs under CPEC projects, taking advantage of its geological placement. The greatest of the benefits is likely to be foreign investment by proposing a flexible and safe environment with fiscal incentives, infrastructure readiness, and policy support. (Sheikh et al. 2019).

5.9 Social Impact and Human Development

CPEC projects offer more significant social implications, which enhance human development and societal well-being in Pakistan.

Job Creation: Most importantly, in the areas of manufacturing, construction, and energy, CPEC projects have generated invaluable employment opportunities for the locals, which can reduce the rate of poverty and raise living standards.

Skill Development: The surge of modern technologies and practices through CPEC projects has created the need for skill development programs and knowledge transfer. Training programs and collaborative initiatives associated with CPEC projects help uplift the workforce's skill set, which promotes overall growth. (Mukhtar et al. 2022).

Urbanisation and Regional Development. Under CPEC's influence, there is a wave of merging infrastructure and industrial development, with new economic centres emerging around project sites. This urbanisation inculcates improvements in social infrastructure, including education, healthcare, and housing, thereby promoting balanced regional development.

5.10 Stakeholders and Partnerships in CPEC

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), an integral part of the China Belt and Road initiative, encompasses a range of stakeholders and partnerships beyond just a bilateral initiative. This dense fabric of cooperation and collaboration extends beyond the Sino-Pakistani governments. It includes various financial institutions and private entrepreneurs, each contributing to the multifaceted goals and outcomes of CPEC.

5.11 Governmental Bodies and Agencies in CPEC Implementation

Successful connectivity implementation of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) depends mainly on joint efforts and cooperation of Chinese and Pakistani government

institutions and agencies. These institutions are important in strategic implementation, facilitating the implementation and management of many aspects of these ambitious programs.

The Role of Pakistan's Governmental Entities

The Ministry of Planning, Development, and Special Projects is involved in CPEC project management in Pakistan. This agency monitors the number of projects undertaken by CPEC and plans and executes projects per the country's and industry's requirements. The project's core ensures sustainability and advances Pakistan's socio-economic goals and objectives. It coordinates the planning and implementation phase, liaises with Chinese counterparts, and coordinates various levels and departments of the Government of Pakistan to ensure integrated actions and objectives. (Rana, Zhang, and Butt 2022)

The ministry extends beyond mere care; it is important in identifying new operational opportunities, accessing finance, facilitating intersectoral and interregional cooperation required for project outcomes, ensuring integration of CPEC projects in Pakistan's national development agenda, and with objectives such as industrialisation development, infrastructure development, energy security alignment and employment generation.

China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC). In parallel, China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) plays a corresponding and equally important role. As China's top economic planning agency, NDRC is crucial in policy formulation, infrastructure planning and coordination of CPEC components with Pakistani partners serving as a key element in China's comprehensive Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (Yeo 2009). It ensures that CPEC has the long-term objectives of increasing regional connectivity and promoting economic growth. NDRC's participation in CPEC demonstrates China's commitment to the corridor's success. It provides strategic guidance, technical

expertise, and financial oversight. It works with Chinese enterprises, financial institutions, and government agencies to organise their contributions to CPEC projects and ensure that agreed-upon standards are met.

Joint Cooperation Framework. The cooperation between Pakistan's Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Projects and China's NDRC is further strengthened through various bilateral meetings, including the Joint Committee (JCC) on CPEC, which acts as a key monitoring body for development, and it takes strategic decisions addresses emerging challenges and moves the CPEC process forward. In addition, various sector-specific Working Groups (JWGs) work under the umbrella of JCC, focusing on key areas such as energy, transport infrastructure, Gwadar port development and industrialisation. These JWGs enable the creation of detailed technical discussions, project management and recommendations (Yeo 2009).

Enhancing CPEC's Implementation. The establishment of the CPEC Authority has contributed significantly to the development of corridor management while providing a centralised and highly focused mechanism for managing its various infrastructure projects. The government has strengthened CPEC governance and operational efficiency by addressing bureaucratic hurdles, ensuring interagency coordination, and consistent dialogue with Chinese counterparts. The Pak-China Government institutions and companies are the cornerstone of CPEC's success. Their mutual collaborative efforts ensure that the strategy adopted not only evolves in line with the goals set but also changes and evolves in response to emerging opportunities and challenges. These organisations work collaboratively to share mutual benefits and shared development, exemplifying international cooperation in pursuing common development goals to be achieved.

5.12 Overview of International and Regional Collaborations in CPEC

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), as an important component of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), naturally attracts several international and local partners. This cooperation is not limited to China-Pakistan bilateral relations, but rather various Central Asian countries interested in the economic and strategic sharing of the route. Old states and other stakeholder countries like Afghanistan, Iran, and Central Asian countries see CPEC as a strategic avenue to enhance connectivity and regional integration. Their participation ranges from infrastructure development, such as road and rail connectivity extending the access road, to the creation of economic linkages within SEZs along CPEC corridors; the objectives of such local cooperation are to foster economic interdependence and mutual growth and position CPEC as a catalyst for wider regional prosperity.

Silk Route Nations and CPEC. As per the historic Silk Road, the countries in the middle of the CPEC provide cultural and historical context and are important in economic and policy linkages. These countries, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, etc., find in CPEC a way to modernize their ancient trade routes while integrating them into a modern economic network of connectivity. (Khetran and Khalid 2019). By rejoicing in their geographic and strategic position, these countries can increase trade, facilitate energy exchange, welcome tourism and cultural exchange, and exchange knowledge and ideas. They may also benefit from CPEC's infrastructure and cross-border coordination. Infrastructure development is crucial for a more integrated economic zone, providing a gateway to Europe, the Middle East, and beyond.

Multilateral Institutions and Financial Support. Multilateral institutions, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank (WB) and Asian Infrastructure Bank (AIIB), play an important role in providing financing and advisory support to CPEC projects. Their

involvement provides other than relevant financial capacity and international knowledge and standards. These organisations contribute to various aspects of the CPEC, from infrastructure development to capacity building in the energy sector. They also provide technical assistance, in addition to their financial support, policy advice, and best practices in governance and environmental protection, increasing the quality and impact of all CPEC projects. (Xiaolong et al. 2021).

Private Sector Engagement. Private sector participation is vital in translating CPEC's strategic vision into economic reality. The private sector provides local and international investment, technology, and know-how to stimulate projects that range from infrastructure to technical hallmarks. The active participation of private players speeds up the project timeline and fosters innovation and competitiveness, which is essential for economic growth. Under CPEC, private sector participation such as telecommunications, manufacturing, and services generates new and multiple opportunities to reduce the number of unemployment through providing sources for employment, promoting economic diversity and increasing productivity (Khan Et Al. 2023).

Role in Infrastructure and Development. Under CPEC, the private sector is important in infrastructure development and broader economic development. Through direct investments, joint ventures, and public-private partnerships, they help build roads, ports, power plants, and industrial hubs that underpin the success of CPEC. This participation helps mobilise the necessary capital, know-how, and entrepreneurial efficiency for large-scale infrastructure projects that will boost economic growth, create jobs, and improve livelihoods throughout the region (Zhang, Wang, and Okafor 2022)

Public-Private Partnerships. The public-private partnership (PPP) under CPEC is an example of financing partners that align government objectives with private sector

development. The energy sectors carry this kind of management, where maximum investment and sustainable returns require shared risk-reward PPPs to enable the use of private investment and expertise and ensure that the industry is consistent with strategic public interest objectives. They are regarded as the main drivers of sustainable growth and prosperity, providing creative and new financing solutions and business models that drive business and encourage development.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a great testament to the enduring partnership between China and Pakistan. This friendship has resulted in an economic partnership deeply rooted in their shared history and mutual aspirations for regional connectivity and prosperity. This chapter examines the many aspects of CPEC, emphasising its role as a catalyst for economic transformation, articulating geopolitical integration, and a beacon for future development efforts. Through its extensive infrastructure about infrastructure, energy and technology, CPEC aims not only to modernise Pakistan's economic environment but also to take advantage of Pakistan's fragile geography. CPEC aims to enhance connectivity between the country and neighbouring regions, facilitate and provide extensive trade routes beyond its borders, and boost economic growth and confidence in Central and South Asian countries.

Establishing special economic zones (SEZs) under CPEC demonstrates the scheme's potential to stimulate industrial growth, attract foreign investment, and create greater employment opportunities to spur social and economic development in various regions of Pakistan. Its market power is ready to be harnessed, contributing to balanced, inclusive economic growth.

Furthermore, CPEC's focus on energy diversification through the development of coal, hydro and solar power projects addresses Pakistan's vital energy needs for sustainable development and energy security. This policy objective of renewable energy also reflects a responsible approach to environmental sustainability, confronting global efforts to combat climate change.

The role of international and local partners, as well as the active participation of the private sector, is a huge part of the spirit of CPEC. Public-private partnerships exemplify the synergy between government ambition and private sector management capabilities, facilitating efficiency and innovation in implementing multiple projects.

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a well-planned and well-instigated effort that embodies two countries' aspirations committed to shared prosperity and regional integration. As CPEC gains more power, it is committed to transforming Pakistan's economy and to forge stronger ties of cooperation and understanding across the region. The success of the project will depend on continued and consistent collaboration, transparent governance and the financial well-being and security of all stakeholders. Rooted in the connectivity heritage of the ancient Silk Road and with an eye towards the future, CPEC is poised to become a cornerstone of regional development and a model for international cooperation in the 21st century.

CHAPTER SIX

Evaluating the Impact of CPEC on Strategic Culture of Pakistan

This chapter delves into the profound transformation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Pakistan's strategic culture. This shift, which intertwines evolving geo-economic dynamics with national security concerns, is a key factor in understanding Pakistan's changing policy paradigms and foreign alignments. By analysing how CPEC is reshaping Pakistan's strategic culture, this chapter contributes to the complex discourse on the interplay between security and economics in shaping national strategies. The insights presented here are of value to scholars, policymakers, and strategic analysts, offering a deeper understanding of the CPEC's impact.

6.1 Conceptualising the Shift in Pakistan's Strategic Culture Definition and Understanding of Strategic Culture within the Pakistani Context

The nation's foreign policy and securitisation approach are shaped by various determinants, including history, ideology, geography, and the role of institutions. These factors constitute Pakistan's strategic culture. Pakistan's strategic culture has been shaped by its geography, past disputes, and the pursuit of national interest. However, all these have led the country toward a security-centric state (Khan, 2023). When completed, the CPEC would outline China's long-term geo-political plans in the Indian Ocean, which could alter the region's security environment. However, China and Pakistan face a series of challenges that hinder the maximisation of the project; nevertheless, the CPEC still has serious security implications for India that it must address (Gill 2019).

Furthermore, the current focus on national resilience against internal and external threats, sovereignty of the state, and territorial integrity have been the hallmarks of the country's

strategic culture. Pakistan's strategic culture is deeply rooted in a security-centric approach due to its territorial dispute with India. It is a military-centric approach to foreign affairs and national security (Ali and Patman 2019). However, the emergence of CPEC marks a significant turning point. It has steered the country's focus from a security-centric to a geo-economic-centric approach. This profound shift underscores the importance of economic strength, infrastructure resilience, and regional alignments in the modern security landscape, transcending traditional military-centric strategies. (Ali 2016).

Pakistan's active participation in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a testament to the evolution of its strategic culture. The country has recognised the strategic importance of economic integration at the regional level, aligning economic development with national security. CPEC has opened doors to economic corridors, trade connectivity, and infrastructure development and bolstered the nation's security framework. This development signifies a crucial recalibration in Pakistan's strategic culture. (Khan and Liu 2019). By joining CPEC, Pakistan has undoubtedly broadened its strategic culture to contain infrastructure-influenced security and business-related diplomacy. It has been clear that Pakistan has diversified its economic base. Strategically, Pakistan has become an essential player in the regional economic architecture. This change reflects the increasing understanding of Pakistan's relationship between national security and economic growth (Javed and Ismail 2021).

Pakistan's strategic culture is experiencing a sustainable shift as it negotiates the game-changing effects of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Pakistan beside focusing on conventional security paradigms, has considered security and economic development complementary to each other. This massive change indicates enlightened strategic thinking, as geo-economic factors shape national security strategies. Beijing's security strategy in Pakistan rests on four pillars: military invisibility, economic visibility, indiscriminate diplomacy, and

geo-political alignment (Biberman, Schwartz, and Zahid 2023). Pakistan's long-lasting emphasis on economic diplomacy, trade, and regional connectivity is a sign of the nation's economic integration strategies into its security paradigm. Therefore, the country's strategic institutions and think tanks carefully examine and incorporate economic factors into their strategic planning and policymaking. The paradigm shift in Pakistan's strategic culture recognises the potential of financial strength and interconnectedness to bolster national resilience and deterrence capabilities (Khan, 2021).

While CPEC is an economic endeavour, it also carries significant strategic implications for Pakistan's regional and international standing. The project is helping Pakistan redefine its strategic imperatives by advancing connectivity, energy cooperation, and infrastructure development. This emphasis on economic value chains and Pakistan's role as a territorial economic centre underscores the project's broader strategic significance (Khan and Liu 2019). Additionally, due to CPEC, Pakistan can use its strategic location, moving it from a geo-political frontline into a geo-economic crossroads. This change invigorates Pakistan's strategic depth and economic domination, opens new markets, draws worldwide investments, and promotes an atmosphere encouraging tenable financial progress. CPEC is considered an economic lifeline for Pakistan and negates India's assertion as baseless (Akhtar 2023).

Pakistan's foreign policy is defined by its economic relationships, regional integration, and security frameworks, resulting from the geo-economic reorientation of its strategic culture. The corridor will transform the domestic equations of China–Pakistan, and the dividends of its potentialities will be extended to other regional countries. However, the implementation brought about geo-political tensions in the region, as India rejected the investment in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, raising apprehensions for violation of territorial integrity and sovereignty. Meanwhile, the US, a major player in the regional politico-security dynamics, has a tenuous

relationship with Pakistan over Islamabad's inclination towards China and support for terrorism. Such emerging developments will have far-reaching consequences for regional stability and cooperation (Hussain and Jamali 2019). The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has had a deep and complex effect on Pakistan's strategic culture, indicating a massive shift towards a geo-economic paradigm. This change has also changed Pakistan's external alliances and regional role. Pakistan can now negotiate the complexity of the geo-political issues of the twenty-first century with more resilience and agility.

6.2 Analysis of the Pre-CPEC strategic culture of Pakistan, emphasising its traditional security-centric focus

It is essential to comprehend Pakistan's conventional strategic culture before exploring the revolutionary effects of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) on Pakistan's strategic idea. Due to its strategic location, historical legacies, and regional security dynamics, Pakistan has forever had a security-centric emphasis in its national strategy and policy formulations (Ali and Patman 2019).

The importance of military security, India's centrality as a perceived existential threat, the value of partnerships with large countries, and the function of nuclear deterrent are the main aspects that comprise Pakistan's pre-CPEC strategic culture (Hyder 2022). Pakistan's strategic policy and posture have consistently emphasised traditional security concerns over non-traditional security challenges, such as economic ones. These themes have been present throughout the policy (Fair 2014). In the past, military security has been given a great deal of weight in Pakistan's strategic culture, which frequently regards defence capabilities and readiness as the primary way to guarantee national security. Pakistan's early experiences of conflict and rivalry with India are the source of this emphasis since they have moulded a strategic viewpoint that sees military might as crucial to a country's existence and sovereignty (Rizvi 2002).

Pakistan's strategic culture has been shaped by the perceived threat posed by India, which impacts its foreign policy, military doctrines, and security policies. The wars and current conflicts between India and Pakistan have strengthened a strategic mindset that sees India as a persistent foe, requiring a solid and watchful defence posture to counter perceived threats (Paul 2015). Pakistan's alliances with powerful nations, first with the United States during the Cold War and then with China, have also indicated its strategic culture. These alliances have been seen as crucial for Pakistan to counter India and obtain outside assistance for its defence and security requirements within its security-centric strategic culture (Smith 2011). As a crucial equaliser in its strategic equation with India, Pakistan views developing and maintaining nuclear capabilities as vital to its strategic culture. Nuclear deterrence is essential to preserving national security since it increases Pakistan's strategic autonomy and deters foreign attacks (Tasleem and Dalton 2018).

Although Pakistan's strategic culture has changed significantly since the start of the CPEC and the move toward geo-economic factors, some aspects of this change should be considered. An increasing number of people now recognise that economic security is essential to total national security, which complements the old security-centric focus rather than completely replacing it. Pakistan's strategic culture's incorporation of economic factors shows that it is adaptable and recognises the complexity of today's security issues rather than undermining the continued importance of conventional security concerns (Biberman, Schwartz, and Zahid 2023). It is essential to note that persistent evolutionary change reflects a complex strategic culture and aims to integrate strategic interests in an evolving regional and global environment.

6.3 Elucidation of the Concept of Geo-Economic Strategies and Their Relevance to Contemporary Strategic Thinking

The contemporary strategic approach is based on geo-economics, which connects geopolitics and economic power dynamics to affect global strategic interactions. In the age of globalisation and economic interdependence, countries use monetary tools to accomplish strategic goals, strengthening their position and protecting their interests (Blackwill and Harris 2016).

The term "geo-economic strategies" defines economic instruments, such as trade regulations, financing flows, resource distribution, and financial sanctions, to further geo-political goals. According to the author (Luttwak 1990), economic initiatives can significantly impact national security and international relations. Moreover, in the age of strategic environment, states use geo-economic strategies to negotiate the complications of the worldwide order. Hence, economic power is becoming equated with geo-political influence (Ciuriak 2019). Now, let us deconstruct the relevance of geo-economic strategies to contemporary strategic thinking: Globalisation has brought both pros and cons with it. On the one hand, it has interconnected the world economies; on the other hand, great powers' hegemony has started declining. States can use the economy as a soft power to strengthen their strategic position. They can advance their domestic agendas internationally (Mattlin and Wigell 2016)

There is no denying that the global balance of power has altered with the rise of developing economies. In addition, international powers are declining relative to each other. Hence, a state can create its influence globally if it is economically strong. States can use their economic resources to reshape the global order using geo-economic methods (Ciuriak 2019). States can use economic instruments to influence each other. For instance, economic measures have become essential to influencing nuclear deterrence and military confrontation. In the 21st century, different regions have been connected through economic corridors. Consider the case

of CPEC, geo-economic strategies have been applied to promote connectivity, enhance regional integration, and establish mutual dependencies that robust stability and prosperity. In the words of Zhao (2020), projects like CPEC change regional dynamics and have significant economic effects. Hence, these domains show the complex nature of geo-economics and its effects on international relations (Wolf 2017).

Another critical component of geo-economy is statecraft. It means using economic instruments for diplomatic purposes (Lenway 1988). Now, states use economic incentives like trade tariffs and sanctions instead of military actions to influence the conduct of other states or non-state actors, which includes investment projects, development financing and economic aid as diplomatic tools. States driven by geo-economic calculations have access to and control important resources like energy supply, minerals, water and even data. Countries ensure the flow of these resources. In this way, adversaries cannot have absolute power over these resources. Hence, resource competition can influence geo-political alliances and confrontations, highlighting the relationship between geo-economics and conventional security issues (Csurgai 2018).

Infrastructure development and connectivity efforts play an important role in geo-economics. They function as tools for reinforcing influence and fostering economic interdependencies. In addition to expediting economics and contribution, projects that improve tangible connectedness—like ports, railroads, highways, and digital networks—also involve economic friendships in a crucial framework. States can increase their geo-economic status and clever reach by constructing foundation connections that allow the ruling class to approach new markets, extend their influence, and integrate into essential supply chains. (Van Zon and Mupela 2016). When states work together to establish common economic areas through free trade agreements (FTA), customs unions, and common markets, geo-economic strategies play

a crucial role in forming regional economic integration processes(Wernaart 2021). Although essentially economic, these integration initiatives have significant strategic ramifications since they promote economic interdependence, increase group resilience, and can act as a buffer against hostile tactics or outside pressure. When regional stability, security, and collective bargaining power are sought through economic cooperation, the strategic aspect of regional economic integration is especially apparent.

The growing prominence of geo-economic policies, which combine strategic objectives with economic might, shows a change in the foundations of the international order (Roberts, Moraes, and Ferguson 2019). The state's ability to exploit economic tools for strategic purposes, manage geo-economic complexities, and reduce vulnerabilities brought on by economic interdependencies will be critical factors in determining its global influence and status in this dynamic environment. Hence, statecraft increasingly depends on comprehending and using geo-economic strategies in the twenty-first century. Because strategic and economic factors have become interdependent in the twenty-first century, geo-economic strategies are now essential to modern strategic thinking (Krugman 1998). An increasingly competitive world will require states to secure their place in the international hierarchy and advance their national interests as they navigate the complex interplay of global economic and geo-political forces. To do this, they must be able to develop and implement effective geo-economic strategies.

6.4 CPEC as a Catalyst for Strategic Cultural Transformation

CPEC is one of the main projects of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). According to policy research institutes and think tanks, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a game changer that will change Pakistan's strategic culture (Khan and Liu 2019). CPEC is a Chinese gift to Pakistan that will boost the latter's fragile economy. CPEC has caused a paradigm shift and moved Pakistan from a security-centric approach toward geo-economic imperatives.

Regarding the development of ports, highways, railways, and energy plants, the infrastructure projects undertaken by CPEC are unparalleled in Pakistan. About adjacent regions, especially Central and South Asia and the Middle East, these projects are intended to improve Pakistan's connectivity both within the country and with them. The building of Gwadar Port is an example of a strategic project that positions Pakistan as a major entry point for trade and energy lines and expands its influence into the Arabian Sea and beyond (Rehman, Ashfaq, and Naeem 2022).

Additionally, the CPEC's transportation networks and energy pipelines are intended to build economic corridors that support trade, energy distribution, and interpersonal interactions, promoting regional cooperation and integration. Although primarily economic, these corridors have a strategic value because they increase Pakistan's influence and interdependencies with its neighbours, changing the nature of its regional alliances and engagements. CPEC is Pakistan's financial lifeblood as it promises to expand savings. Chinese assets under the CPEC have been important in filling out vital gaps in Pakistan's strengths and foundation areas, which have long restricted the country's financial potential. CPEC is anticipated to spur industrialised development. It will remodel farming and agriculture and expand the service sector. Pakistan can provide jobs by promoting socio-economic advancement (Ahmad 2020).

Another component of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the concoction of Special Economic Zones (SEZs). These Special Economic Zones (SEZs) aim to advance resilience and financial variety by applying local approximate advantages and merging bureaucracy into worldwide advantage chains. Through this economic reorganisation, Pakistan's elasticity to external shocks is expected to be strengthened, as well as its economic sovereignty and strategic autonomy (Zeng 2021). With a drastic change from security-centric to geo-economic hub, CPEC is strategically reinventing Pakistan's identity and role at the

international level. Beijing's vision under BRI is aligned with Islamabad. Though there are other stakeholders, including the Central Asian States, Russia, and even Afghanistan, Pakistan is exceptional due to its strategic position. Pakistan is leveraging the CPEC to strengthen its ties with Beijing. Pakistan is determined to increase its regional geo-political presence (Wolf 2017). Thus, CPEC has shaped Pakistan's strategic culture. It has emphasised the importance of economic development, which is vital for national security. Further, Pakistan's foreign policy is also changing. This change is due to the growing focus on economic diplomacy, cultural transition, security cooperative measures, and regional connectivity. Through these measures, Pakistan is utilising the CPEC to harmonise its security aims with development ambitions.

6.5 Discussion on how CPEC Serves as a Bridge Between Pakistan's Geo-strategic Priorities and Its Geo-Economic Aspirations

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a large investment and infrastructure project designed to fulfil Pakistan's geo-strategic aims and geo-economic aspirations. Not only does this exist, but it is also linked to geo-strategic and geo-economic aspects. If history is a guide, Pakistan's geo-strategic interests have been dominated by fear over national sovereignty, territorial integrity and regional stability. Pakistan has faced two arch-rivals, India and Afghanistan, on two fronts. However, the CPEC has brought about a paradigm shift in which economic expansion and connectivity are essential elements of strategic stability and national security (Hussain 2017). Pakistan, through CPEC, has a chance to improve its economic growth and national security. Pakistan may leverage its strategic location as a hub connecting South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East by utilising this approach, which connects its short-term economic demands with its long-term goals. Pakistan's strategic landscape has changed due to the CPEC's energy and transportation infrastructure expansion, with ports, railroads,

pipelines, and highways becoming important economic and strategic conduits. These resources support trade and investment and give Pakistan more strategic depth because they may be used for supply chain and logistical resilience during times of crisis or conflict (Khan et al., 2023).

Along with improving Pakistan's regional integration and connectivity, the economic corridors built as part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) facilitate trade, energy, and cross-cultural interactions. Pakistan's increased connectedness elevates its geo-strategic status by placing it at the centre of regional economic processes and providing a platform for mediating and influencing more significant regional political and economic dynamics. Significant geo-political ramifications flow from the energy projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which seek to address Pakistan's chronic energy shortages. A vital component of Pakistan's strategic autonomy is its improved energy security, which the country achieves by diversifying its energy sources and decreasing reliance on outside suppliers. Pakistan's strategic imperatives are closely linked to energy security, as a stable energy supply is essential for maintaining economic stability, military preparedness, and overall national resilience, aiming to spur economic growth through foreign investment, knowledge transfer, and industrial development. The Special Economic Zones (SEZs) under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) are expected to play a pivotal role. Strategic implications accompany these SEZs, even though their primary goals are economic which promotes societal stability and lessens the country's susceptibility to outside effects. Moreover, as the SEZs draw investments from various nations and house MNCs, they can serve as hubs for global collaboration, providing chances for diplomatic engagement and the projecting of soft power. These economic engagements can advance Pakistan's geo-strategic objectives through strategic alliances and cooperation. CPEC connects Pakistan's economic and geo-strategic imperatives (Javed and Ismail 2021).

In addition to improving Pakistan's, the CPEC has given it more significant geo-political clout. It has given Islamabad more clout and respect in international forums, which is possible only because it is at the crossroads of an important international traffic and energy corridor. Pakistan has increased its diplomatic status, allowing it to protect its interests better. The merger of Pakistan's geo-strategic and geo-economic aims under the CPEC has a few repercussions. On the one hand, when regional economic interdependence increases, a more stable and cooperative environment becomes a reality, not a dream. Moreover, the likelihood of conflicts is also reduced. Furthermore, CPEC's role in supporting economic development can help address fundamental socio-economic grievances in the region that feed instability and disturbance (Hussain 2020).

The strategic cultural shift has considerably been influenced by the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Pakistan can take back more offshore contributions and cooperation through crucial communication by redefining its security-centric state as an increasing financial hub. By highlighting the CPEC's benefits for Pakistan in addition to regional harmony and development, persuasive perception management can help calm worries and doubts (Hussain Sajid, Khan Faisal, and Muhammad Ayaz 2021). In the long run, Pakistan can protect its strategic autonomy with the successful execution of the CPEC. Indeed, the CPEC has more potential to make Pakistan more independent in its foreign policy decisions and allow it to diversify its economic ties. With the CPEC's economic expansion, Pakistan can enhance its autonomy and national security by investing in its military and technological capabilities (Khan 2021). Undoubtedly, Pakistan may face many hydra-headed problems. Both internal and external forces have been involved in disrupting the CPEC. However, to ultimately realise CPEC's potential, balancing financial benefits and Pakistan's sovereign interests is necessary. Additionally, equitable allocation of economic gains and resolving material and social issues are crucial. Furthermore, new diplomatic skills and strategic foresight are needed to deal with

extrinsic pressures and geo-political rivalries, particularly about India as a neighbour and the worldwide community's position on CPEC.

CPEC has become an important force as it has linked Pakistan's geo-strategic aims and geo-economic aspirations. It has enabled Pakistan to formulate a comprehensive strategy for national security. Additionally, it ensures the country's economic might, infrastructure resilience, energy security, and regional connectivity. Through the persuasive exercise of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Pakistan may improve its strategic wisdom, advance interregional mergers, and base itself as an important player in the dynamic geo-political landscape of Asia. Finally, CPEC links geo-strategic goals and geo-economic ambitions. Pakistan could constitute a new strategic culture that balances its security and economic concerns. This culture moves the country toward a prosperous and secure future by cautiously directing the troubles and grabbing the opportunities provided by CPEC.

6.6 Analysis of Policy Documents, Speeches, and Strategic Communiqués to Illustrate the Government's Recognition of CPEC's Role in Strategic Culture Transformation

Pakistan's strategic discourse has joined the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a central idea in the country's economic policy. The government acknowledges CPEC's role in moulding Pakistan's strategic direction in policy documents, declarations by main leaders, and strategic communiqués. Pakistan has made the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) a key component of its long-term development objectives and policies to achieve sustained growth and economic prosperity, as stated in the Vision 2025 statement. The Ministry of Planning, Development & Reform (2014) outlines the implications of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) for Pakistan's strategic depth and resilience. It highlights the importance of CPEC in boosting connectivity, infrastructure, energy sufficiency, and industrialisation. CPEC's long-term plan, which runs from 2017 to 2030, is an all-inclusive

strategy co-developed by China and Pakistan and outlines the goals, vital areas of collaboration, and methods for carrying out CPEC. In addition to strengthening Pakistan's strategic position, it acknowledges the corridor's importance in encouraging regional integration, peace, and stability (Khan and Liu 2019).

Speeches and Public Statements

The Prime Minister and President of the country regularly mention CPEC in their speeches as a major economic game-changer and pillar of their country's strategic policy. For example, the Prime Minister has emphasised in several speeches the contribution of the CPEC to Pakistan's economic growth as well as to the country's increased prominence and power in the region; this is indicative of a strategic approach that unites economic growth with national security (“Prime Minister Imran Khan Meets President Xi Jinping | China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Secretariat Official Website” 2019)

The top military leadership has also appreciated and acknowledged the importance of CPEC. Military leaders have publicly announced its importance for national security and economic stability. Such endorsements from the military mean a more extensive accord on CPEC's part in forming a more comprehensive and nuanced crucial sophistication in Pakistan.

Strategic Communiqués and Diplomatic Engagements

China and Pakistan are all-weather friends. This friendship has further strengthened through CPEC. Their strategic alliance is centred on CPEC, which has become the driving force behind economic cooperation and strategic trust. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2018), the role of CPEC is important in promoting security and connectivity in the region. This view is consistent with Pakistan's strategic change towards geo-economic imperatives (“CPEC to Turn Pak-China Ties into Long Term Strategic Economic Partnership: Ahsan | China-Pakistan

Economic Corridor (CPEC) Secretariat Official Website” 2018). The CPEC is becoming increasingly important for Pakistan's representation in international forums. Pakistan champions the new strategic paradigm, which stresses collaborative security and economic interdependence. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has enhanced a meaningful part of Pakistan's strategic narrative worldwide (Hussain 2020).

Strategic Reports and Defense Analyses

Pakistan's policy research institutes and think tanks have thoroughly examined the strategic importance in several publications. Economic corridors like CPEC are considered strategic assets for the sages of the ages. These assets can provide security benefits beyond conventional military means. Moreover, scholars and defence institutes have checked the safety facets of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and highlighted the project's enhancement of Pakistan's strategic depth. The infrastructure and security that CPEC offers have strengthened Pakistan's resilience to external pressures and economic coercion.

Educational Institutions and Academic Discourse

The higher-level educational institutes in Pakistan have conducted research-based studies to determine the implications of the CPEC for the country's strategic culture. They discovered that the CPEC has played a crucial part in shifting Pakistan from a security-centric to an economic-centric country. Their studies have emphasised the significance of regional interconnectedness, infrastructural development and economic strength as cornerstones of strategic thinking (Nisar, Ali, and Asif 2021). CPEC's strategic implications have become a frequent subject of discussion at interstate and worldwide conventions in Pakistan. Scholars, policymakers, and planning specialists debate how CPEC can change Pakistan's strategic

preferences and alignments. These forums provide food for thought and unanimity concerning the significance of CPEC in Pakistan's strategic culture development.

Public Perception and Media Discourse

Media is a tool that shapes opinion and perception on a large scale. Pakistani media is no exception when it comes to spreading the national narrative regarding CPEC. Pakistani media highlights the CPEC's economic and strategic advantages. Further, it helps shape public opinion of the project's significance for security and development purposes. Television narrators repeatedly highlight the project's potential to make Pakistan a territorial economic powerhouse and link these progresses to raised national influence and strategic independence (Hussain 2020). In addition to the electronic media, print media also addresses the strategic importance of the CPEC. Leading Pakistani newspapers' opinion and editorials, project Pakistan's long-term national interests. These articles frequently contend that Pakistan's ability to negotiate the changing geo-strategic environment largely depends on CPEC (Idrees, Nawaz, and Madni 2023).

CPEC is crucial in Pakistan's strategic cultural reform. It is evident in the government and strategic institutions, as evidenced by the policy documentation, speeches, and strategic communiqués. Pakistan has introduced a new strategic culture and integrated the CPEC into its strategic policy measures. The new strategic culture prioritises economic prosperity. Furthermore, this strategic recalibration navigates hurdles of the modern international environment. Many academic studies have been conducted, and strategic assessments, policy documents, and media coverage have demonstrated the impact of the CPEC on strategic culture. Finally, Pakistan is redefining its national priorities and positioning itself to play a constructive role in regional and global arenas.

6.7 Key Developments and Components of CPEC Influencing Pakistan's Strategic Culture

Undoubtedly, the CPEC is influencing Pakistan's Strategic Culture. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a complex endeavour that will significantly affect Pakistan's strategic culture. However, this portion investigates the key projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and examines their strategic implications, explaining how they influence Pakistan's overall strategic stance.

Gwadar Port is indeed the CPEC's crown gem. With the expansion of the port, Pakistan will have a strategic benefit in maritime affairs and trade logistics as the port stands at the crossroads of Central Asia, the Middle East, and South Asia. The port is located at the mouth of the Arabian Sea. Pakistan has raised its approach to maritime routes and enhanced its significance in the worldwide shipping and trade network, changing the region's capacity balance and bestowing Pakistan significant geo-political influence (Makarevich 2021).

The CPEC's transportation initiatives aim to increase connectivity inside Pakistan and with its neighbours. These projects include pipelines, railroads, and roadways. The improvements to the Karakoram Highway, the Lahore-Karachi Motorway, and the Main Line-1 railway project improve Pakistan's internal connectivity while strengthening its ties to China and Central Asia. This increased connection has significant strategic military importance since it makes trade and economic integration more accessible and allows for faster and more effective troop and resource mobilisation (Alam, Hussain, and Bogheiry 2023).

Pakistan's pressing energy demands are met by CPEC's energy projects, which seek to end the energy crisis that has long impeded the nation's ability to grow economically and strategically. Through constructing wind, solar, hydro, and coal projects, CPEC broadens Pakistan's energy

sources and bolsters energy security, which is essential to national security. Under the CPEC, Pakistan will be able to supply energy that is both sustainable and reliable, which will help the country become more industrialised, more resilient economically, and more prepared militarily - all critical components of a well-rounded strategic approach (Javed and Ismail 2021). CPEC's SEZ aims to spur industrial expansion, attract foreign investment, and accelerate economic development. These zones are designed to expand throughout Pakistan to attain advantages and promote coordinated financial progress. The Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in Pakistan influence the country's economic condition by advancing industrialisation. This is important because it strengthens Pakistan's strategic autonomy and lessens the fear of foreign financial pressures (Jahangir, Haroon, and Mirza 2020).

Fibre optic installation has improved Pakistan's information and communication technology infrastructure. Hence, CPEC also emphasises technological cooperation and digital connectedness. To strengthen the country's digital economy, informational and cyber capabilities are becoming crucial for Pakistan's strategic environment. CPEC again places a forceful importance on mechanics service and digital relatedness. According to Hussain and Zahid (2017), Pakistan's strategic culture is reinforced by enhanced digital infrastructure, which facilitates command and control, intelligence sharing and cyber defensive capabilities. In general, CPEC is fostering regional collaboration and integration. It has the potential to change regional alliances. It has the potential to ease past tensions. It has the clout to increase trust between neighbouring countries by promoting trade and social cohesion. According to Wolf (2019), Pakistan's strategic interests may be served by economic-driven regionalism by fostering regional stability and cooperation.

The progress of the CPEC has influenced strategic culture. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is moving the country toward a more sophisticated and integrated strategy.

With the progress of these projects, Pakistan's strategic culture will be further formed, following the reality of a multipolar and interconnected global order.

6.8 Case Studies on Specific CPEC Projects and Their Direct and Indirect Impacts on Pakistan's Strategic Policies and Posture

Various projects under CPEC directly or indirectly impact Pakistan's strategic policies and postures. In the following part of thesis, case studies will be discussed. We will determine how these projects directly and indirectly influence Pakistan's strategic culture.

Gwadar Port Development

The first case study under consideration is about the construction and development of Gwadar port. Gwadar Port is no doubt the focus point of the CPEC. Gwadar Port, situated on the southwest coast of Pakistan's Balochistan, is strategically crucial for Pakistan, which means that the port's development increases the country's strategic importance (Hussain 2020). The infrastructure development of Gwadar Port gives Pakistan alternative traffic to Karachi and essential maritime access in times of maritime blockades Gwadar could be used for both military and civilian reasons, providing the Pakistan Navy with greater reach and strategic depth over vital sea lanes of communication (Rehman, Ashfaq, and Naeem 2022). The port obliquely fortifies Pakistan's economic base by promoting regional and national economic expansion, essential to strengthening long-term strategic investments. Gwadar, a significant node on the Belt and Road Initiative, strengthens Pakistan's regional trade and connectivity position, giving it more clout in regional security and diplomatic negotiations.

Karachi-Lahore Motorway (M-9)

As part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the Karachi-Lahore Motorway is a major infrastructure project intended to boost internal connectivity and promote the effective movement of people and products. The highway improves Pakistan's internal strategic mobility by facilitating faster military movements and logistical assistance, which is crucial for national defence and disaster response scenarios (Javed and Ismail 2021). It advances economic resilience and variety, which are essential for national strength, is possible due to the flexible economic integration between Pakistan's many regions.

Social cohesion is a necessary and major component of Pakistan's strategic perspective. However, it depends on internal peace and stability; the more social cohesion, the more stability. Trade is a source of connectivity and integration. It has the clout to bind nations and states. As far as Pakistan is concerned, the road network is paramount for trading activities. The motorway is a lively channel for trade. It is helping Pakistan's role in regional trade networks (Hussain 2020).

Energy Projects Under CPEC

Different energy plants under CPEC have been installed in Pakistan. Some of them have become operational, while others are under construction. These plants include coal, hydro, solar, and wind energy. All these projects aim to alleviate Pakistan's severe energy crisis. So far, Pakistan has relied on foreign energy imports. However, energy shortages could not be reduced. Therefore, under CPEC, energy projects directly impact Pakistan's economic uplift. Due to CPEC, the risk of energy shortages can be easily reduced to zero. Pakistan needs a sufficient energy supply to achieve strategic autonomy, as its economic and defence capabilities are dependent on an excessive energy supply.

Pakistan's strategic posture depends on investment in the military and energy. A large amount is crucial for the military to strengthen its strategic culture (Sultan 2021). There is a dire need for investment in energy technologies that will foster innovation and technical growth, enhancing Pakistan's strategic possibilities. These case studies have demonstrated how CPEC has influenced Pakistan's strategic culture directly and indirectly. On the one hand, the direct benefits have improved Pakistan's energy security and regional influences. On the other hand, indirect consequences also facilitate social cohesion, economic resilience, and technological advancement. However, there is still a need to strengthen Pakistan's strategic posture by assessing these projects. (Javed and Ismail 2021)

6.9 Examination of the Economic Corridors, Energy Cooperation, and Infrastructural Development as Elements Redefining Pakistan's Strategic Priorities

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has transformed Pakistan's ambitions through infrastructure development, energy cooperation, and the building of economic corridors. The following parts deconstruct how these factors change Pakistan's strategic environment. Many economic corridors constructed under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) are live pathways that advance Pakistan's ties to regional and worldwide markets. These corridors have fostered Pakistan's economic outreach and strategic depth.

Pakistan's access to Central Asia and the Middle East markets is not a distant dream now. Pakistan has become an important economic regional hub for trans-regional commerce and energy transit (Hussain 2020). Considering global economic perception, CPEC admits Pakistan can transform its trade partnerships by constructing several trade routes and minimising dependency on any single state. Energy projects under the CPEC have undoubtedly been important in lessening the country's continuous power shortages. To maintain industrial progress and economic stability, Pakistan's energy security has been upgraded considerably

under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) by accumulating bitumen, hydro, wind, and solar projects for the country's energy mix. Industry is the backbone of any country and can flourish with a massive supply of energy, which ensures better economic opportunities. However, Pakistan's aim to revive industrialisation, essential for economic expansion, job creation, and mechanical progress, all of which help Pakistan's strategic proficiencies, relies on a fixed-strength supply.

The transportation infrastructure projects of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)—roads, railroads, ports, and airports—profoundly impact Pakistan's strategic priorities by improving its access, mobility, and logistical capacities. Pakistan's strategic mobility is bolstered by improved infrastructure, facilitating more effective military deployments and logistics—essential for national defence and disaster response situations. Infrastructure such as Gwadar Port creates new opportunities for international maritime involvement, enhancing Pakistan's strategic standing by allowing it to project its influence in international trade and marine security (Rehman, Ashfaq, and Naeem 2022).

The CPEC's construction of economic corridors, energy cooperation, and infrastructure development have reshaped Pakistan's strategic preferences. CPEC has positioned Pakistan better to take advantage of its geo-strategic location, prompting economic growth, regional integration, and strategic stability by improving connectivity, guaranteeing energy security, and building infrastructure (Javed and Ismail 2021). As mentioned earlier, the progress highlights a meaningful change in Pakistan's strategic culture that has shifted from stressing conventional security issues to a more comprehensive plan incorporating economic growth and regional collaboration as fundamental components of its framework. Consciously, its strategic aims and advancing harmony and affluence in the region will depend on the success of CPEC in Pakistan.

6.10 Impact Assessment of CPEC on Pakistan's Strategic Culture

A critical study has been conducted to demonstrate that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has impacted Pakistan's strategic culture. There have been talks about how national security strategy should consider the economy. An evaluation of the changed ideas and behaviours inside Pakistan's defence and strategic establishments following the start of the CPEC examined how Pakistan has aligned itself with regional economic trends owing to the CPEC consideration of how Pakistan's crucial partnerships with neighbours, regional geopolitics and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) communicate—an exploration of how CPEC might change the region's balance of power and economic interdependence.

Determine the obstacles Pakistan faces in aligning its strategic culture with the new geo-economic necessities brought by the CPEC and examine how Pakistan may use CPEC to help itself in the geo-economics of the region and its ability to use the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) strategically to correct Pakistan's economic and national security (Ibrar et al. 2019). This portion summarises the chapter's main conclusions and defines the method by which Pakistan's strategic culture has changed with the CPEC and a discourse on how Pakistan's foreign affairs, internal harmony, and regional standing can be affected by this strategic cultural change. Strategies to help defence establishments, policymakers, and planners take advantage of and adopt the changeable strategic civilisation.

Major Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

Major Findings

Economic Initiatives a New Dimension of National Security. This thesis has provided snapshots and has explored a new dimension in National Security where the CPEC, as a major economic initiative, is transforming Pakistan's strategic culture from predominately geopolitical to geo-economics. Understanding how nations perceive and react within their security-centered environment is needed. As far as strategic culture is concerned, it is a broad concept that includes the study of historical experiences, cultural traditions, values, and strategic practices (Astrada 2019). However, a nation's foreign policy is constructed based on all these factors, and security-related decisions are made. At the same time, geo-economics is the study that sheds light on the employment of resources, economic tools, and other capabilities to acquire geo-political aims (Csurgai 2018). It brings a shift in the policies of a nation from conventional military-based strategies towards sophisticated economic statecraft.

Theoretical Frameworks to Analyse the Change in Strategic Culture. However, the theoretical frameworks of Neo-realism, geoeconomics, and strategic culture comprehensively analyse how nations pursue cultural legacies and economic prowess to understand the global political system and its intricacies. These frameworks have different insights and explore the effects of strategic culture on national security strategies. Further, these different schools of thought have highlighted the importance of historical experiences and theoretical diversity in the international arena.

Pakistan's Strategic Culture's Continuity and Change. Pakistan's Strategic Culture was developed after its independence for different reasons. Pakistan is significant in international and regional politics, and its geography and geo-political positioning compelled it to remain

relevant to the world powers. Also, the strategic culture was influenced largely by the historical enmity with India and the colonial rule left behind by the British Empire in this part of the world. Within this evolutionary process, its strategic culture has predominantly evolved (Briskey 2022). As a permanent factor, religion laid the foundation of Pakistan's strategic culture. Pakistan has faced multiple challenges since its independence as a security state and kept adjusting to world politics. Pakistan always strikes a balance between the world powers, but sometimes Pakistan joined the US block against USSR expansion and the war on terrorism.

Shift from Geopolitics to Geoeconomics. With China's rise and launch of BRI's flagship project, CPEC changed the mindset of the elite to focus more on the economy. There is a noticeable shift from a mostly security-centric to one that increasingly prefers considering economic factors. However, internal and external security-focused environments have influenced this drastic change. Finally, Islamabad has adjusted its strategic orientation toward economic integration strategies and conventional military tactics. International political analysts call it a win-win game for both countries. CPEC strengthens the geo-political and economic alliance between China and Pakistan. It can boost Pakistan's economic growth and improve its regional status. Therefore, the CPEC focuses on infrastructure projects, communication networks, energy projects and industrial collaboration. Though there are some irritants to the completion of the CPEC, it has wide ramifications for regional economic dynamics and geo-political alignments.

It has been discussed earlier that Pakistan's strategic culture has evolved with the changing geo-political environment at the international level. By incorporating geo-economic factors into the conventional doctrine of security-centric strategy, there is no denying that the CPEC has impacted Pakistan's strategic culture (Javed and Ismail 2021). With this change, the essential elements of Pakistan's national security have become rich and wide. Pakistan is much more

focused on trade, investment, economic development, regional alliances, etc. Moreover, because of the CPEC, Pakistan has started reevaluating its global and regional strategic ties in the complex rules-based international order. Under such circumstances, Pakistan is foreseeing incorporating a combination of geo-strategic and geo-economic imperatives. This engagement highlights the growing interplay between economic prowess and strategic sway (Durrani, Bilal, and Kalim 2017).

CPEC: A Catalyst to Change the Power Dynamics in South Asia and Beyond. There has always been convergence and divergence in Pakistan's geopolitical alignments. Due to CPEC, the uncertain period of geo-political alignment is about to end. Pakistan's external and internal ties have been profoundly affected by the CPEC, especially when Islamabad is engaging with regional players and major global powers (Khan and Liu 2019). The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a pivot of China's modern economic policy to pursue its economic objectives. It can alter the power dynamics in South Asia and beyond. The CPEC has the potential to shift Pakistan's relations with the USA, India, and Afghanistan using strengthened economic interests and geo-political connections with Beijing. To put it in a convincing manner, Pakistan has become an important strategic actor in regional politics and has the clout to make economically motivated and strategically balanced foreign policy.

Economic Security at the core of Comprehensive National Security of Pakistan. The National Security Policy 2022-2026 is Pakistan's first national security policy document. The policy explicitly narrates the emerging global trends and identifies policy objectives and areas of priority areas to invest national resources for better outcomes. The policy places economic security at the core of comprehensive national security, emphasising a geo-economic vision to supplement the focus on geo-strategy and recognising that sustainable and inclusive economic growth is needed to expand our national resource pie. Appreciating this symbiotic relationship

between economic, traditional, and human security allows the articulation of holistic policy actions that will prepare Pakistan to optimise national security outcomes in the coming decades. As per the National Security Policy, Pakistan will continue to strengthen this relationship across all areas of mutual engagement. As a project of national importance, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) enjoys national consensus. It redefines regional connectivity and provides impetus to Pakistan's economy with the potential to jump-start domestic growth, alleviate poverty, and improve regional connectivity. Pakistan welcomes Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in CPEC-related and other Special Economic Zones from interested countries (National Security Division 2022).

CPEC - Element of the Relationship between Economic Development and National Security. In the words of the sages of the ages, economic development and national security depend on each other. When a country provides security to its people, economic development becomes that country's fate (Kukhar 2022). In Pakistan's case, CPEC has become a profound element of the relationship between economic development and national security. It shows that economic resilience is an essential component of national power.

Moreover, the CPEC focuses on economic growth, prosperity, and the country's infrastructure development. It will boost Pakistan's economic stability, strengthening national security by reducing vulnerabilities. In the long run, the relationship between economy and security sheds light on the idea of national security changing in the modern international arena, where economic might is perceived as equivalent to military might (Skulska and Domiter 2021).

Implications for Pakistan's Strategic Culture. The irrefutable fact is that the CPEC marks a significant change in Pakistan's strategic culture. Primarily, the strategic culture of Pakistan was military-centric, but now, due to CPEC, Pakistan views development and economic growth

as enriched strategic goals. In contemporary international relations, development and economic interdependence are much embraced and valued as primary components of security (Mansfield and Pollins 2003). Nonetheless, Pakistan is integrating the CPEC into a strategic framework. This will undoubtedly lead to a promising future where strategic culture may be modified to accommodate conventional security concerns and economic aspirations.

Future Trajectories of Pakistan's Strategic Culture. The CPEC will have long-term effects on Pakistan's strategic culture because the CPEC has integrated with the country's economy and strategic aspirations. Pakistan may create a multi-dimensional strategic culture through CPEC. The CPEC creates a balance between security concerns and modern economic needs. Not only this but Pakistan's approach towards regional and global concerns is anticipated to be influenced by the shift in the strategic culture. CPEC, a vision and the ambition of China's "constructive engagement" policy, will alter the region's fate, and Pakistan will be the most beneficiary of the Project. Economic development due to the CPEC will bring political stability, and the project will upgrade the life standard of the local Pakistanis and bring stability, security, and development. CPEC will convert Pakistan's location into an asset (Hussain, Khan and Ayaz 2021).

Broader Implications for Strategic Studies. In addition to the future trajectories of Pakistan's strategic culture, strategic studies can strengthen itself further from the shift in the strategic culture brought through CPEC (Nisar, Ali, and Asif 2021). It has broadened the sphere of strategic studies. Interestingly, it is necessary to consider the growing importance of geo-economics and related issues. Furthermore, we can see that many other nations are also going through similar changes, highlighting the necessity for strategic cultures to change in a time when security and economy are entwined. Thus, the study provides information to decision-makers involved in foreign policy decision-making.

Contribution to Geo-economic Discourse. The power dynamics in the 21st century have altered. States now pursue power for security maximisation and global influence, but gaining and maintaining that power depends heavily on economic vitality and strategic inventiveness (Zielinski, Schilde, and Ripsman 2021). Hence, economic corridors have the potential to change geo-political environments, as demonstrated by the case of the CPEC and Pakistan.

Synthesis of Strategic Culture and Geoeconomics. This was expertly managed by taking snapshots of how economic efforts and strategic imperatives interact. This interaction is done by combining ideas from strategic culture and geo-economics. The facts often differ from the perception. However, the undergoing research provided some empirical proof regarding geo-economic factors ingrained in strategic culture by studying and evaluating Pakistan's experience with the CPEC. Finally, this enlightened work can be useful for academics and professionals in strategic studies and international relations.

Long-term Consequences of CPEC on Pakistan's Strategic Culture. Whatever one thinks of the CPEC, whatever its real intent, despite recent setbacks, it is imperative to acknowledge the long-term consequences of the CPEC on Pakistan's strategic culture. It has moved Pakistan from a traditional security viewpoint to a more balanced geo-economic one. This change compels us to reassess the conventional security paradigm and incorporate economic factors into strategic planning. Pakistan's geo-political stance may also change due to the CPEC (Ali, Noonari, and Mahesar 2021). It will make the country more stable, prosperous and rich. Pakistan's regional influence will be enhanced by witnessing economic stability. Hence, economic stability may push Pakistan to seek friendship with regional and world powers.

Policy Implications for Pakistan's National Security and Foreign Relations

National Security. Pakistan has been facing many vulnerabilities since its creation. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure that the CPEC does not create another source of vulnerability as it

changes Pakistan's economic environment (Surahio et al. 2022). To maintain strategic autonomy, Pakistan must reduce its reliance on any one nation or organisation while broadening economic alliances to strike an economic balance.

Foreign Relations. CPEC has placed Pakistan at the central stage in China's BRI initiative. This positioning may change Pakistan's relations with other major powers and neighbours. However, Pakistan must carefully examine the emerging dynamics and foster positive regional cooperation. Moreover, until becoming an economically stable state, Pakistan should use all diplomatic means to minimise any possibility of conflict with India, Afghanistan, and Iran, as well as other regional and extra-regional powers.

Regional Integration. South Asia is the only region without strong integration among states. Thus, it is necessary to make the region peaceful and economically integrated like other regions, such as the EU. Interestingly, the CPEC again gives Islamabad the privilege of playing its role on the front line. Pakistan must make efforts to activate regional organisations like SAARC to strengthen the South Asian Regions and increase economic interdependence, which will help minimise possible conflicts.

Concluding Observations

The thesis concludes that CPEC has transformed Pakistan's strategic culture. It has caused a paradigm shift incorporating geo-economic factors into its strategic framework. The change in Pakistan's strategic culture illustrates how pliable and dynamic strategic thinking can be to shifting geo-political and economic environments. Ultimately, the study further stresses the importance of understanding strategic culture and economic initiatives and their relationship. Additionally, in a complex international system, they both influence a country's foreign policy on security. Policymakers and strategists who want to negotiate the intricacies of contemporary geopolitics and the global economy must have this insight.

Key Recommendations

To optimise the strategic advantages offered by the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), following expanded recommendations provide a detailed roadmap:

Incorporation of Geo-economics into the Planning Framework. There is a need to create specific divisions within policy and strategic institutions that incorporate geo-economics into the planning framework for foreign policymaking and national security paradigms. Secondly, these divisions ought to collaborate with a professional with expertise in economics. They then go out to predict different patterns, recognise prospects, and design approaches harmonising with national security. We must create a well-coordinated policy framework aligning security measures with economic development aims. We need to realise that, for strategic reasons, efforts like the CPEC are exploited. Inter-agency collaboration is a must to improve Pakistan's security and status at the global level. To clear Pakistan's strategic interests under the CPEC, a multifaceted communication plan must be developed for domestic and foreign purposes.

Economic Ties with Other States while using CPEC as Launchpad. Pakistan should make new economic ties worldwide in the era of globalisation and interdependence. In this way, Pakistan's dependence on any single actor will diminish. By doing this, Pakistan's economic resilience and strategic flexibility will further increase as it fortifies its relationship with China through the CPEC. In addition, Pakistan should use CPEC as a launch pad for regional integration. It must establish relations with surrounding states through different projects, including energy, infrastructure, and people diplomacy. Hence, economic stability and interdependence will increase. As it strengthens its connections with China through the CPEC, Pakistan should utilise CPEC as a springboard for additional regional integration. It may encourage stability and economic interdependence by establishing ties with neighbouring nations through infrastructure, people-to-people exchanges, and energy projects.

Cooperation between the Public and Private Sector. Another important aspect is establishing a strong cooperation network between public and private stakeholders to guarantee that CPEC projects are carried out cohesively. Simplifying collaboration across governmental levels and between the public and private sectors will ensure that CPEC projects are implemented cohesively, maximising effectiveness and efficiency while adhering to strategic national objectives. There is a need to invest in research-based programs to promote technical innovation, especially in the CPEC-centered industries.

Continuous Assessment and Adaptation. Pakistan's CPEC strategy must be revised, considering regional and global developments. Thus, continuous assessment should be conducted to determine what changes are taking place and how they can benefit Pakistan worldwide. The fruits of CPEC will be realised in the future, hence the need for sustained backing beyond political regimes. Strategic endurance is imperative if CPEC is to unlock its full potential for transforming Pakistan's strategic culture and economic landscape.

Addressing Security Threats to CPEC. It cannot be ignored that security threats exist against CPEC infrastructure both from internal and external quarters; hence, reliable risk mitigation measures are needed. These involve but are not limited to emergency response plans, cyber defence strategies, and physical security precautions.

Informed Decision Making. Furthermore, an inclusive dialogue with all stakeholders on various perspectives regarding CPEC should occur so that all citizens can participate in shaping their destiny through development projects that affect them directly or indirectly. This will create ownership among people at grassroots levels and equip decision-makers with the necessary information to develop better ways of handling challenges related to implementation. Additionally, good governance must be observed during the management of any CPEC project

if positive outcomes are to be maximised while at the same time winning over public trust. Such practices should emphasise accountability, efficiency, transparency, and ethical standards.

Leveraging Global Platforms and Strategic Alliances to Promote CPEC and Enhance Economic Growth and Security. International conferences, forums, and the media can be used to explain the strategic aspects and success stories of CPEC in a globalised world. This will help position Pakistan well globally and attract foreign investment and cooperation. In terms of security and economy, form strategic alliances with countries along the route that can support or benefit from it – this will enhance both economic growth and collective security.

Ensuring Social Responsibility, Environmental Stewardship, and Inclusive Benefits in CPEC Projects. Pakistan should ensure that social responsibility and environmental stewardship are integrated into the development and implementation of CPEC projects. This is to avoid situations where financial gains are achieved at the expense of social progress or ecological balance. Furthermore, ensure that every region or group within Pakistan is included in benefiting from CPEC advantages; equal distribution of these benefits will promote national development while at the same time alleviating regional disparities or imbalances.

Crisis Management in the case of CPEC. Strong frameworks for managing such incidents should be set up to anticipate a crisis due to CPEC and ensure that operations continue even during tough periods. CPEC should regularly evaluate its progress and strategic impact; this will help make necessary adjustments where needed, thus improving its effectiveness over time vis-à-vis changing global and national contexts.

Role of Academia to Promote Research on CPEC. Promote scholarly study on the effects of CPEC in international relations and strategic studies, with a special emphasis on how it will affect Pakistan's strategic culture and security as a nation. To create an informed foundation for

upcoming professionals, academic institutions should create specific courses and modules on CPEC, especially in international relations, strategic studies, economics, and regional studies. Create innovation centres where academics, industry professionals, and legislators may collaborate to develop innovative ideas and plans that will use CPEC to the country's strategic benefit. Organise biennial or annual strategic review conferences that bring together specialists from domestic and foreign arenas to evaluate the state of CPEC and its influence on Pakistan's strategic culture, providing a forum for information sharing and policy recommendations. Make comparative analyses to determine how similar economic corridors have impacted strategic cultures in other nations or areas and to identify lessons that can be applied to the Pakistani context.

Establishment of Strategic Units and Think Tanks. There is a need to establish units inside important government ministries. These units will employ scenario planning and strategic foresight techniques to predict future geo-political and economic developments associated with CPEC. By doing so, Pakistan will grow and prosper upward. In addition, establish relationships with international institutions and think tanks to enable a reciprocal exchange of ideas and perspectives. Conduct collaborative research on the geo-economic and geo-strategic importance of the CPEC. New think tanks should be established with input from stakeholders in the public and private sectors. The strategic ramifications of CPEC must be assessed, guaranteeing a range of perspectives and inclusive policy suggestions. Furthermore, a new initiative must be created to raise awareness among military personnel and policymakers. They should incorporate insights from the strategic culture into their planning and decision-making procedures regarding CPEC.

Multidisciplinary Approach to CPEC and Provision of Scholarship. Another important thing is providing scholarships to support multidisciplinary studies of CPEC. For a

comprehensive understanding of the CPEC, different perspectives, including international politics, sociology, and environmental studies, should be brought together. Pakistan's youth should be provided with programs that are CPEC-centric. These people must be equipped with modern education and abilities to contribute to Pakistan's strategic culture within the framework of the CPEC.

Encouraging in-depth Study of Strategic Culture and CPEC. There is a need to study strategic culture in depth. Those who are responsible should hold debates on the subject. They should invite academics, decision-makers, and strategists to discuss how Pakistan is changing due to the CPEC. Stakeholders must provide input on the effects of policies relating to the CPEC. The information obtained then should be used to improve and modify strategic approaches. Moreover, it ensures that security and economic objectives are mutually reinforcing and encourages synergy between civilian and military institutions in executing CPEC projects.

Further, initiatives should increase geo-strategic literacy for the public and governmental understanding of the CPEC. In the age of digitalisation, a digital archive should be established for academic purposes and decision-makers. This repository should collect, preserve, and share research papers, policy papers, and historical material on Pakistan's strategic culture and the CPEC. Pakistan is a country where youth are competent, so their potential must be used by engaging them in contests, innovative challenges, etc. Through their active involvement, they can explore and suggest how Pakistan accrue maximum benefits from the CPEC.

Strategic Alliances Beyond Economics. The time has come to develop strategic alliances with international entities other than economic ones, where CPEC can serve as a point of collaboration. However, Pakistan's strategic interests must be prioritised while making alliances to promote regional stability.

Countering the Propaganda against CPEC. Since CPEC is a project of immense importance for Pakistan, the enemy never leaves any stone unturned to propagate it, referring to it as an East India Company or sometimes calling it a debt trap for Pakistan. There is a need to remain vigilant, and in the era of post-truth, the state of Pakistan should use all possible tools for telling the truth and countering the propaganda against CPEC.

Conclusion

We have thoroughly examined how the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has changed Pakistan's strategic culture. The CPEC has shifted from a security-centric to a more geo-economic framework. The main chunks of the thesis highlight how Pakistan's involvement in the CPEC has considerably impacted the country's strategic orientation. It has indicated how economic factors deeply influence national security and strategic aspirations. CPEC is redefining Pakistan's strategic priorities and recalibrating its foreign policy and national security agenda. However, it is a complex economic and political project. There is a clear indication of strategic transition, while Pakistan has increased its focus on infrastructure development, regional connectivity, and economic development, considering them essential elements. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has not only improved Pakistan's economic outlook but has also given access to a new strategic platform for increased regional integration and cooperation. Economic corridors such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) can affect national strategic interests and aspirations. The study stresses that nations like Pakistan modify their strategic cultures to react to shifting geopolitical and geoeconomic arenas. It enhances our knowledge of the intricate interactions between strategic culture and economic development plans. Further, the research provides different perspectives that work beyond the context of Pakistan.

Nonetheless, the CPEC is dynamic, and it has wide-ranging consequences. Therefore, we need more academic investigation and positive analysis in several ways. Thus, subsequent research may focus more intently on the precise mechanisms by which strategic culture is impacted by economic development, analysing comparative instances in various geo-political settings. Furthermore, longitudinal research has been conducted to evaluate the long-term effects of the CPEC on Pakistan's geopolitical attitude, political dynamics at the state level, and regional interactions, which would yield important insights. An in-depth examination has provided objective knowledge of the geo-political consequences of CPEC. It may also be acquired by looking into the viewpoints of major countries and other regional actors regarding the project's strategic importance. The establishment of the CPEC has drastically shifted Pakistan's strategic environment towards a geo-economic strategic culture. This thesis clarifies the intricacies of this shift, providing a basis for more academic research and policy analysis. Though ramifications extend far beyond the region, the impact of CPEC on Pakistan's strategic culture will surely remain important for vigilant analysis and investigation as it develops.

REFERENCES

- Adobor, Henry. 2021. "Open Strategy: What Is the Impact of National Culture?" *Management Research Review* 44 (9): 1277–97. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-06-2020-0334>.
- Afaqi, Tahir and Dr Muhammad Usman Askari. 2022. "China Pakistan Economic Corridor (Cpec) Regional Integration And Challenges." *Khaldunia - Journal of Social Sciences* 2 (1): 21–35. <https://doi.org/10.36755/khaldunia.v2i1.35>.
- Afridi, Manzoor Khan, and Iram Khalid. 2016. "The Politics of Interdependence: A Case of China- Pakistan Economic Corridor." *South Asian Studies* 31 (2): 659–71.
- Afsaruddin, A. 2011. *Islam, the State, and Political Authority: Medieval Issues and Modern Concerns*. Palgrave Macmillan US.
- Aggarwal, Vinod K., and Andrew W. Reddie. 2021. "Economic Statecraft in the 21st Century: Implications for the Future of the Global Trade Regime." *World Trade Review* 20 (2): 137–51. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S147474562000049X>.
- Ahmad, Mahmood. 2020. "Developing a Competitive Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry under CPEC." In *China's Belt and Road Initiative in a Global Context*, edited by Jawad Syed and Yung-Hsiang Ying, 227–69. Palgrave Macmillan Asian Business Series. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-18959-4_10.
- Ahmad, Riaz, Hong Mi, and Lloyd W. Fernald. 2020. "Revisiting the Potential Security Threats Linked with the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)." *Journal of the International Council for Small Business* 1 (1): 64–80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/26437015.2020.1724735>.
- Ahmad, Sohail, Inayat Kaleem, and Hajra Nasir Satti. 2018. "Special Economic Zones: A Comparison of the Economic Policies of China and Pakistan." *Global Economics Review* III (II): 12–19. [https://doi.org/10.31703/ger.2018\(III-II\).02](https://doi.org/10.31703/ger.2018(III-II).02).
- Ahmed, Salik Uddin, Abdul Hameed Memon, and Amjad Ali Kamboh. 2020. "Regional Renewable Energy Resource Potential in Pakistan." *Sir Syed University Research Journal of Engineering & Technology* 9 (2). <https://doi.org/10.33317/ssurj.153>.
- Ahmed, Zahid Shahab, and Shahram Akbarzadeh. 2023. "Pakistan, Pan-Islamism, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation." *Religions* 14 (3): 289. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14030289>.
- Ajzenhamer, Vladimir. 2020. "Strategic Studies in the Service of Hegemony: A View of Strategic Culture from the Perspective of the Second Generation." *Vojno Delo* 72 (4): 7–29. <https://doi.org/10.5937/vojdelo2004007A>.
- Akash Khan Et Al. 2023. "The Impact Of Cpec On Pakistan Economy: An Analysis Framework." *Russian Law Journal* 11 (12s). <https://doi.org/10.52783/rlj.v11i12s.2088>.

- Akhtar, Muhammad Nauman. 2023. "Navigating India's Counter Narrative over CPEC." *Global Foreign Policies Review* VI (I): 28–38. [https://doi.org/10.31703/gfpr.2023\(VI-I\).03](https://doi.org/10.31703/gfpr.2023(VI-I).03).
- Akhtar, Nadeem, Hidayat Ullah Khan, Muhammad Asif Jan, Cornelius B. Pratt, and Ma Jianfu. 2021. "Exploring the Determinants of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and Its Impact on Local Communities." *SAGE Open* 11 (4): 215824402110571. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211057127>.
- Alam, Tanveer, Hamid Hussain, and Ali Bogheiry. 2023. "China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Opportunities And Challenges For Implementation." *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs* 6 (4). <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v6i4.927>.
- Alami, Ilias. 2018. "Money Power of Capital and Production of 'New State Spaces': A View from the Global South." *New Political Economy* 23 (4): 512–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13563467.2017.1373756>.
- Ali, Ahmed, Zahir Shah, and khursheed Ahmad. 2019. "Challenges to Pakistan's Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era 1990-2001." *Global Regional Review* IV (I): 1–7. [https://doi.org/10.31703/grr.2019\(IV-I\).01](https://doi.org/10.31703/grr.2019(IV-I).01).
- Ali, Arshad, and Robert G. Patman. 2019. "The Evolution of the National Security State in Pakistan: 1947–1989." *Democracy and Security* 15 (4): 301–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17419166.2019.1566063>.
- Ali, Ghulam. 2017. *China-Pakistan Relations: A Historical Analysis*.
- Ali, Iftikhar, Imran Ali Noonari, and Pervaiz Ali Mahesar. 2021. "Understanding Pak-China Relations Through Cpec: Geostrategic Implications For South Asia." *Asia-Pacific - Annual Research Journal of Far East & South East Asia* 38 (February):182–201. <https://doi.org/10.47781/asia-pacific.vol38.Iss0.3004>.
- Ali, Irfan. 2022. "Importance Of Cpec A Crown Jewel Of Belt And Road Initiative (Bri) For China And Pakistan." *Pakistan Journal of Social Research* 04 (02): 552–58. <https://doi.org/10.52567/pjsr.v4i2.506>.
- Ali, Muhammad. 2016. "Significance of CPEC in East Asia Countries & Its Impact on Pakistan Economy." *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3527953>.
- Ali, Murad. 2018. "Pakistan's Quest for Coal-Based Energy under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Implications for the Environment." *Environmental Science and Pollution Research* 25 (32): 31935–37. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-018-3326-y>.
- . 2020. "China Pakistan Economic Corridor: Prospects and Challenges." *Contemporary South Asia* 28 (1): 100–112. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09584935.2019.1667302>.
- . 2021. "CPEC in Pakistan's Quest for Energy Security: Clarifying Some Misperceptions." *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies* 07 (02): 179–98. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S237774002150007X>.

- Ali, Shehzad. 2022. "Strategic Culture And Inter-State Relations: A Case Of Pakistan And India." *Margalla Papers* 26 (1): 121–31. <https://doi.org/10.54690/margallapapers.26.1.102>.
- Ali, Yousaf, Zaeem Rasheed, Noor Muhammad, and Salman Yousaf. 2018. "Energy Optimization in the Wake of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)." *Journal of Control and Decision* 5 (2): 129–47. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23307706.2017.1353929>.
- Almond, Gabriel A., and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton University Press. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt183pnr2>.
- Aman, Jaffar, Jaffar Abbas, Guoqing Shi, Noor Ul Ain, and Likun Gu. 2022. "Community Wellbeing Under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Role of Social, Economic, Cultural, and Educational Factors in Improving Residents' Quality of Life." *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (March): 816592. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.816592>.
- Anand, V. 2020. "Revisiting the Discourse on Strategic Culture: An Assessment of the Conceptual Debates." *Strategic Analysis* 44 (3): 193–207. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09700161.2020.1787684>.
- Ang, Ien, Yudhishtir Raj Isar, and Phillip Mar. 2015. "Cultural Diplomacy: Beyond the National Interest?" *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 21 (4): 365–81. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2015.1042474>.
- Arshed, Noman, Mahak Zahra Awan, Aaiza Mirza, Faheem Riaz, and Muhammad Ghulam Shabeer. 2022. "China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Its Role in Pakistan Economy and Its Social and Environmental Status." *Journal of Applied Research and Multidisciplinary Studies* 2 (2): 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.32350/jarms.22.01>.
- Artamonov, V, V Lukin, and T Musienko. 2020. "Strategic Culture: To the Question of the Evolution Theory." *National Security and Strategic Planning* 2020 (3): 5–15. <https://doi.org/10.37468/2307-1400-2020-3-5-15>.
- Asad, Muhammad, Farrukh Ibne Mahmood, Ilaria Baffo, Alessandro Mauro, and Antonella Petrillo. 2022. "The Cost Benefit Analysis of Commercial 100 MW Solar PV: The Plant Quaid-e-Azam Solar Power Pvt Ltd." *Sustainability* 14 (5): 2895. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14052895>.
- Astrada, Marvin. 2019. *Strategic Culture: Concept and Application*.
- Avruch, K. 1999. "Culture & Conflict Resolution." *Choice Reviews Online* 36 (11): 36-6581-36–6581. <https://doi.org/10.5860/CHOICE.36-6581>.
- Bagby, Laurie M. Johnson. 1994. "The Use and Abuse of Thucydides in International Relations." *International Organization* 48 (1): 131–53. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300000849>.
- Baldwin, David A., and Ethan B. Kapstein. 2020. *Economic Statecraft*. New edition. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Barillé, Marie. 2022. "The Belt and Road Initiative - Case Study on Chinese Infrastructure Projects in Pakistan."
- Barkin, Samuel. 2009. "Realism, Prediction, and Foreign Policy." *Foreign Policy Analysis* 5 (3): 233–46.
- Barthel, Diane. 1996. "Getting in Touch with History: The Role of Historic Preservation in Shaping Collective Memories." *Qualitative Sociology* 19 (3): 345–64. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02393276>.
- Bartlett, Ewell T. 1955. "Can Government Be Human?" *Public Administration Review* 15 (1): 39. <https://doi.org/10.2307/972566>.
- Baxter, Craig, and Ayesha Jalal. 1997. "Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia: A Comparative and Historical Perspective." *The American Historical Review* 102 (3): 874. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2171636>.
- Baylis, John, James J. Wirtz, and Jeannie L. Johnson. 2022. "Strategy in the Contemporary World." 2022. <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/strategy-in-the-contemporary-world-9780192845719?cc=us&lang=en&>.
- Beckley, Michael. 2010. "Economic Development and Military Effectiveness." February 19, 2010. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01402391003603581>.
- Bedford, David. 2001. "The Tragic Reading of Thucydidean Tragedy." *Review of International Studies* 27 (January):051–067. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210500010512>.
- Bell, Duncan. 2017. "Political Realism and International Relations." *Philosophy Compass* 12 (2): e12403. <https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12403>.
- Biberman, Yelena, Jared Schwartz, and Farhan Zahid. 2023. "China's Security Strategy in Pakistan: Lessons for Washington." *Asian Security* 19 (1): 43–58. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14799855.2023.2176224>.
- Blackwill, Robert D., and Jennifer M. Harris. 2016. *War by Other Means: Geoeconomics and Statecraft*. Harvard University Press. <https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674545960>.
- Bloomfield, Alan. 2012. "Time to Move On: Reconceptualizing the Strategic Culture Debate." *Contemporary Security Policy* 33 (3): 437–61. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2012.727679>.
- Booth, Ken. 1990. "The Concept of Strategic Culture Affirmed." In *Strategic Power: USA/USSR*, edited by Carl G. Jacobsen, 121–28. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-20574-5_8.
- Bradnock, Robert W. 1998. "Regional Geopolitics in a Globalising World: Kashmir in Geopolitical Perspective." *Geopolitics* 3 (2): 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650049808407617>.
- Bras, Rev, and Polit. 2022. "SciELO - Brazil - The Epistemology of International Politics: Offensive Realism and the Neorealist Scientific Research Program The Epistemology

- of International Politics: Offensive Realism and the Neorealist Scientific Research Program.” 2022. <https://www.scielo.br/j/rbpi/a/JVgfDfNHQjw66MbSQCjwYk/>.
- Briskey, Mark. 2022a. “The Foundations of Pakistan’s Strategic Culture: Fears of an Irredentist India, Muslim Identity, Martial Race, and Political Realism.” *Journal of Advanced Military Studies* 2022 (special): 130–52. <https://doi.org/10.21140/mcu.2022SIstratcul008>.
- . 2022b. “The Foundations of Pakistan’s Strategic Culture: Fears of an Irredentist India, Muslim Identity, Martial Race, and Political Realism.” *Journal of Advanced Military Studies* 2022 (special): 130–52. <https://doi.org/10.21140/mcu.2022SIstratcul008>.
- Brown, L. Carl, and Vali Nasr. 2006. “The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future.” *Foreign Affairs* 85 (6): 174. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20032188>.
- Brunt, Nathaniel, and Shafat Farooq. 2021. “The Kashmir Conflict Archive.” *Photography and Culture* 14 (4): 469–81. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17514517.2021.1901451>.
- Bryman, Alan. 2004. *Social Research Methods*. Oxford University Press.
- Bulliet, Richard W., and Richard M. Eaton. 1995. “The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760.” *The American Historical Review* 100 (1): 213. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2168098>.
- Burchill, Scott, Andrew Linklater, Jack Donnelly, Terry Nardin, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit, André Saramago, Toni Hastrup, and Alina Sajed. 2021. *Theories of International Relations*. Edited by Richard Devetak and Jacqui True. 6th edition. London New York Oxford New Delhi Sydney: Red Globe Press.
- Buzan, Barry, and Ole Wæver. 1997. “Slippery? Contradictory? Sociologically Untenable? The Copenhagen School Replies.” *Review of International Studies* 23 (2): 241–50. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210597002416>.
- Cai, Wei, and Andrew Godwin. 2019. “Challenges And Opportunities For The China International Commercial Court.” *International & Comparative Law Quarterly* 68 (4): 869–902. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020589319000332>.
- Camisão, Sandrina Antunes and Isabel. 2018. “Introducing Realism in International Relations Theory.” *E-International Relations* (blog). February 27, 2018. <https://www.e-ir.info/2018/02/27/introducing-realism-in-international-relations-theory/>.
- Cappella Zielinski, Rosella, Kaija Schilde, and Norrin Ripsman. 2021. “A Political Economy of Global Security Approach.” *Journal of Global Security Studies* 6 (1): ogaa005. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogaa005>.
- Chambers, Michael R. 2002. *South Asia in 2020: Future Strategic Balances and Alliances*. Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College.
- Charrette, Jason, and Jennifer Sterling-Folker. 2023. “Realism.” In *International Organization and Global Governance*, by Thomas G. Weiss and Rorden Wilkinson, 3rd ed., 95–105. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003266365-10>.

- Chaudhuri, Rudra. 2018. "The Making of an 'All Weather Friendship' Pakistan, China and the History of a Border Agreement 1949–1963." *The International History Review* 40 (1): 41–64. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2017.1298529>.
- "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Opportunities and Risks | Crisis Group." 2018. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/pakistan/297-china-pakistan-economic-corridor-opportunities-and-risks>.
- Ciuriak, Dan. 2019. "Goeconomic Disruption: A Comment on the Causes, Consequences and Policy Responses." *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3352813>.
- Clunan, Anne L. 2018. "Russia and the Liberal World Order." *Ethics & International Affairs* 32 (1): 45–59. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0892679418000096>.
- Cohen, Eliot A. 1994. Review of *Review of The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War*, by Williamson Murray, Macgregor Knox, and Alvin Bernstein. *Foreign Affairs* 73 (5): 151–52. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20046863>.
- Cornish, Paul, and Geoffrey Edwards. 2005. "The Strategic Culture of the European Union: A Progress Report." *International Affairs* 81 (4): 801–20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2005.00485.x>.
- "CPEC to Turn Pak-China Ties into Long Term Strategic Economic Partnership: Ahsan | China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Secretariat Official Website." 2018. <https://cpec.gov.pk/news/79>.
- Crawford, Krysten. 2024. "The Power of 'Goeconomics' to Make Sense of a Turbulent World | Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research (SIEPR)." 2024. <https://siepr.stanford.edu/news/power-geoeconomics-make-sense-turbulent-world>.
- Crowe, William J. 1989. "US Military Power and Global Security." In *Conventional Deterrence into the 1990s*, by Thomas Boyd-Carpenter, 112–20. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-10502-1_6.
- Csurgai, Gyula. 2018. "The Increasing Importance of Geoeconomics in Power Rivalries in the Twenty-First Century." *Geopolitics* 23 (1): 38–46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2017.1359547>.
- Dennett, Daniel C. and The Hegeler Institute. 2001. "The Evolution of Culture:" Edited by Sherwood J. B. Sugden. *Monist* 84 (3): 305–24. <https://doi.org/10.5840/monist200184316>.
- Doroshko, Mykola, and Iuliia Tsyryfa. 2021. "Russian Strategic Culture: Why the Past Matters." *Przegląd Strategiczny*, no. 14 (December), 147–63. <https://doi.org/10.14746/ps.2021.1.9>.
- Drelich-Skulska, Bogusława, and Małgorzata Domiter. 2021. "Areas of Modern Trade Policy Versus Economic Security." *Journal of Economics Studies and Research*, February, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.5171/2021.514735>.

- Drezner, Daniel W. 2007. "All Politics Is Global: Explaining International Regulatory Regimes." *Choice Reviews Online* 44 (12): 44-7089-44-7089. <https://doi.org/10.5860/CHOICE.44-7089>.
- . 2011. "Sanctions Sometimes Smart: Targeted Sanctions in Theory and Practice: Sanctions Sometimes Smart." *International Studies Review* 13 (1): 96–108. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2486.2010.01001.x>.
- . 2019. "Economic Statecraft in the Age of Trump." *The Washington Quarterly* 42 (3): 7–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2019.1663072>.
- Drozdowski, Danielle, Sarah De Nardi, and Emma Waterton. 2016. *Memory, Place and Identity: Commemoration and Remembrance of War and Conflict*. <https://dokumen.pub/memory-place-and-identity-commemoration-and-remembrance-of-war-and-conflict-1nbsped-1138923214-9781138923218.html>.
- Duchâtel, Mathieu. 2011. "The Terrorist Risk and China's Policy toward Pakistan: Strategic Reassurance and the 'United Front.'" *Journal of Contemporary China* 20 (71): 543–61. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2011.587158>.
- Dunford, Michael, and Weidong Liu. 2019. "Chinese Perspectives on the Belt and Road Initiative." *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 12 (1): 145–67. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cjres/rsy032>.
- Dunne, Tim, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith. 2020. "International Relations Theories - Paperback - Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, Steve Smith - Oxford University Press." 2020. <https://global.oup.com/ukhe/product/international-relations-theories-9780198814443>.
- Durrani, Sundas Qayyum, Muhammad Bilal, and Inayat Kalim. 2017. "Pakistan-China Strategic Partnership: Capitalizing the Geo-Political Location of Pakistan." *Global Regional Review* II (I): 152–65. [https://doi.org/10.31703/grr.2017\(II-I\).11](https://doi.org/10.31703/grr.2017(II-I).11).
- Elashkar, Ayman Gad. 2020. "Realism between Theory and Reality in International Relations." *Acta Universitatis Danubius. Relationes Internationales* 13 (1). <https://dj.univ-danubius.ro/index.php/AUDRI/article/view/219>.
- Embree, Ainslie T., and David Gilmartin. 1990. "Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan." *The American Historical Review* 95 (5): 1609. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2162862>.
- Epstein, David. 2022. "Post-Soviet Russia as a Product of Half-Disintegration of the USSR: Facts and Interpretation." *Critical Sociology* 48 (4–5): 679–97. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08969205211064517>.
- Fair, C. Christine. 2008. *The Madrassah Challenge: Militancy and Religious Education in Pakistan*. United States Institute of Peace Press.
- . 2014a. *Fighting to the End: The Pakistan Army's Way of War*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199892709.001.0001>.

- . 2014b. *Fighting to the End: The Pakistan Army's Way of War*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199892709.001.0001>.
- Faisal, Muhammad. 2020. "Pakistan-China Relations: Beyond CPEC." *Strategic Studies* 40 (2): 23–44. <https://doi.org/10.53532/ss.040.02.0080>.
- Fallon, Theresa. 2015. "The New Silk Road: Xi Jinping's Grand Strategy for Eurasia." *American Foreign Policy Interests* 37 (3): 140–47. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10803920.2015.1056682>.
- Farooqui, Muhammad Ahmed, and Syed Mobasher Aftab. 2018. "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor; Prospects and Challenges for Balochistan, Pakistan." *IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering* 414 (September): 012046. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1757-899X/414/1/012046>.
- Farrell, Theo. 1998. "Culture and Military Power." *Review of International Studies* 24 (3): 407–16. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210598004070>.
- Faruki, Kemal A. 1972. "The Indo-Pakistan War, 1971, and the United Nations." *Pakistan Horizon* 25 (1): 10–20.
- Faruqi, Ahmad. 2001. "Failure in Command: Lessons from Pakistan's Indian Wars, 1947—1999." *Defense Analysis* 17 (1): 31–40. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07430170120041785>.
- Farwa, Ume. 2018. "Belt and Road Initiative and China's Strategic Culture." In . <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Belt-and-Road-Initiative-and-China%E2%80%99s-Strategic-Farwa/bc33bc65687baf9b5d88ffa02d41016eec1ffdc1>.
- Fatima, Noor, Asia Baig, and Burhan Ali Shah. 2019. "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Fostering the Trade, Investment and Economic Globalization." *Global Social Sciences Review* IV (II): 283–90. [https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2019\(IV-II\).37](https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2019(IV-II).37).
- Feener, R. Michael. 2019. "Islam in Southeast Asia to c. 1800." In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History*, by R. Michael Feener. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277727.013.40>.
- Feng, Huiyun, and Kai He. 2021. "A Dynamic Strategic Culture Model and China's Behaviour in the South China Sea." *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 34 (4): 510–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09557571.2019.1642301>.
- Fisher, Michael H. 2000a. "Pakistan: A Modern History." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 59 (3): 787–88. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2659005>.
- . 2000b. "Pakistan: A Modern History. By Ian Talbot. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998. Xvi, 432 Pp. \$35.00 (Cloth)." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 59 (3): 787–88. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2659005>.
- Flick, Uwe, Ernst von Kardorff, and Ines Steinke. 2004. "What Is Qualitative Research? An Introduction to the Field." *A Companion to Qualitative Research*, January, 3–12.

- Forde, Steven. 2012. "Thucydides and 'Realism' among the Classics of International Relations." In *Thucydides and the Modern World: Reception, Reinterpretation and Influence from the Renaissance to the Present*, edited by Katherine Harloe and Neville Morley, 178–96. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139094214.009>.
- Freedman, Lawrence. 2013. *Strategy: A History* - Lawrence Freedman. https://books.google.com.pk/books/about/Strategy.html?id=BeQRDAAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y.
- Gaid, Tarek. 2017. "Power and Fear in Great Power Politics-John J. Mearsheimer.Pdf." https://www.academia.edu/33713002/Power_and_Fear_in_Great_Power_Politics_John_J_Mearsheimer_pdf.
- Ganguly, Rajat. 2001. "India, Pakistan and the Kashmir Insurgency: Causes, Dynamics and Prospects for Resolution." *Asian Studies Review* 25 (3): 309–34. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357820108713312>.
- Ganguly, Sumit, and S. Paul Kapur. 2023. "Reframing the US-Pakistan Strategic Renaissance." *The Washington Quarterly* 46 (2): 183–99. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2023.2225910>.
- Garlick, Jeremy. 2018. "Deconstructing the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor: Pipe Dreams Versus Geopolitical Realities." *Journal of Contemporary China* 27 (112): 519–33. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2018.1433483>.
- Germond, Basil. 2015. "Beyond National Security — Maritime Power and Forces Projection." In *The Maritime Dimension of European Security*, 51–72. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137017819_5.
- Ghiasy, Richard, and Jiayi Zhou. 2017. "The Silk Road Economic Belt: Considering Security Implications and EU–China Cooperation Prospects." SIPRI. <https://www.sipri.org/publications/2017/other-publications/silk-road-economic-belt>.
- Ghose, Gauvav, and Patrick James. 2005. "Third-Party Intervention in Ethno-Religious Conflict: Role Theory, Pakistan, and War in Kashmir, 1965." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 17 (3): 427–45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546550590929200>.
- Gilderhus, Mark T. 2006. "The Monroe Doctrine: Meanings and Implications." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36 (1): 5–16. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-5705.2006.00282.x>.
- Gill, Don McLain. 2019. "The Geopolitics of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor(CPEC) and Its Security Implications for India." *The Korean Journal of International Studies* 17 (3): 337–53. <https://doi.org/10.14731/kjis.2019.12.17.3.337>.
- Gilpin, Robert. 1981. *War and Change in World Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511664267>.
- Glaser, Charles. 2011. "Will China's Rise Lead to War? Why Realism Does Not Mean Pessimism." *Foreign Affairs* 90 (2): 80–91.

- Glišić, Darko. 2020. "The Key Factors of the US Strategic Culture." *Vojno Delo* 72 (4): 124–60. <https://doi.org/10.5937/vojdelo2004124G>.
- Gray, Colin S. 1999a. *Modern Strategy*. Oxford University Press.
- . 1999b. "Strategic Culture as Context: The First Generation of Theory Strikes Back." *Review of International Studies* 25 (1): 49–69. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210599000492>.
- Grigorescu, Alexandru, and Molly M. Melin. 2017. "Multilateral Institutions and Conflict Resolution." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 34 (3): 301–29. <https://doi.org/10.1002/crq.21176>.
- Gruber, Anton, Alexander Tekles, and Lutz Bornmann. 2023. "John Mearsheimer's Academic Roots: A Reference Publication Year Spectroscopy of a Political Scientist's Oeuvre." *Scientometrics* 128 (7): 3867–77. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-023-04721-6>.
- Guzzini, Stefano. 2001. "The Significance and Roles of Teaching Theory in International." *Journal of International Relations and Development*.
- Halal, William E. 1993. "Global Strategic Management in a New World Order." *Business Horizons* 36 (6): 5–10. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0007-6813\(05\)80017-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0007-6813(05)80017-5).
- Henne, Peter S. 2022. "What We Talk About When We Talk About Soft Power." *International Studies Perspectives* 23 (1): 94–111. <https://doi.org/10.1093/isp/ekab007>.
- Henrikki, Heikka. 2002. "Strategic Culture and the English School: Conceptualising Strategic Adjustment in the Nordic Region." <https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/wps/fiia/0001254/index.html>.
- Hilali, A Z. 2001. "Pakistan's Foreign Policy Objectives in the Post- September 11, 2001 Era."
- Hollis, Martin, and Steve Smith. 1991. *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Houston, Michael J, and Seymour Sudman. 1975. "A Methodological Assessment of the Use of Key Informants." *Social Science Research* 4 (2): 151–64. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0049-089X\(75\)90009-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/0049-089X(75)90009-5).
- Howorth, Jolyon. 2003. "France, Britain and the Euro-Atlantic Crisis." *Survival* 45 (4): 173–92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2003.9687570>.
- Huang, Yiping. 2016. "Understanding China's Belt & Road Initiative: Motivation, Framework and Assessment." *China Economic Review* 40 (September):314–21. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chieco.2016.07.007>.
- Hudaya, Maula, and Dwi Aulia Putri. 2008. "Strategic Culture: The Answer of Internasional Relations Study to Overcome Challenges in The Globalized World," September. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327777482_Strategic_Culture_The_Answer_of_Internasional_Relations_Study_to_Overcome_Challenges_in_The_Globalized_World.

- Hudson, Valerie M. 2008. "Where Is Strategic Culture to Be Found? The Case of China." *International Studies Review* 10 (4): 782–85. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2486.2008.00833.x>.
- Humphreys, Adam R C. 2013. "Waltz and the World: Neorealism as International Political Theory?" *International Politics* 50 (6): 863–79. <https://doi.org/10.1057/ip.2013.34>.
- Huntington, Samuel P. 1997. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. https://books.google.com.pk/books/about/The_Clash_of_Civilizations_and_the_Remaking_of_World_Order?id=Iq75qmi3Og8C&redir_esc=y.
- Huntley, Matthew David. 2022. "European Defence Policy at a Crossroads – Germany Preserving the Status Quo and France Seeking Change?" *European Politics and Society* 23 (2): 173–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2020.1855710>.
- Hussain, Ejaz, and Muhammad Furqan Rao. 2020. "China–Pakistan Economic Cooperation: The Case of Special Economic Zones (SEZs)." *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 13 (4): 453–72. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40647-020-00292-5>.
- Hussain, Fakhar. 2020. "Geostrategic Imperatives of Gwadar Port for China." *The Korean Journal of International Studies* 18 (2): 145–67. <https://doi.org/10.14731/kjis.2020.08.18.2.145>.
- Hussain, Mehmood, and Ahmed Bux Jamali. 2019. "Geo-Political Dynamics of the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor: A New Great Game in South Asia." *Chinese Political Science Review* 4 (3): 303–26. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41111-019-00128-y>.
- Hussain Sajid, Khan Faisal, and Muhammad Ayaz. 2021. "Politico-Economic Implications of CPEC on Pakistan." *FWU Journal of Social Sciences*, December, 149–64. <https://doi.org/10.51709/19951272/Winter-2021/10>.
- Hussain, Sajjad. 2017. "China's CPEC Investment in Pakistan Reaches \$62 Billion," April 12, 2017. <https://www.livemint.com/Politics/dB5tQKISoKNrvl7EwDPFbP/Chinas-CPEC-investment-in-Pakistan-reaches-62-billion.html>.
- Hussain, Syed Shahbaz, Umbreen Javaid, Pirzada Sami Ullah Sabri, Muhammad Ilyas, and Iffat Batool. 2014. "Compulsions of Sino-Pakistani Strategic Engagement in Lieu of Security Constraints Engendered by the Anarchistic International Political System." *South Asian Studies*.
- Hussain, Touqir. 2005. "U.S.-Pakistan Engagement: The War on Terrorism and Beyond," August.
- Hussain, Zahid. 2017. "The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and the New Regional Geopolitics."
- Hyder, Ghulam. 2022. "CPEC: Shifting Sands in Pakistan's Foreign Policy." *South Asian Research Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*.
- Ibrar, Muhammad, Jianining Mi, Muhammad Rafiq, and Liaqat Ali. 2019. "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Ensuring Pakistan's Economic Benefits." *Khazar Journal of*

Humanities and Social Sciences 22 (1): 38–51. <https://doi.org/10.5782/2223-2621.2019.22.1.38>.

- Idrees, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir, Tariq Nawaz, and Abdul Rehman Madni. 2023. “Framing Biases Of Sino-Pak Media: A Comparative Content Analysis Of Official Social Media Accounts.” *Global Digital & Print Media Review* VI (II): 376–87. [https://doi.org/10.31703/gdpmr.2023\(VI-II\).27](https://doi.org/10.31703/gdpmr.2023(VI-II).27).
- Ignatyeva, Irina, and Boris Isaev. 2019. “Modern Trends in Geo-Economics and Geopolitics.” In *Proceedings of the International Conference Communicative Strategies of Information Society (CSIS 2018)*. Saint-Petersburg, Russia: Atlantis Press. <https://doi.org/10.2991/csis-18.2019.104>.
- Inboden, Rana Siu. 2022. “China and Authoritarian Collaboration.” *Journal of Contemporary China* 31 (136): 505–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2021.1985828>.
- Inboden, William. 2018. “Ronald Reagan, Exemplar of Conservative Internationalism?” *Orbis* 62 (1): 43–55. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orbis.2017.11.003>.
- Iqbal, Khuram. 2018. “Securing CPEC: Challenges, Responses and Outcomes.” In *Securing the Belt and Road Initiative*, edited by Alessandro Arduino and Xue Gong, 197–214. Singapore: Springer Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-7116-4_11.
- Islam, Md Saidul. 2020. “Islam and Democracy in South Asia: An Introduction.” In *Islam and Democracy in South Asia*, 1–23. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-42909-6_1.
- Ismail, Muhammad. 2023. “China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Economic and Strategic Implications for Pakistan.” In .
- Ismail, Muhammad, and Syed Mehdi Husnain. 2022. “Recalibrating Impact of Regional Actors on Security of China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).” *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 15 (3): 437–62. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40647-022-00347-9>.
- J. Tellis, Ashley, Alison Szalwinski, and Michael Wills. 2016. *Understanding Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific | The National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR)*. <https://www.nbr.org/publication/understanding-strategic-cultures-in-the-asia-pacific/>.
- Jack L. Snyder. 1977. “The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations.” <https://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R2154.html>.
- Jacobsen, Carl G., ed. 1990. *Strategic Power: USA/USSR*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-20574-5>.
- Jaeger, Bruna Coelho, and Pedro Vinicius Pereira Brites. 2020. “Goeconomics in the Light of International Political Economy: A Theoretical Discussion.” *Brazilian Journal of Political Economy* 40 (February): 22–36. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0101-31572020-2982>.
- Jaffrelot, Christophe, ed. 2016. *Pakistan at the Crossroads: Domestic Dynamics and External Pressures*. Columbia University Press. <https://doi.org/10.7312/jaff17306>.

- Jahangir, Asifa, Omair Haroon, and Arif Masud Mirza. 2020. "Special Economic Zones under the CPEC and the Belt and Road Initiative: Parameters, Challenges and Prospects." In *China's Belt and Road Initiative in a Global Context*, edited by Jawad Syed and Yung-Hsiang Ying, 289–328. Palgrave Macmillan Asian Business Series. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-18959-4_12.
- Jalal, Ayesha. 1991. "The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence." *Choice Reviews Online* 28 (08): 28-4741-28-4741. <https://doi.org/10.5860/CHOICE.28-4741>.
- Jaleel, Sabahat and Habibullah. 2021. "China-Pakistan Relations under CPEC." *Global International Relations Review* IV (III): 15–21. [https://doi.org/10.31703/girr.2021\(IV-III\).03](https://doi.org/10.31703/girr.2021(IV-III).03).
- Jalil, Ghazala. 2019. "China's Rise: Offensive or Defensive Realism." *Strategic Studies* 39 (April):41–58. <https://doi.org/10.53532/ss.039.01.00118>.
- Jan, Mohammad Waqas, and Zahid Shahab Ahmed. 2022. "Internationalizing the Kashmir Dispute: An Analysis of India and Pakistan's Statements at the United Nations General Assembly." *India Review* 21 (4–5): 546–75. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14736489.2022.2131124>.
- Jaruszewski, Waldemar Kryspin. 2017. "The Role of Intellectual Capital and Culture in the Development of National Security." *Studia Gdańskie. Wzję i Rzeczywistość* XIII (June):9–29. <https://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0015.5481>.
- Javed, Hafez Muhammad, and Muhammad Ismail. 2021. "CPEC and Pakistan: Its Economic Benefits, Energy Security and Regional Trade and Economic Integration." *Chinese Political Science Review* 6 (2): 207–27. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41111-020-00172-z>.
- Johnson, Dominic D. P., and Bradley A. Thayer. 2016. "The Evolution of Offensive Realism: Survival under Anarchy from the Pleistocene to the Present." *Politics and the Life Sciences* 35 (1): 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1017/pls.2016.6>.
- Johnson, Jeanie, Kerry M.Kartchner, and Jeffery A.Lareson. 2009. *Strategic Culture and Weapons of Mass Destruction*. <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1057/9780230618305>.
- Johnston, Alastair Iain. 1995. "Thinking about Strategic Culture." *International Security* 19 (4): 32. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539119>.
- . 1999. "Strategic Cultures Revisited: Reply to Colin Gray." *Review of International Studies* 25 (3): 519–23. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210599005197>.
- Jørgensen, Knud. 2010. "Why Theorize International Relations?" In , 6–32. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-230-36694-7_2.
- Juneau, Thomas. 2023. "Neoclassical Realism as a Theory for Correcting Mistakes: What State X Should Do Next Tuesday." *International Studies Review* 25 (3): viad021. <https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viad021>.

- Kaplan, Morton A. 1961. "Is International Relations a Discipline?" *The Journal of Politics* 23 (3): 462–76. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2127101>.
- Kaplan, Rober.D. 2013. "The Revenge of Geography: What the Map Tells Us about Coming Conflicts and the Battle of Fate." *Geographical Review* 103 (2): 304–5. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gere.12020>.
- Kapur, S. Paul. 2008. "Ten Years of Instability in a Nuclear South Asia." *International Security* 33 (2): 71–94. <https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.2008.33.2.71>.
- Kartchner, Kerry M., Briana D. Bowen, and Jeannie L. Johnson. 2023. *Routledge Handbook of Strategic Culture*. 1st ed. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003010302>.
- Katzenstein, Peter J., ed. 1996. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. Columbia University Press.
- Kennedy, Greg, ed. 2004. *British Naval Strategy East of Suez, 1900-2000*. 0 ed. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203495155>.
- Keohane, Robert O. 1969. "Lilliputians' Dilemmas: Small States in Internatinal Politics." *International Organization* 23 (2): 291–310. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002081830003160X>.
- Keohane, Robert O., and Joseph S. Nye. 1987. "Power and Interdependence</i> Revisited." *International Organization* 41 (4): 725–53. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300027661>.
- Kerr, David. 2010. "Central Asian and Russian Perspectives on China's Strategic Emergence." *International Affairs* 86 (1): 127–52. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2010.00872.x>.
- Khadka, Anush. 2017. "What Is the Purpose of Theory in IR?," January. https://www.academia.edu/44001661/What_is_the_purpose_of_theory_in_IR.
- Khan. 2022. "CPEC: Project of Geo-Economics or Geo-Politics?" *China Dialogues* (blog). July 14, 2022. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/cff/2022/07/14/cpec-project-of-geo-economics-or-geo-politics/>.
- Khan, Ayesha. 2021. "The Geopolitics of China-Pakistan Historical Connectivity and Its Economic and Strategic Significance." *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies* 07 (03): 289–303. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S2377740021500123>.
- Khan, By Feroz Hassan. 2022. *Subcontinent Adrift: Strategic Futures of South Asia*. <https://www.cambriapress.com/pub.cfm?bid=903>.
- Khan, Feroz Hassan. 2005. "Theory."
- Khan, Ijaz. 2012. *Pakistan's Strategic Culture and Foreign Policy Making: A Study of Pakistan's Post 9/11 Afghan Policy Change*. Nova Science Publishers, Incorporated.

- Khan, Muhammad Fahim. 2023. "SHIFTING SANDS: PAKISTAN'S STRATEGIC CULTURE AMIDST REGIONAL AND GLOBAL FLUX." *Russian Law Journal* 11 (12s). <https://doi.org/10.52783/rlj.v11i12s.2190>.
- Khan, Shehryar, and Guijian Liu. 2019. "The China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Challenges and Prospects." *Area Development and Policy* 4 (4): 466–73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23792949.2018.1534549>.
- Khaskheli, Muhammad Bilawal, Shumin Wang, Xiaoshan Yan, and Yuehan He. 2023. "Innovation of the Social Security, Legal Risks, Sustainable Management Practices and Employee Environmental Awareness in The China–Pakistan Economic Corridor." *Sustainability* 15 (2): 1021. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15021021>.
- Khawaja, Asma Shakir, and Imran Raza. 2022. "Power Realignment in South Asia – An Outcome of BRI (CPEC)." *Margalla Papers* 26 (I): 85–97. <https://doi.org/10.54690/margallapapers.26.I.99>.
- Khetran, Mir Sher Baz, and Muhammad Humayun Khalid. 2019. "The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Gateway to Central Asia." *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies* 05 (03): 455–69. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S2377740019500179>.
- Khoo, Nicholas, Michael L.R. Smith, and David Shambaugh. 2005. "China Engages Asia? Caveat Lector." *International Security* 30 (1): 196–211. <https://doi.org/10.1162/0162288054894599>.
- Knight, Nick. 2003. "Imagining Globalisation: The World and Nation in Chinese Communist Party Ideology." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 33 (3): 318–37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472330380000211>.
- Kondapalli, Srikanth, ed. 2012. "Testing China's Rise. China–Pakistan Relations." In *Pakistan's Stability Paradox: Domestic, Regional, and International Dimensions*. Routledge Contemporary South Asia Series 49. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, [England] ; New York: Routledge.
- Korab-Karpowicz, W. Julian. 2023. "Political Realism in International Relations." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman, Winter 2023. Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2023/entries/realism-intl-relations/>.
- Kovalev, Andrei Andreevich. 2021. "Topical Issues of the Security Strategy of Small States." *Вопросы Безопасности*, no. 1 (January), 28–40. <https://doi.org/10.25136/2409-7543.2021.1.34906>.
- Krasner, Stephen D. 2001. "Sovereignty." *Foreign Policy*, no. 122 (January), 20. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3183223>.
- Krugman, P. 1998. "What's New about the New Economic Geography?" *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 14 (2): 7–17. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxrep/14.2.7>.

- Kukhar, Oleksandr. 2022. "Experience of foreign countries in implementing economic security within digitalization." *Ukrainian Journal of Applied Economics and Technology* 7 (1): 319–25. <https://doi.org/10.36887/2415-8453-2022-1-39>.
- Kumar, Rajesh, and Kofi O. Nti. 2004. "National Cultural Values and the Evolution of Process and Outcome Discrepancies in International Strategic Alliances." *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 40 (3): 344–61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886304266846>.
- Kupchan, Charles A. 1988. "NATO and the Persian Gulf: Examining Intra-Alliance Behavior." *International Organization* 42 (2): 317–46. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300032835>.
- Kuru, Deniz. 2017. "Who f(o)unded IR: American Philanthropies and the Discipline of International Relations in Europe." *International Relations* 31 (1): 42–67. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117816676307>.
- Kuszevska, Agnieszka, and Nitza-Makowska Agnieszka. 2021. "Multifaceted Aspects of Economic Corridors in the Context of Regional Security: The China–Pakistan Economic Corridor as a Stabilising and Destabilising Factor - Agnieszka Kuszevska, Agnieszka Nitza-Makowska, 2021." 2021. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/23477970211017719>.
- Lantis, Jaffery. 2002. "Strategic Culture and National Security Policy." *International Studies Review* 4 (3): 87–113. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1521-9488.t01-1-00266>.
- Lantis, Jeffrey. 2003. "Strategic Culture and National Security Policy." *International Studies Review* 4 (June):87–113. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1521-9488.t01-1-00266>.
- Lantis, Jeffrey S. 2009. "Strategic Culture: From Clausewitz to Constructivism." In *Strategic Culture and Weapons of Mass Destruction*, edited by Jeannie L. Johnson, Kerry M. Kartchner, and Jeffrey A. Larsen, 33–52. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230618305_3.
- Larik, Abdul Razaque, Shah Nawaz Mangi, and Syed Gulzar Ali Shah Bukhari. 2023. "Elite Consensus and Balancing: A Neoclassical Realist Perspective on Pakistan–China Ties." *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*, August, 23477970231152363. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23477970231152363>.
- Latif, Muhammad Ijaz, and Muhammad Jahanzeb Akmal. 2019. "Structural Realism: A Constitutive Analysis."
- Latif, Muhammad Ijaz, and Muhammad Tayyab Zia. 2020. "Strategic Dimensions of CPEC: Role of Regional and International Powers | Journal of Business and Social Review in Emerging Economies." 2020. <https://publishing.globalcsrc.org/ojs/index.php/jbsee/article/view/1507>.
- Lavoy, Peter R. 2006. "Pakistan's Strategic Culture."

- Lee, Sangkuk. 2014. "China's 'Three Warfares': Origins, Applications, and Organizations." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 37 (2): 198–221. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2013.870071>.
- Lenway, Stefanie Ann. 1988. "Between War and Commerce: Economic Sanctions as a Tool of Statecraft." *International Organization* 42 (2): 397–426. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300032860>.
- Li, Wei. 2009. "Research Perspectives on Bilingualism and Multilingualism." In *The Blackwell Handbook of Research Methods on Bilingualism Ad Multilingualism*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444301120.ch1>.
- Li, Xing. 2019. "China's Dual Position in the Capitalist World Order: A Dual Complexity of Hegemony and Counter-Hegemony." In *The International Political Economy of the BRICS*, edited by Xing Li, 95–117. The International Political Economy of New Regionalisms Series. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429507946-6>.
- Libel, Tamir. 2020. "Rethinking Strategic Culture: A Computational (Social Science) Discursive-Institutionalist Approach." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 43 (5): 686–709. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2018.1545645>.
- Linowski, Dirk, and Stefan Lukas. 2021. "The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Its Implications for Security Cooperation in the Region," January.
- Lipkan, Volodymyr, Oksana Kuznichenko, and Andrii Ivanov. 2023. "Goeconomics as A Tool of Modern Geostrategy." *Baltic Journal of Economic Studies* 9 (1): 113–23. <https://doi.org/10.30525/2256-0742/2023-9-1-113-123>.
- Lissner, Rebecca Friedman. 2018. "What Is Grand Strategy? Sweeping a Conceptual Minefield (November 2018)." *Texas National Security Review*. <https://doi.org/10.26153/TSW/868>.
- Lizardo, Omar. 2016. "Cultural Symbols and Cultural Power." *Qualitative Sociology* 39 (2): 199–204. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-016-9329-4>.
- Lobell, Steven E. 2010. "Structural Realism/Offensive and Defensive Realism." In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.304>.
- Lock, Edward. 2010. "Refining Strategic Culture: Return of the Second Generation." *Review of International Studies* 36 (3): 685–708. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510000276>.
- . 2017. "Strategic Culture Theory: What, Why, and How." In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, by Edward Lock. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.320>.
- Lokman, Rackmawatie, Sity Daud, and Chiew Ping Hoo. 2022. "CPEC and South Asia's Geopolitical Complex: Powers' Rivalry." *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)* 7 (9): e001741. <https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v7i9.1741>.

- Longhurst, Kerry. 2018. *Germany and the Use of Force*. Manchester University Press. <https://doi.org/10.7765/9781526137401>.
- Luginbill, Robert D. 1999. "Thucydides on War and National Character – Bryn Mawr Classical Review." 1999. <https://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2000/2000.02.20/>.
- Luttwak, Edward N. 1990. "From Geopolitics to Geo-Economics: Logic of Conflict, Grammar of Commerce." *The National Interest*, no. 20, 17–23.
- Lynggaard, Kennet, and Peter Triantafillou. 2023. "Discourse Analysis and Strategic Policy Advice: Manoeuvring, Navigating, and Transforming Policy." *Journal of European Public Policy* 30 (9): 1936–59. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2023.2217846>.
- Lynn-Jones, Sean M. 1998. "Realism and America's Rise: A Review Essay." *International Security* 23 (2): 157–82. <https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.23.2.157>.
- Mações, Bruno. 2019. *Belt and Road: A Chinese World Order*. London: Hurst.
- Macmillan, Alan. 1996. "Strategic Culture and British Grand Strategy 1945-1952," September.
- Mahmood, Arfan, and Muhammad Usman Askari. 2022. "Revisiting the Determinants and Challenges of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Through the Lens of Public Opinion." *Pakistan Journal of Social Research* 04 (04): 828–39. <https://doi.org/10.52567/pjsr.v4i04.897>.
- Majeed, Tabassum, Zahid Anwar, and Faiza Bashir. 2023. "CPEC: Pakistan and China's Joint Step towards a Shared Destiny." *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics* 8 (2): 547–57. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20578911231156102>.
- Makarevich, Gleb G. 2021. "Maritime Strategy of Pakistan: Development and Future Prospects." *Asia and Africa Today*, no. 7, 29. <https://doi.org/10.31857/S032150750014631-6>.
- Malik, Hasan Yaser. 2012. "Strategic Importance of Gwadar Port."
- Malik, Nazia, and Muhammad Jamil. 2023. "Security Challenges and Policy Initiatives: An Analysis from CPEC Standpoint." *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 16 (3): 269–84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17467586.2023.2280887>.
- Mansfield, Edward, and Brian Pollins, eds. 2003. *Economic Interdependence and International Conflict: New Perspectives on an Enduring Debate*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. <https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.11952>.
- Martadinata, Ilham, Muhammad Wirajuda, and Helda Risman. 2024. "Analysis of China's Interests in Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Policy in Pakistan." *Journal of Social and Political Sciences* 7 (March): 46–58. <https://doi.org/10.31014/aior.1991.07.01.465>.
- Martin, Lisa L. 1992. "Interests, Power, and Multilateralism." *International Organization* 46 (4): 765–92. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300033245>.

- Marx, Axel, and Thomas Lebzelter. 2020. "Is EU GSP+ Fostering Good Governance? Results from a New GSP+ Compliance Index." *Journal of World Trade* 54 (Issue 1): 1–30. <https://doi.org/10.54648/TRAD2020001>.
- Masih, Adven. 2018. "Thar Coalfield: Sustainable Development and an Open Sesame to the Energy Security of Pakistan." *Journal of Physics: Conference Series* 989 (April):012004. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/989/1/012004>.
- Mastanduno, Michael. 1998. "Economics and Security in Statecraft and Scholarship." *International Organization* 52 (4): 825–54. <https://doi.org/10.1162/002081898550761>.
- Mattlin, Mikael, and Mikael Wigell. 2016. "Goeconomics in the Context of Restive Regional Powers." *Asia Europe Journal* 14 (2): 125–34. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10308-015-0443-9>.
- McCartney, Matthew. 2021. "The Prospects of the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): The Importance of Understanding Western China." *Contemporary South Asia* 29 (3): 358–75. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09584935.2020.1855112>.
- McGlinchey, Stephen, and Dana Gold. 2017. "International Relations Theory." 2017. <https://www.e-ir.info/2017/01/09/international-relations-theory/>.
- McGlinchey, Stephen, Rosie Walters, and Dana Gold. 2017. "Getting Started with International Relations Theory." 2017. <https://www.e-ir.info/2017/12/24/getting-started-with-international-relations-theory/>.
- Mclaughlin, Mark. 2024. "The Geoeconomics of Belt and Road Disputes: A Case Study on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor." *Asian Journal of International Law* 14 (1): 94–122. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S2044251323000176>.
- Mearsheimer, John J. 2003. "The Tragedy of Great Power Politics | John J Mearsheimer | W. W. Norton & Company." 2003. <https://wnorton.com/books/9780393349276>.
- Milenković, Miloš. 2020. "Strategic Culture and Legitimacy of Violent Power Takeover." *Vojno Delo* 72 (4): 105–23. <https://doi.org/10.5937/vojdelo2004105M>.
- Misra, Amalendu. 2001. "The Centrality of Kashmir in India-Pakistan Security Dynamics." *International Politics* 38 (1): 103–20. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.ip.8892615>.
- Mitręga, Adrian, and Marian Kozub. 2019. "The Influence of Strategic Culture on Shaping Security Policy." *Security and Defence Quarterly* 27 (5): 44–56. <https://doi.org/10.35467/sdq/111661>.
- Moisio, Sami. 2018. "Towards Geopolitical Analysis of Geoeconomic Processes." *Geopolitics* 23 (1): 22–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2017.1326481>.
- MoPD&SI. n.d. "CPEC Vision & Mission | China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Secretariat Official Website." Official. <https://Cpec.Gov.Pk/>. Accessed June 21, 2024. <https://cpec.gov.pk/vision-mission/3>.

- Mughis, Muhammad, and Irfan Siddiqui. 2021. "Security Threats and Challenges to Pak China Economic Corridor / One Belt Of Road." *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs* 2 (2). <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v2i2.61>.
- Mukhtar, Arshia, Ying Zhu, You-il Lee, Mary Bambacas, and S. Tamer Cavusgil. 2022. "Challenges Confronting the 'One Belt One Road' Initiative: Social Networks and Cross-Cultural Adjustment in CPEC Projects." *International Business Review* 31 (1): 101902. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2021.101902>.
- Murad, Muhammad, and Dr Irfan. 2023. "Role of Islam in the Foreign Policy of Pakistan – From Past To Present." *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs* 6 (4). <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v6i4.926>.
- Murray, Williamson, Alvin Bernstein, and MacGregor Knox. 1996. *Making Strategy Rulers States and War / Regional and World History: General Interest*. <https://www.cambridge.org/pk/universitypress/subjects/history/regional-and-world-history-general-interest/making-strategy-rulers-states-and-war?format=PB&isbn=9780521566278>.
- Myers, Greg. 1998. "Displaying Opinions: Topics and Disagreement in Focus Groups." *Language in Society* 27 (1): 85–111. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404500019734>.
- Naithani, Neeraj, and Prashant Agarwal. 2023. "Overview of Karakoram Highway/CPEC Connectivity to Xinxiang and Gilgit Baltistan." *Journal of Mountain Research* 18 (1). <https://doi.org/10.51220/jmr.v18i1.17>.
- Narlikar, Amrita. 2010. *New Powers: How to Become One and How to Manage Them*. <https://www.amazon.com/New-Powers-Become-Manage-Them/dp/0199327262>.
- , ed. 2016. *Small States in Multilateral Economic Negotiations*. 0 ed. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315540139>.
- Nasr, Vali. 2004. "Military Rule, Islamism and Democracy in Pakistan." *The Middle East Journal* 58 (2): 195–209. <https://doi.org/10.3751/58.2.12>.
- National Security Division. 2022. "National Security Policy of Pakistan 2022-2026." Government of Pakistan.
- Nazir, Humaira. 2021. "Impact Assessment of Gwadar Port on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: A Case Study." *Journal of Art, Architecture and Built Environment* 4 (1): 69–95. <https://doi.org/10.32350/jaabe.41.04>.
- Neumann, Iver B., and Henrikki Heikka. 2005. "Grand Strategy, Strategic Culture, Practice: The Social Roots of Nordic Defence." *Cooperation and Conflict* 40 (1): 5–23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836705049731>.
- Nisar, Maria, Rana Imran Ali, and Muhammad Asif. 2021. "Future Implications of CPEC: A Descriptive Analysis of Cultural Impact of China- Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC) on Pakistan and Chinese Culture." *Global Political Review* VI (I): 208–15. [https://doi.org/10.31703/gpr.2021\(VI-I\).20](https://doi.org/10.31703/gpr.2021(VI-I).20).

- Niyangoda, Nalinda, Manoj Keppetipola, and Anil Bowatte. 2021. "Evolving Regional and Global Dynamics and Future Of CPEC." *ISSRA Papers* 13 (December):163–73. <https://doi.org/10.54690/issrap.v13iXIII.105>.
- Norloff, C. 2011. "America's Global Advantage: US Hegemony and International Cooperation." *Choice Reviews Online* 48 (05): 48-2945-48-2945. <https://doi.org/10.5860/CHOICE.48-2945>.
- Nurjanah, Madinna U. L. F. A. 2010. "(HIN 100504) International Relations Theories - Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, Steve Smith," January. https://www.academia.edu/10064301/_HIN_100504_International_Relations_Theories_Tim_Dunne_Milja_Kurki_Steve_Smith.
- Nye, Joseph S. 1990. "Soft Power: The Means To Success In World Politics." *Foreign Policy*, no. 80, 153. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1148580>.
- "Pakistan 2025: One Nation - One Vision." 2014. 2014. <https://policy.asiapacificenergy.org/node/2910>.
- Pande, Aparna. 2011. *Explaining Pakistan's Foreign Policy*. 0 ed. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203829950>.
- Panke, Diana. 2012. "Small States in Multilateral Negotiations. What Have We Learned?" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 25 (3): 387–98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09557571.2012.710589>.
- Parepa, Laura-Anca. 2020. "The Belt and Road Initiative as Continuity in Chinese Foreign Policy." *Journal of Contemporary East Asia Studies* 9 (2): 175–201. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24761028.2020.1848370>.
- Parveen, Saima, and Syed Akhtar Ali Shah. 2020. "China Pakistan Economic Corridor: Interdependence to Regional Integration." *Central Asia* 85 (Winter): 57–78. <https://doi.org/10.54418/ca-85.11>.
- Paul, T.V. 2015. "The Warrior State: Pakistan in the Contemporary World." *International Journal: Canada's Journal of Global Policy Analysis* 70 (2): 363–65. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702015576503>.
- Pedi, Revecca, and Katerina Sarri. 2019. "From the 'Small but Smart State' to the 'Small and Entrepreneurial State': Introducing a Framework for Effective Small State Strategies within the EU and Beyond." *Baltic Journal of European Studies* 9 (1): 3–19. <https://doi.org/10.1515/bjes-2019-0001>.
- Petersen, Ulrik Enemark. 1999. "Breathing Nietzsche's Air: New Reflections on Morgenthau's Concepts of Power and Human Nature." *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 24 (1): 83–118. <https://doi.org/10.1177/030437549902400104>.
- Platias, Athanasios, and Vasilis Trigkas. 2024. "Classical Realism and the Rise of Sino-American Antagonism: A Review Essay." *Political Science Quarterly* 139 (1): 79–93. <https://doi.org/10.1093/psquar/qqad078>.

- “Prime Minister Imran Khan Meets President Xi Jinping | China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Secretariat Official Website.” 2019. October 9, 2019. <https://cpec.gov.pk/news/191>.
- Quinn, Riley, and Bryan Gibson. 2017. “An Analysis of Kenneth Waltz’s Theory of International Politics.” Routledge & CRC Press. 2017. <https://www.routledge.com/An-Analysis-of-Kenneth-Waltzs-Theory-of-International-Politics/Quinn-Gibson/p/book/9781912127078>.
- Rana, Muhammad Waqas, Sufang Zhang, and Abbass Rashid Butt. 2022. “Prioritising CPEC Energy Projects Using AHP and TOPSIS Technique.” In *2022 International Conference on Engineering and Emerging Technologies (ICEET)*, 1–6. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: IEEE. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ICEET56468.2022.10007370>.
- Ranjan, Amit. 2021. “China’s Engagement with Pakistan: Concerns for India.” *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region* 17 (1): 96–113. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19480881.2021.1878585>.
- Rasool, Sajjad, and Waqar Ahmad. 2021. “China Pakistan Economic Corridor, Regional Economic Dependency; Implication For Regional Peace And Stability.” *Journal of Higher Education and Development Studies (JHEDS)* 1 (1): 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.59219/jheds.v1i1.3>.
- Rauf, Sarwat. 2021. “Regional Connectivity in Pakistan and Central Asian Republics: Prospects and Challenges.” *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies* 07 (03): 327–47. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S2377740021500147>.
- Rehman, Zia Ur, Muhammad Ashfaq, and Muhammad Naeem. 2022. “The Geo-Economics and Geopolitical Significance of Gwadar Port in the Changing Maritime Scenario.” *FWU Journal of Social Sciences*, December, 121–32. <https://doi.org/10.51709/19951272/Winter2022/9>.
- Reiter, Dan, and Allan C. Stam. 2002. *Democracies at War* | Princeton University Press. <https://press.princeton.edu/books/paperback/9780691089492/democracies-at-war>.
- Rizki, Khairur, and Namira Risqi Putri Muquita. 2023. “Analisis Pelanggaran Hak Asasi Manusia (HAM) Dalam Sengketa Wilayah Perbatasan Kashmir.” *Global Political Studies Journal* 7 (1): 88–100. <https://doi.org/10.34010/gpsjournal.v7i1.9256>.
- Rizvi, Hasan Askari. 2014. “The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Regional Cooperation and Socio-Economic Development.” *Strategic Studies* 34/35:1–17.
- Rizvi, Hasan-Askari, ed. 2002. *South Asia in 2020: Future Strategic Balances and Alliances*. Strategic Studies Institute. Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute.
- Rizvi, Syed Qamar Afzal. 2023. “The Evolution of Pakistan’s Strategic Culture | By Syed Qamar Afzal Rizvi.” *Pakistan Observer* (blog). April 26, 2023. <https://pakobserver.net/the-evolution-of-pakistans-strategic-culture-by-syed-qamar-afzal-rizvi/>.

- Roberts, Anthea, Henrique Choer Moraes, and Victor Ferguson. 2019. "Toward a Geoeconomic Order in International Trade and Investment." *Journal of International Economic Law* 22 (4): 655–76. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jiel/jgz036>.
- Roberts, Anthea, Moraes Henrique Choer, and Victor Ferguson. 2018. "The Geoeconomic World Order." Default. 2018. <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/geoeconomic-world-order>.
- Rossi, Enzo, and Matthew Sleat. 2014. "Realism in Normative Political Theory." *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2397459>.
- Rovner, Joshua. 2017. "Thucydides and the Long War Problem." War on the Rocks. December 4, 2017. <https://warontherocks.com/2017/12/thucydides-long-war-problem/>.
- Saini, Rohini. 2021. "CPEC: Exploring Pakistan as a Reliable Partner for China and Its Implications on India." *Electronic Journal of Social and Strategic Studies* 02 (03): 435–53. <https://doi.org/10.47362/EJSSS.2021.2310>.
- Salman Masood Sheikh, Mahwish Zafar, Saqib Nawaz, and Asma Nawaz. 2019. "CPEC Investment Opportunities and Challenges in Pakistan." *Journal of Accounting and Finance in Emerging Economies* 5 (1): 123–28. <https://doi.org/10.26710/jafee.v5i1.722>.
- Schmidt, Brian C, and Colin Wight. 2023. "Rationalism and the 'Rational Actor Assumption' in Realist International Relations Theory." *Journal of International Political Theory* 19 (2): 158–82. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17550882221144643>.
- Schneider, Susan C. 1989. "Strategy Formulation: The Impact of National Culture." *Organization Studies* 10 (2): 149–68. <https://doi.org/10.1177/017084068901000202>.
- Scholvin, Sören, and Mikael Wigell. 2018. "Geo-Economics as a Concept and Practice in International Relations: Surveying the State of the Art." 2018. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324602603_Geo-economics_as_a_concept_and_practice_in_international_relations_surveying_the_state_of_the_art.
- Schühly, Andreas Michael. 2022. "The Influence of Culture on Strategic Management and Its Processes." In *Cultural Influences on the Process of Strategic Management*, by Andreas Michael Schühly, 137–237. MIR Series in International Business. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-86660-0_3.
- Schwenk, Charles R. 1988. "The Cognitive Perspective on Strategic Decision Making." *Journal of Management Studies* 25 (1): 41–55. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.1988.tb00021.x>.
- Shah, Ali Zaman. 2017. "Geopolitical Significance of Balochistan: Interplay of Foreign Actors." *Strategic Studies* 37 (3): 126–44. <https://doi.org/10.53532/ss.037.03.00213>.
- Shah, Rahat, Shakir Hussain, and Asif Rasheed. 2020. "China Pakistan Economic Corridor: Security Challenges and Sequence of Processes of Domestic Resistance." SSRN Scholarly Paper. Rochester, NY. <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=3518045>.

- Shaumyan, Tatiana L. 2023. "The Kashmir Problem: International Legal Perspective." *Journal of the Institute of Oriental Studies RAS*, no. 4 (26), 250–64. <https://doi.org/10.31696/2618-7302-2023-4-250-264>.
- Shifting Power in Asia-Pacific?* 2017. Global Power Shift. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-45689-8_5.
- Shved, V. 2021. "Indian-Pakistani Border: Historical Development and Contemporary Principles of Reconciling Contradictions." *Problems of World History*, no. 15 (September), 140–50. <https://doi.org/10.46869/2707-6776-2021-15-7>.
- Siddiqui, Mehtab Begum, Maryam Khokhar, Tayyaba Rafique Makhdoom, Md Billal Hossain, Sarmad Ejaz, Faisal Ejaz, and Anna Dunay. 2023. "The Impact of Pak and China Cultural Influences on CPEC Energy Project Moderating Effect in South Asia: A Case Study from Pakistan." *International Journal of Energy Economics and Policy* 13 (6): 211–19. <https://doi.org/10.32479/ijee.13920>.
- Silin, Yakov, Larisa Kapustina, Italo Trevisan, and Andrei Drevalev. 2018. "The Silk Road Economic Belt: Balance of Interests." *Economic and Political Studies* 6 (3): 293–318. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20954816.2018.1499072>.
- Silove, Nina. 2016. "The Pivot before the Pivot: U.S. Strategy to Preserve the Power Balance in Asia." *International Security* 40 (4): 45–88. https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00238.
- Singh, Priyanka. 2016. "Louis D. Hayes. The Islamic State in the Post-Modern World: The Political Experience of Pakistan." *Asian Affairs* 47 (3): 510–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03068374.2016.1225937>.
- Small, Andrew. 2015. *The China-Pakistan Axis: Asia's New Geopolitics*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Smith, Paul J. 2011. "The China–Pakistan–United States Strategic Triangle: From Cold War to the 'War on Terrorism.'" *Asian Affairs: An American Review* 38 (4): 197–220. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00927678.2011.604291>.
- Smith, Stanley Barney. 1940. "The Economic Motive in Thucydides." *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 51:267–301. <https://doi.org/10.2307/310931>.
- Snyder, Glenn H. 2002. "Mearsheimer's World-Offensive Realism and the Struggle for Security: A Review Essay." *International Security* 27 (1): 149–73.
- Sondhaus, Lawrence. 2009. "Strategic Culture and Ways of War." Routledge & CRC Press. 2009. <https://www.routledge.com/Strategic-Culture-and-Ways-of-War/Sondhaus/p/book/9780415545068>.
- Soomro, Abdul Hameed, Maryam Abbasi, Saira Umer, and Eman Shaikh. 2023. "Assessment of Global Wind Power Generation at Jhimpir Pakistan-A Case Study." *Sir Syed University Research Journal of Engineering & Technology* 13 (1): 42–47. <https://doi.org/10.33317/ssurj.540>.

- Steinsson, Sverrir. 2014. "John Mearsheimer's Theory of Offensive Realism and the Rise of China." *E-International Relations* (blog). March 6, 2014. <https://www.e-ir.info/2014/03/06/john-mearsheimers-theory-of-offensive-realism-and-the-rise-of-china/>.
- Sultan, Adil. 2021. "Challenges in Nuclear Posture and Deterrence from Pakistan's Perspective." *National Security Journal* 3 (4). <https://doi.org/10.36878/nsj20211224.05>.
- Surahio, Muhammad Kashan, Shengyu Gu, Hakim Ali Mahesar, and Mansoor Mumtaz Soomro. 2022. "China–Pakistan Economic Corridor: Macro Environmental Factors and Security Challenges." *SAGE Open* 12 (1): 215824402210798. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440221079821>.
- Synder. 1977. *The Soviet Strategic Culture. Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations*. <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/ADA046124>.
- Synder, Jack. 1984. "The Ideology of the Offensive." *Cornell University Press*. <https://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/book/9780801482441/the-ideology-of-the-offensive/>.
- Tasleem, Sadia, and Toby Dalton. 2018. "Nuclear Emulation: Pakistan's Nuclear Trajectory." *The Washington Quarterly* 41 (4): 135–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2018.1558662>.
- Telbami, S. 2002. "Kenneth Waltz, Neorealism, and Foreign Policy." *Security Studies*, March. <https://doi.org/10.1080/714005344>.
- The Hindu*. 2012. "China Has No Plan for Indian Ocean Military Bases," September 3, 2012, sec. Interview. <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/interview/china-has-no-plan-for-indian-ocean-military-bases/article3855313.ece>.
- Thorhallsson, Baldur, Sverrir Steinsson, and Thorsteinn Kristinsson. 2018. "A Theory Of Shelter: Iceland's American Period (1941–2006)." *Scandinavian Journal of History* 43 (4): 539–63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03468755.2018.1467078>.
- Thürer, Matthias, Ivan Tomašević, Mark Stevenson, Constantin Blome, Steven Melnyk, Hing Kai Chan, and George Q. Huang. 2020. "A Systematic Review of China's Belt and Road Initiative: Implications for Global Supply Chain Management." *International Journal of Production Research* 58 (8): 2436–53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00207543.2019.1605225>.
- Toft, Peter. 2005. "John J. Mearsheimer: An Offensive Realist between Geopolitics and Power." *Journal of International Relations and Development* 8 (December). <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jird.1800065>.
- Treddenick, John M. 1996. "Defence and Economics: Some Issues for the Post-Cold War World." *The Canadian Journal of Economics* 29 (April):S644. <https://doi.org/10.2307/136124>.

- Tripathi, Harish. 2023. "History of the Delhi Sultanate: Its Establishment, Influence, and Fall:" *RESEARCH REVIEW International Journal of Multidisciplinary* 8 (5): 166–71. <https://doi.org/10.31305/rrijm.2023.v08.n05.022>.
- Ullah, Sadiq, Mumtaz Alam, and Zulfiqar Ali Baig. 2022. "Effects of CPEC on the Economy of China and Pakistan." *Asia Social Science Academy* 8 (3): 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.51600/jass.2022.8.3.1>.
- Umair, Muhammad, Fida Bazai, and Ruqaia Rehman. 2021. "Counter-Terrorism Strategies Of The Musharraf Regime In FATA." *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs* 4 (4). <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v4i4.318>.
- Ur Rehman, Naveed. 2020. "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Challenges and Prospects in the Context of Political and Economic Challenges Associated with BRI Initiative." *Pakistan Social Sciences Review* 4 (III): 1215–24. [https://doi.org/10.35484/pssr.2020\(4-III\)88](https://doi.org/10.35484/pssr.2020(4-III)88).
- Van Der Walddt, Gerrit. 2020. "Constructing Conceptual Frameworks in Social Science Research." *The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa* 16 (1). <https://doi.org/10.4102/td.v16i1.758>.
- W. Taliaferro, Jeffrey. 1999. "Security Under Anarchy: Defensive Realism Reconsidered." 1999. <https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/isa/taj01/>.
- Waldron, Arthur. 1996. "Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History." *The China Quarterly* 147 (September):962–64. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741000051870>.
- Walling, Talichuba. 2017. "Neorealism in International Relations | Talichuba Walling - Academia.Edu." 2017. https://www.academia.edu/12094509/Neorealism_in_International_Relations.
- Walt, Kenneth. 1957. *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis, Anniversary Edition*. Columbia University Press.
- Walt, Stephen M. 1990. *The Origins of Alliances*. Cornell Studies in Security Affairs. Ithaca London: Cornell university press.
- Walt, Stephen M. 2018. "US Grand Strategy after the Cold War: Can Realism Explain It? Should Realism Guide It?" *International Relations* 32 (1): 3–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117817753272>.
- Wani, Zahoor Ahmad. 2022. "Geopolitical Dynamics in the Afghanistan–India–Pakistan Triangle." *India Quarterly* 78 (4): 617–33. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09749284221127807>.
- Weinbaum, Marvin G. 1991. "Pakistan and Afghanistan: The Strategic Relationship." *Asian Survey* 31 (6): 496–511. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2645079>.
- Wen, Ruosi, and Hummera Saleeem. 2021. "The Opportunities and Challenges That the Belt and Road Initiative Brings: Analysis from Perspective of China-Pakistan Economic

- Corridor.” *American Journal of Industrial and Business Management* 11 (06): 675–91. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ajibm.2021.116044>.
- Wernaart, Bart. 2021. “Regional Economic Integration.” In *International Law and Business*. Routledge.
- Westphal, Manon, and Ulrich Willems. 2023. “Doing Realist Political Theory: Introduction.” *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 26 (3): 319–34. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13698230.2022.2120654>.
- Widdowson, H.G. 1995. “Discourse Analysis: A Critical View.” *Language and Literature: International Journal of Stylistics* 4 (3): 157–72. <https://doi.org/10.1177/096394709500400301>.
- Wigell, Mikael, Sören Scholvin, and Mika Aaltola. 2019. “Geo-Economics and Power Politics in the 21st Century: The Revival of Economic Statecraft.” Routledge & CRC Press. 2019. <https://www.routledge.com/Geo-economics-and-Power-Politics-in-the-21st-Century-The-Revival-of-Economic-Statecraft/Wigell-Scholvin-Aaltola/p/book/9780367480493>.
- Winter, Tim. 2020. “Silk Road Diplomacy: Geopolitics and Histories of Connectivity.” *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 26 (7): 898–912. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2020.1765164>.
- Wolf, Siegfried O. 2017. “China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and Its Impact on Regionalisation in South Asia.” In *Regional Cooperation in South Asia*, edited by Sumana Bandyopadhyay, André Torre, Paulo Casaca, and Tomaz Dentinho, 99–112. Contemporary South Asian Studies. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-56747-1_6.
- . 2020. *The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor of the Belt and Road Initiative: Concept, Context and Assessment*. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0262728019893125>.
- Xiaolong, Tao, Nida Gull, Shahid Iqbal, Muhammad Asghar, Ahsan Nawaz, Gadah Albasher, Javaria Hameed, and Ahsen Maqsoom. 2021. “Exploring and Validating the Effects of Mega Projects on Infrastructure Development Influencing Sustainable Environment and Project Management.” *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (April): 663199. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.663199>.
- Yahaya, Jibrin Ubale. 2018. “The Relevance of Theoretical Assumption of Realist and Idealist Perceptions in International Relations Discipline.” *Arts and Social Sciences Journal* 09 (05). <https://doi.org/10.4172/2151-6200.1000410>.
- Yeo, Yukyung. 2009. “Remaking the Chinese State and the Nature of Economic Governance?” *Journal of Contemporary China* 18 (62): 729–43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670560903172808>.
- Yu, Hong. 2017. “Motivation behind China’s ‘One Belt, One Road’ Initiatives and Establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.” *Journal of Contemporary China* 26 (105): 353–68. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2016.1245894>.

- Yusin, Jennifer. 2009. "The Silence of Partition: Borders, Trauma, and Partition History." *Social Semiotics* 19 (4): 453–68. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330903361141>.
- Zaheer, Muhammad. 2023. "The Theory of Neorealism and U.S. Foreign Policy," December.
- Zaidi, Syed Muhammad Saad, and Adam Saud. 2020. "Future of US-China Relations: Conflict, Competition or Cooperation?" *Asian Social Science* 16 (7): 1. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v16n7p1>.
- Zain, malik. 2021. "Pakistan Faces External Security Threats From Afghanistan and India." *Journal of Arts & Social Sciences* 8 (1): 1–5. [https://doi.org/10.46662/jass-vol8-iss1-2021\(1-5\)](https://doi.org/10.46662/jass-vol8-iss1-2021(1-5)).
- Zeng, Douglas Z. 2021. "The Past, Present, and Future of Special Economic Zones and Their Impact." *Journal of International Economic Law* 24 (2): 259–75. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jiel/jgab014>.
- Zhang, Qiyue, Zheng Wang, and Godwin Okafor. 2022. "Understanding China's Economic Engagement in Africa: An Exploration of the FDI-Trade Nexus." *Sustainability* 14 (23): 15632. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su142315632>.
- Zhang, Tiejun. 2002. "Chinese Strategic Culture: Traditional and Present Features." *Comparative Strategy* 21 (2): 73–90. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01495930290043056>.
- Zille-e-, Huma, and Mustafa Malik. 2021. "Globalization with Chinese Characteristics: A Case Study of OBOR and CPEC (2013-2020)." *International Journal of Political Studies* 7 (2). <https://doi.org/10.25272/j.2149-8539.2021.7.2.04>.

Appendix I

Interview Guide

The Impact of CPEC on Pakistan's Strategic Culture

Purpose of the Study

This questionnaire is part of a PhD research project titled "The Impact of CPEC on Pakistan's Strategic Culture.". In the aftermath of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Pakistan, historically characterized as a security state, has strategically embraced geo-economics alongside its traditional geo-strategic orientation. This shift poses a compelling inquiry into the evolution of Pakistan's strategic culture and the transformative impact of CPEC on its security policy. As Pakistan integrates geo-economics as a supplemental tool, understanding the nature of its strategic culture becomes imperative for comprehending post-CPEC security dynamics. This scenario might be compelling the state of Pakistan to readjust its foreign and national security policies under its new emerging strategic priorities, thus transforming Pakistan's strategic culture. This study will explore the implications of CPEC on Pakistan's strategic culture and aims to assess the change in Pakistan's strategic culture caught between the forces of change and continuity.

Guidelines for Respondents

Please provide thoughtful and concise/brief responses to the following questions. Your insights are invaluable to understanding the complex dynamics of CPEC and its impacts on Pakistan's Strategic Culture.

Timeline for Submission

Please submit your completed questionnaire as early as possible. Your prompt response will greatly assist in keeping the research on schedule.

Questions:

Theoretical Framework of Strategic Culture and Geoeconomics

Concepts and Perspectives

What are the foundational elements of strategic culture, and how has the concept evolved, including its key components and analytical approaches?

Dynamics and Evolutionary Phases of Strategic Culture of Pakistan

How has Pakistan's strategic culture evolved in changing geopolitical and economic landscapes?

Comprehensive Overview of the CPEC

What are the key developments, components, and current progress of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)?

Evaluating the Impact of CPEC on the Strategic Culture of Pakistan

What impact has CPEC had on Pakistan's strategic culture, particularly in the context of shifting geopolitical and geo-economic trends?

Getting maximum Benefits from CPEC

Can you suggest practical steps Pakistan should take to accrue maximum benefits from CPEC?

Policy Recommendations for the Future

Looking ahead, what policy recommendations would you offer for Pakistan to navigate its geo-economic effectively, which should, in return, strengthen its geopolitics?

Respondent Information: (Optional)

Name:

Position:

Organization:

Contact Information:

Please also give your consent if there is no issue for mentioning your name in referencing of the research.

Submission Instructions:

Please return your completed questionnaire via email: muhammad.phdir51@iiu.edu.pk by the specified timeline. If the respondent is comfortable with a voice note responding to each question, he may send WhatsApp Voice Note at +92-333-9992311 replying each question. Should you have any questions or require further clarification, do not hesitate to contact the mentioned.

Thank you very much for your valuable contribution to this research. Your expertise and insights are greatly appreciated.