The Dynamics Of The Pakistan-U.S. Alliances During The Cold War: A Psychology Of Threat Perception

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Abstract

Alliances are one of the integral elements of effective statecraft in international relations. Therefore, this study aims at explaining alliances and their formation, reviewing the history of alliances in general and the dynamics of the Pakistan-U.S. alliances during the Cold War era in particular to understand the psychology of threat perception. The study highlights that alliances are formed to enhance security in order to counter a mutual threat. However, a threat may be less or more but there

is a difference between reality and perception as these are absolutely psychological phenomena that cannot be measured with numerical values. For instance, Pakistan allied as the most-allied ally of the U.S. based on presumptions with latent values to counter Soviet Union, because, there was no immediate, direct or a potential threat to the former, therefore, later their alliance became just a paper alliance. Based on the events between these two nations during the Cold War era, this study concludes that a potential mutual threat based on realities and patent values strengthens the alliance otherwise it becomes a marriage of inconvenience.

Keywords: Alliances, Threat, Pakistan, the U.S., Cold War.

1. Introduction

This study covers an introduction of the alliances in international relations and a historical overview of the alliances in world's history. In addition to that, a synopsis of the Pakistan-U.S. alliances during the Cold War is provided that traces the historical trends of the alliances between both countries to understand the psychology of threat perception. This is meant to help us understand the states' behavior in the alliance particularly in the case of Pakistan and the U.S.

2. Alliances in International Relations

Alliances arguably constitute one of the integral elements of effective statecraft in international relations. Underpinning the design of these alliances is the perceived balance between the liabilities and benefits of the alliance for every member (Kireyev, 2004). Relevantly, perhaps one of the main topics of foreign policy discourse revolves around the formation of alliance, mostly focusing on the elements of 'to whom' and 'how long' (Dwivedi, 2012). Two or more countries would likely form an alliance with the goals generally about defying their common enemy. Weaker states would often enter an alliance to protect themselves against potential and strong adversary, achieving the desired stability and status; whilst stronger states would form an alliance for self-interest and to prevent its foes from accessing the resources of weaker states. (Kireyev, 2004; Liska, 1962).

States are also motivated to form alliances with the overarching goal of acquiring greater security, (Lalman &

Newman, 1991). At the time of a conflict, it is expected that states would likely seek diplomatic and military assistance from their own allies (Dwivedi, 2012). Hence, the efficacy of an alliance is determined by its capability to counter a common threat (Liska, 1962). It is for this reason that an alliance ceases to exist when there is an unequal distribution of benefits and costs, as well as when there is no more common threat shared by its members (Liska, 1962).

3. History of Alliances in General

The history of interstate alliances may be commonly associated with the political and military landscape of the European continent. The key reasoning behind the formation of an alliance is premised on maintaining the balance of power with one another (Haglund, 2009). The origin of alliances can be traced back to the ancient history of civilization. One prominent example of such alliances was the formation of a long-lasting alliance during the Peloponnesian War in the ancient Greece. In this War, two alliances were displayed: One, Spartans and their allies, known as Peloponnesian League, and second, on the opposite side, Athenians and their allies, known as Delian League (Lendering, 2005). Haglund (2009) also reveals the classic work of Artha-Sastra (c. 300 BC) of Kautilya, in which Kautilya talks about the formation of alliances. He highlighted that states should forge the allies with others to seek their assistance and support against their common enemy.

During the medieval times, there were many medium-sized countries in the continent of Europe. Among the most notable examples of these countries are included the Dutch Republic, Archduchy of Austria, England, France, Spain, Savoy and the Holy Roman Empire. Whenever any country from this continent tried to establish hegemony, other countries reacted to that by forming alliances to deter it such as the Grand Alliance in 1689 also known as the League of Augsburg (Stapleton Jr, 2004).

Ever since the concept of nation states came into reality through the signing of Treaty of Westphalia in 1468, not a single state was militarily powerful enough to establish a long-lasting hegemony against the rest of its counterparts in Europe. Whenever a country tried to become a hegemon, other countries would react by forming alliances to counter it. Despite multiple attempts, King Louis of France, for

instance, failed in his attempt to establish a lasting hegemony over Europe. This failure was due to the formation of alliance by other nation States in opposing French aspiration, which ultimately led to the War of the Grand Alliance. Similarly, Napoleon Bonaparte's ambition to conquer the European continent was thwarted by a series of alliances (Haglund, 2009).

Whilst the history of interstate alliances, as noted earlier, is generally connected to the European balance of power and Westphalian states system, other continents have also witnessed the formation of such alliances. Alliances had played a pivotal role in influencing the regional balance in the developing states of South America. For instance, the triple alliance of Uruguay, Brazil, and Argentina during the Paraguayan War (1865-70) defeated Paraguay with devastating effect, reducing the population and territorial possession of the latter (Marley, 1998).

Ideology was also one of the key factors that provided the basis for many alliances, but this was not the case in the formation of alliance involving the Roman Catholic King of France and Ottoman Sultan that allied together in 1536 to fight against the Roman Emperor (Haglund, 2009). In the same way, the democratically elected government of the United States and Great Britain allied with the communist Soviet Union (USSR) in the Second World War to successfully defeat the Nazi Germany.

Towards the end of the 19th century, alliances reached a new level, when the economic and military rivalry commenced between France and Germany that eventually polarized the European continent. The rivalry led the formation of two alliances, 'the Allies' (France, Great Brittan and Russia) and 'the Central Powers' (Austria-Hungary and Germany) were formed (Coffman, 2014). These alliances resulted instability in the region and eventually led to the First World War in 1914 when a conflict between Austria-Hungary and Russia brought both the alliances pitted against each other at the battlegrounds across Europe (Leed, 1981). This event had abandoned traditional isolation of the U.S. which joined the Allied side in 1917 (Haglund, 2009).

During the Second World War (1939-1945), Germany, Japan and Italy formed the offensive alliance known as the Axis competing for world dominance, resulting in defensive

alliance of China, the Great Britain and France. The U.S. and USSR subsequently joined the defensive alliance side in 1941. By defeating the Axis in 1945, the victorious Allies then established the United Nations (UN) for the purpose of international collaboration and collective security (Churchill, 1959).

In the aftermath of the Second World War, two foremost importance military alliances during the Cold War era were formed based on divergent ideological line. The Great Britain, Canada and western European countries joined the U.S. in 1949 and established the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The USSR, its Eastern and central European satellites reacted to the threat posed by the formation of NATO by forming their own military pact, the Warsaw Pact in 1955. The creation of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact led to the Cold War rivalry between the member States of these two alliances (Wagner, 1978). In the aftermath of the formation of these alliances, a number of treaty organizations were established by the U.S., such as Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty (ANZUS), the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), and the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). These treaty organizations came to an end with the dissolution of Warsaw Pact and the collapse of the USSR in 1991 (Haglund, 2009).

In the immediate aftermath of the Cold War and without a clear Europeans block, numerous scholars were engaged in an extensive debate regarding the need of an enemy to keep the alliances unified. For instance, there was a debate about NATO's continued existence after the collapse of the USSR, whether it should remain intact or be dissolved (Kireyev, 2004). Conversely, this traditional driving factor behind forming an alliance has been underscored by certain high-profile crises. For instance, the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Centre in the U.S. prompted the American government to form a diverse alliance with old allies (e.g., the United Kingdom, France and Pakistan) and the new partners (e.g., Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan) to counter international terrorism (Haglund, 2009). Such situations generated a new foundation for forming alliances to counter a common threat.

4. The Pakistan-U.S. Alliances during the Cold War

Pakistan gained its independence from the Great Britain following its partitioning from India in 1947. Immediately after the independence, the Pakistani government under the Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan explicitly conveyed its country's desire in the diplomatic circle to establish a long-term and close diplomatic relationship with the U.S. The desire to push for diplomatic relationship with the U.S. was warranted due to the perceived rising threat posed by India and the growing influence of USSR to neighbouring countries surrounding Pakistan. Despite the U.S. President, Harry S. Truman had no concrete plan for protecting Pakistan, he then was soon realised Pakistan's strategic significance, leading to a newfound existence and the birth of the U.S. and Pakistan relationships (Gould, 2010; Kux, 2001; Mahmud, 1991). Pakistan signed the Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement in May 1954 with the U.S. to create anti-communist collective defence bilateral treaties. Within the same year, Pakistan joined SEATO along with Great Britain, the U.S., France, the Philippines, Thailand, New Zealand, and Australia (Jillson, 2016).

Pakistan's entry into the SEATO provided the country with security assurance from the U.S. Even though SEATO was established only to defend communist's hostility, Pakistan was seeking security assurance against aggression from all quarters, including India. However, the U.S. had made it clear and refused to assist Pakistan against all the quarters as SEATO was established against communist aggression (Asim, 2011).

Pakistan signed the Baghdad Pact in 1955, which later known as Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) in 1958. After signing the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and CENTO treaties, Pakistan became the closest U.S. ally in the region and started to receive military support and technical assistance from the latter. These treaties, as stated above, primarily were conceived to counter the Communist expansion at that time. Pakistan becoming the part of these treaties shows the geographical significance of the former.

Despite the formalization of military cooperation involving Pakistan and the U.S. in the above-mentioned alliances, both did not share similar objectives and interests. Pakistan's interest and objective were to defend itself against the

growing military threat from its strongest rival, India on the other hand, the U.S. was seeking a strong and stable partner against communist aggression in the region. The U.S. did not want to provoke India - one of its closest allies in the continent, without the expense of destabilizing the region. Consequently, this divergence in interests influenced the course of partnership between the U.S. and Pakistan in the upcoming years (Asim, 2011).

Following the conflict between India and China in 1962, Pakistan realized that being an ally of the U.S. did not have much value because of the latter always keeping its interests first. In the conflict of 1962, the U.S. afforded military and political support to India that brought annoyance and disappointment to Pakistan as the latter perceived India as a major security threat to the country. The U.S. viewed India as a possible partner to contain China's aggression and communist expansionist in the continent. Regardless of protest made by Pakistan, the U.S. was adamant in its position from discontinuing its military support to India even after the conflict (Tahir & Khalid, 1986).

During the war of 1965, the instance of convergence and divergence between the situational conceptions of Pakistan and the U.S. occurred. Pakistan came under a serious threat posed by India and was expecting for the U.S. government to provide diplomatic support and military assistance. The U.S., nonetheless, saw things in a different way. The US President, Lyndon B. Johnson, suspended economic and military aid to both Pakistan and India on September 8, 1965 during the height of the conflict. Before the arms suspension, Pakistan received most of its military equipment and hardware from the U.S. India, on the other hand, received relatively little military aids from the U.S. Instead, the country was the recipient of extensive military aid from the USSR and managed to develop its own industry on manufacturing military equipment (Asim, 2011).

After the war of 1965, Pakistan requested to the U.S. for the spare parts required to repair its military equipment and assets damaged or destroyed during the war. The then U.S. President, Johnson, decided to provide only the spare parts for the previously allocated military equipment without the provision of military assistance and financial credits (Tahir & Khalid, 1986). The Johnson Administration did not approve the export of fighter aircrafts, tanks and artillery. In the end,

Pakistan was only provided with the U.S. spare parts to maintain the American-made military equipment although this policy showed the narrow and restrictive military relationships of the U.S. with Pakistan.

The declining state of the Pakistan-U.S. alliance forced Pakistan to discontinue the operation of the Badaber intelligence facility, nearby Peshawar that was provided to the U.S. as a part of the cooperative arrangement (Sattar, 2013). Even though the U.S. was still the largest source of economic assistance to Pakistan, its provision of security and military assistance had already been ceased. Both SEATO and CENTO largely became a paper alliance. One may argue that the U.S. government had betrayed Pakistan during the war of 1965. This was a notion which Pakistani government firmly believed to be true yet no concrete effort was manifest and observed for the alternate choices on the part of Pakistan (Asim, 2011).

The India-Pakistan war later in 1971 brought Pakistan to a point of realization that a peculiar divergence had started to occur in its alliance with the U.S., and that it was now necessary to reconsider its dependence on the latter. In this war, the crises in the East Pakistan and relevant military crackdown by the Pakistani army in the region was exploited by India. Once again, the U.S. aids to Pakistan were cut off. Moreover, the U.S. stance regarding the creation of Bangladesh was also shifted as the Pakistani army's control over this region was starting to crumble. During the war, Pakistan hardly received any moral and physical support from the world as the country reluctantly recognized the sovereign existence of Bangladesh. Furthermore, the official stance of the U.S. government on Kashmir dispute had also shifted away from its previous support for the UN resolutions of 1948 and 1949 on plebiscite. In retaliation, Pakistan withdrew from SEATO membership in 1972 which brought an end to already a dead alliance (Asim, 2011). Pakistan's military and political failure in East Pakistan significantly reduced its geopolitical importance as it lost its Eastern territory. Following the incident, Pakistan realized its national security could not achieve by relying solely on the U.S. Therefore, Prime Minister, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, was inclined to build a tie, closer than before, among Pakistan, China and other Muslim countries.

In 1979, the Iranian Revolution brought an anti-U.S. government into power in the country. Consequently, Iran left CENTO. Pakistan also quickly withdrew from this alliance (Mahdi, 1995). And so, the first formal period of alliances, that spanned approximately over 25 years between the U.S. and Pakistan, came to an end. Between 1954 and 1979, Pakistan's military and security relationships witness of a long shadow of the external and internal dynamics of the country. There was no direct or immediate threat from the Communist movement. However, Pakistan joined the alliances, and due to which, it was known as the most allied ally with the Western Camp against communism. It helped to bolster the country's military capability, but the alliances were unable to assist much in the 1965 and 1971 wars against India.

Pakistan's security and military relationship with the U.S. continued to exist but at low profile. It was not until this relationship gained public scrutiny that the U.S. Central Intelligence Authority (CIA) launched Operation Cyclone program for supplying arms to the Afghan Mujahideen with the Pakistani assistance from 1979 to 1989 during the USSR intervention in Afghanistan (Bergen, 2001). Under this Program, the U.S. government gave Pakistan with economic and military aid worth of $600 million a year. This assistance consequently fueled the Afghan Mujahideen confrontation against the USSR intervention in Afghanistan. Comparted to the divergent aspirations of CENTO and SEATO, the U.S. and Pakistan both shared a common goal to counter USSR presence in Afghanistan (Asim, 2011).

Against the USSR, the U.S. converged its interests with Pakistan from 1979 to 1989 but later, diverged its relationship with Pakistan on getting its relevant interests served. In October 1990, the Pressler Sanctions were imposed to freeze $564 million military and economic aid to Pakistan for fiscal year of 1991 (Afzal, 1996). Once again, these sanctions brought a major change in the relationships of the two countries. Therefore, the security relationship, spanning over 10 years, effectively came to an end. It reflected significantly that the relationship between two countries was a marriage of inconvenience. During the presence of the Soviet Union, the U.S. was keen to counter the former presence with the help of Pakistan at overlooking every previous reservation that it might have had with Pakistan. As the U.S. interests were served, there was a

decline in the military aid to and the U.S. interests in Pakistan. There was no significant cooperation or relations between both countries and that era is labelled as a cold era of Pakistan and U.S. relations till 2001. The Global War on Terror opened the new avenue for the U.S. and Pakistan relations.

5. Historical Timeline of the Alliances and Cooperation between Pakistan and the U.S. during the Cold War

Pakistan was founded on August 14, 1947. The U.S. and Pakistan had formally started collaboration in 1954 when latter joined SEATO and signed Mutual defence Assistance Agreement with the former. In the following table, the researcher has developed a historical timeline of the alliances and cooperation between the U.S. and Pakistan during the Cold War.

Table 1 Historical Timeline of the Alliances and Cooperation between Pakistan and the U.S.

Foundation of the State of Pakistan1947			
Year	**Alliances and Cooperation**	**Year**	**Alliances and Cooperation**
1948	Non-Allied	**1970**	SEATO and CENTO
1949	Non-Allied	**1971**	SEATO and CENTO
1950	Non-Allied	**1972**	SEATO and CENTO
1951	Non-Allied	**1973**	CENTO
1952	Non-Allied	**1974**	CENTO
1953	Non-Allied	**1975**	CENTO
1954	SEATO	**1976**	CENTO
1955	SEATO	**1977**	CENTO
1956	SEATO and CENTO	**1978**	CENTO
1957	SEATO and CENTO	**1979**	CENTO and Operation Cyclone
1958	SEATO and CENTO	**1980**	Operation Cyclone
1959	SEATO and CENTO	**1981**	Operation Cyclone
1960	SEATO and CENTO	**1982**	Operation Cyclone
1961	SEATO and CENTO	**1983**	Operation Cyclone
1962	SEATO and CENTO	**1984**	Operation Cyclone
1963	SEATO and CENTO	**1985**	Operation Cyclone
1964	SEATO and CENTO	**1986**	Operation Cyclone
1965	SEATO and CENTO	**1987**	Operation Cyclone
1966	SEATO and CENTO	**1988**	Operation Cyclone
1967	SEATO and CENTO	**1989**	Operation Cyclone
1968	SEATO and CENTO	**1990**	No Alliance and Cooperation
1969	SEATO and CENTO	**1991**	No Alliance and Cooperation

Source: Developed by the Researcher

6. Conclusion

From the discussion in this study, it is obvious that alliances are formed to counter perceived mutual threat. However, a threat may be less or more but there is a difference between reality and perception as these are absolutely psychological phenomena that cannot be measured with numerical values. In the case of Pakistan, it allied as the most-allied ally with the U.S. against Soviet Union when there was no immediate, direct or potential threat to its national security. Based on the discussion, it can be considered that Pakistan's decision to be an ally of the U.S. during the Cold War was based on presumptions with latent values rather than realities and patent values that eventually led towards a paper alliance and became a marriage of inconvenience. Whereas, when Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, Pakistan and the U.S. cooperated under Operation Cyclone to counter this invasion but not in a way of alliance. On the other hand, the world history of alliances, several alliances were based on realities and patent values, for instance, European historical alliances against aspiring hegemonic powers, Latin American historical regional balance, ideological alliances, World War I alliances, World War II alliances and NATO. Based on the discussion, it is to conclude that a potential mutual threat based on realities and patent values rather than presumptions with latent values strengthens the alliance otherwise it becomes a marriage of inconvenience.

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