

Received: 05 March 2024, Accepted: 20 March 2024

External and Non-State Actors in Indo-Pak Relations: Strategic Influencers or Obstacles to Peace (1999–2019).

Mudassar Jahangir 1, Dr. Ghulam Shabbir 2

1.PhD, Scholar,
Department of History & Pakistan Studies,
University of Gujrat
mudassar.jahangir87@gmail.com

2.Assistant Professor
Department of History & Pakistan Studies,
University of Gujrat
ghulam.shabbir@uog.edu.pk

Abstract

This paper examines the intricate relationship between external actors and those outside the Pakistani government in shaping Indo-Pakistan relations, regardless of whether it is characterized by war or diplomacy or is constantly evolving in response to shifting global powers. Our research employs a qualitative, Quantitative, and document-based methodology to analyze the strategic actions of key powers, including the United States, China, and Russia, and to reflect the impact of international organizations such as the United Nations, the European Union, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. At the same time, it also examines the influence of non-state actors, such as militant groups, civil society projects, media, and cultural organizations, in both tension and in creating dialogue. The results demonstrate that, in collaboration with the equally outstanding effectiveness of certain actors supporting the peace-building processes at the diplomatic, economic, and cultural levels, aggravation of the conflict, relying on forms of violence, propaganda, and geopolitical manipulation, was also carried out by other actors. Ultimately, the study reveals the dualistic nature of these actors and argues that long-term, stable peace in the South Asian region is achievable through the realignment of both external and internal policies of engagement that are constructive and aimed at resolving conflicts in the long term.

Keywords:Indo-Pak Relations, External Actors, Non-State Actors, Track II Diplomacy, Kashmir Conflict, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

1. Introduction

Indo-Pakistan relations have been one of the most complex and volatile interstate relationships in world politics since the British partition of British India into two states: independent India, which became the world's largest democracy, and Pakistan. This enmity between the two nuclear neighbors is characterized by strife over territorial limits, especially in the Kashmir region, occasional wars, cross-border terrorism as well as unstable peace measures. Traditional accounts tend to focus on the bilateral political aspect of the story; however, a closer examination reveals that external actors, including both state and non-state actors, play a crucial role in shaping the direction of Indo-Pak relations. This category of actors comprises global powers, including the United States, China, and Russia; multilateral institutions, including those of the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC); and even civil society organizations, militant networks, and cultural institutions, have had a substantial impact in the field of diplomacy, escalation of conflicts, and regional security policies as well (Ali et al., 2017; Clarke, 2011).

The two decades from 1999 to 2019 witnessed a significant shift in the balance of world powers, regional relationships, and international conduct. This change happened on the backdrop of some of the most important events, including the Kargil war (1999), the Mumbai attack of 2008, the assassination of Osama bin Laden (2011), the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that officially opened in 2015, and the abrogation of article 370 by India in 2019. All these events triggered strategic moves not only by India and Pakistan but also by a cluster of externally based state actors who re-align their policies to changing geopolitical interests. A good example is the United States, which acted as a strategic partner to Pakistan during the Cold War but shifted to supporting further involvement with India via nuclear agreements and defense relations, particularly since the 9/11 attacks (Ali, 2019; Sardar, 2011). In the same respect, China's economic aspirations through the Belt and Road Initiative have enhanced its relationship with Pakistan and Russia, as its more even-handed diplomacy between India and itself has evolved. (Ahmed & Faisal, 2023; Khan, 2024).

Along with such power play, the non-state actors have also played new cards of influence within the Indo-Pak conflict dynamics. These militant organizations are Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), heavy-profile cross-border attacks that significantly hurt the bilateral

process of diplomacy (Pandya, 2019; Clarke, 2011). Conversely, Track II diplomacy, cultural exchange programs, and civil society-based initiatives have also provided alternative peacebuilding options that, in most cases, have replaced failed state-level negotiations. The dualistic role of the non-state actors is confusing the regional security calculus and can even raise concerns regarding their accountability and long-term effects (spoilers and peace brokers)(Ahmad, 2014; Malik, 2011).

Although scholars have dealt with the subject at length, it is challenging to find references that adopt an integrative approach, covering both external and non-state actors over such a long timescale. This study aims to bridge this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the roles played by these actors in shaping Indo-Pak relations from 1999 to 2019. In particular, the paper explores the strategic actions of the United States, China, Russia, international organizations such as the UN, EU, SCO, and OIC; peaces making or conflict-increasing actions of such militant networks, media, business communities, and cultural institutions; and ponders upon wider implications to the stability of the region. The research design explanation for this policy is a qualitative method that utilizes documentation, including policy documents, scholarly work, UN resolutions, and official statements.

This paper will contribute to the broader understanding of conflict mediation, power projection, and soft diplomacy in South Asia, as the roles of both state actors and non-state actors in influencing these areas will be critically evaluated. It highlights the fact that external participation in Indo-Pak relations is not a mindless act but rather an interwoven mechanism of strategic considerations, ideational leanings, and informal statecraft initiatives. The role of external influence and its correlation with the erosion or improvement of peace initiatives is also explored in the research, which may provide insight into future directions in regional diplomacy and security.

2. Methodology

This study employs a qualitative, document-oriented analytical approach to examine the roles played by external actors and non-state actors in Indo-Pakistan relations between 1999 and 2019. Due to the political sensitivity and the complex history surrounding the topic, the qualitative approach offers the possibility of a detailed, interpretative discussion of politics and diplomatic

policies, institutional behavior, and non-state influence mechanisms. Instead of using statistical or empirical data sets, this paper will take an interpretive approach to the current literature regarding notable political trends and patterns of discourse, as provided by secondary sources, including academic journals, policy papers, official Diplomatic press releases, historical records, and international publications.

2.1 Research Design and Time Frame

This time range, spanning 20 years from 1999 to 2019, was chosen intentionally, as it holds the most significant importance in Indo-Pakistan relations. This period denotes some of the key incidents, such as the Kargil war, the 9/11 attack and the ensuing U.S. war on terror, the terrorist attack of 2008 in Mumbai, the initiation of CPEC (2015), and the removal of Article 370 (2019). The response of global or non-state actors, such as the United States, China, Russia, militant groups, media institutions, and peace networks, was equally activated by these events, not only because they redefined bilateral relations but also because they involved the international community and brought about an enormous change in the dynamics of bilateral relations. The design will enable this study to observe a specific transition period in South Asian geopolitics, characterized by traditional statecraft as well as emerging transnational forces.

2.2 Data Sources and Selection Criteria

The information relied upon in the current study was primarily collected from peer-reviewed journals, policy think-tank publications, formal government reports, United Nations publications, international news archives, and scholarly monographs. Special focus was placed on the utilization of material already cited in the original MPhil thesis (such as works by Clarke (2011), Ali et al. (2017), Malik (2011), and Sadiq & Ali (2024)). Where possible, primary documents, including official statements of U.S. foreign policy, records of the United Nations Security Council, and speeches by political leaders, were also utilized. A choice was made regarding the presence of actors non-state (militant groups, Track II diplomacy, media, civil society organizations) as well as state (U.S., China, Russia, UN, EU, SCO, OIC) actors, according to the degree of direct engagement in influencing the course of Indo-Pakistan relations at the time of analysis.

2.3 Analytical Approach

A thematic content analysis framework was employed to identify recurring patterns of behavior, shifts in diplomatic orientation, and strategic discourses fostered by both foreign state actors and non-state actors. The thematic subsections of the analysis were broken into the type of actor: (1) major powers, (2) international and regional organizations, (3) militant groups and informal channels of diplomacy, and (4) cultural and economic non-state actors. All the actors were discussed in terms of their interventions in major conflicts or peace-building events (e.g., Kargil, Mumbai attacks, CPEC opposition, the Pulwama incident), the means of influence employed (military aid, diplomacy, sanctions, soft power, or media framing), and the results of the intervention.

2.4 Limitations

Although this study provides an in-depth examination of outside and non-state influences in Indo-Pak relations, it has its limitations. One, the use of secondary sources tends to exclude classified or confidential state secrets related to diplomatic relations that are not published in books. Second, due to the inherent nature of qualitative research, the study of actor motivators and the impacts of policy may be somewhat subjective. Finally, the non-inclusion of post-2019 politics, such as the shift in leadership alignments after the pandemic or the emergence of the Afghan Taliban, may negatively impact the study's capacity to address the latest changes in South Asian diplomacy. Nonetheless, such limitations are mitigated by the strong and wide-ranging source foundation and the definite property of the study period.

3. Results and Findings

3.1 Role of Major Powers in Indo-Pak Relations

Between 1999 and 2019, the security dynamics and diplomatic relations in India-Pakistan relations were largely shaped by the strategic interventions of global powers, primarily the United States, China, and Russia. The two countries were particularly characterized by their foreign policies, which not only responded to changing geopolitical interests but also significantly determined the crisis process of peace and bilateral inclinations in the region. Such powers had a two-fold agenda in most actions they took: (a) to foster stability and (b) preserve

their strategic presence in South Asia. This section will provide a detailed comparative analysis of their two roles.

3.1.1 The United States: Strategic Realignment and Diplomatic Dualism

The role that America played in Indo-Pak relations has changed since the years of the Cold War, when the US was a close ally of Pakistan and is currently a contemporary strategic ally of India. This change was witnessed in 1999 during the Kargil Conflict, where the US, through President Bill Clinton, spoke out publicly against the intrusion of Pakistan into the Indian-controlled territory, and forced the then Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to withdraw forces. This critical action did not simply calm the clash at hand, but is a sign that America had moved away from its normal policy of remaining indifferent to the conflicts in South Asia (Sardar, 2011).

Pakistan has become a frontline state in the US-led war on terror following the 9/11 attacks. President George W. Bush turned Pakistan into a major non-NATO ally under the US, directing billions of dollars of military and economic assistance. Nevertheless, the interaction was full of suspicions. Whereas Pakistan had been cooperating in the capture of high-value al-Qaeda targets, the US continued to accuse Islamabad of harboring Taliban and the elements of the Haqqani network. A low point in bilateral trust occurred with the 2011 Abbottabad raid that culminated in the death of Osama bin Laden on Pakistani *territory* (Ali, 2019).

On the contrary, US-Indian relations improved greatly. The U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement of 2005, which granted India access to civilian nuclear technology despite its non-participation in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), marked a strategic shift. The US viewed India as a democratic counterbalance to China in the Indo-Pacific. There is a sense that America is favoring India, as evidenced by subsequent defense agreements and intelligence sharing, as well as its enhanced involvement in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad). In the case of Pakistan, the change signified diplomatic isolation and confirmation of its dependency on China (Ali & Sultan, 2023).

3.1.2 China: A Steadfast Ally and Economic Anchor for Pakistan

The activities of China in Indo-Pak relations can be characterized by the fact that it has become a strategic benefactor to Pakistan and an economic competitor to India. Although maintaining a low-key diplomatic stance during the Kargil war, Beijing subsequently tightened its military and

economic relations with Pakistan in the years to come. This alliance was initiated with the opening of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in 2015, a multi-billion-dollar project within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), designed to link the Xinjiang region of China and the Gwadar Port of Pakistan (Hongdo et al., 2019).

India was strongly opposed to CPEC because some of its lines run through Gilgit-Baltistan, which is part of the disputed Kashmir region. This meant not only that New Delhi was violating India's sovereignty, but also a geostrategic move to encircle India.

Meanwhile, China has remained a steady provider of advanced weaponry to Pakistan, with which it has jointly produced the JF-17 Thunder fighter jet and supplied submarine dolly systems and ballistic missile assistance. Pakistan was also endowed with China as a nuclear supplier, and any international front would be provided a diplomatic cover against them. Interestingly, China blocked India several times from declaring JeM chief Masood Azhar a global terrorist in the UN Security Council, terming it a lack of consensus. This step demonstrated that China could utilize its platforms in the international community to defend Pakistani interests, despite potentially straining its relations with India (Jassim& Hashem, 2023). Nevertheless, even China did not want to renounce its huge trade ties with India, which reached more than \$ 90 billion by 2019, suggesting the existence of a complex policy of economic opening and restraint (Farooq & Khawaja, 2020).

3.1.3 Russia: From Indo-Centric Ties to Strategic Pragmatism

Traditionally, on the Indian side, Russia has gradually started to diversify its policy in South Asia since the end of 1999. Committing itself to the Western agenda, Russia also expressed full support for India and demanded that Pakistan vacate occupied positions during the Kargil conflict. Nevertheless, by the mid-2000s, Russia was growing alarmed by India's military ties with the United States. In response, Moscow also began to adjust its policies, indicating its interest in forging relations with Pakistan (O'Donnell & Papa, 2021).

Direct Russian defense cooperation started in 2014, when Russia suspended its arms embargo on Pakistan and then engaged in joint military drills under the Druzhba name (Ahmed & Faisal, 2023). Such exercises were on counterterrorism and mountain warfare, so India felt

uncomfortable with them, but Russia was insistent that they were not meant to weaken Indo-Russian relations (Ahmed & Faisal, 2023).

Nonetheless, Russia has also continued to be the largest supplier of defense systems to India. The country sold important systems, such as the S-400 Triumf missile defense system, in a \$5.4 billion contract in 2018. The latter represents the Russian endeavour to preserve the strategic balance in South Asia, as they also counteract the increased Western presence in the region. Another sign of its balancing act was its participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), where both India and Pakistan were affiliated members (Chaliha, 2022).

Comparative Overview: Major Powers in Indo-Pak Relations (1999–2019)

To illustrate the nuanced roles of these actors, the following table provides a comparative summary:

Country	Strategic Focus	Key Interventions	Impact on Indo-Pak Relations
United States	Counterterrorism, Indo-Pacific strategy, Non-proliferation	Kargil mediation, Civil Nuclear Deal with India, Abbottabad raid	Strengthened US-India ties; strategic mistrust with Pakistan; decline in Pakistan's leverage
China	BRI (CPEC), Strategic balancing, Military supply to Pakistan	CPEC launch, Arms to Pakistan, Veto on Masood Azhar, JF-17 collaboration	Closer Sino-Pak ties; heightened India-China geopolitical encirclement concerns
Russia	Balancing Indo-US ties, Counterterrorism, Regional power assertion	S-400 missile deal with India, Druzhba military drills with Pakistan, SCO mediation efforts	Pragmatic diplomacy; maintained Indo-Russian defense axis while opening to Pakistan

These findings suggest that while the United States and China have acted as strategic poles influencing regional polarization, Russia has assumed a more pragmatic and flexible role, engaging both nations to enhance its relevance in the emerging multipolar world order. Each of

these powers, through diplomatic, economic, and military channels, has deeply impacted Indo-Pakistan dynamics, often reinforcing competition rather than cooperation.

3.2 Quantitative Approach: Mapping the Influence of External and Non-State Actors

A quantitative lens is pivotal in disentangling the dynamic nature of externalities and the involvement of non-state actors in Indo-Pakistan relations, in addition to the qualitative analysis. The pure empirical application of the data will be represented in this section using a few selected data points, which help visualize the changes in defense alliances, diplomatic patterns, and terrorism, as well as media and international institutional initiatives. The metrics not only support past accounts but also measure the influence of actors and their strategic importance.

3.2.1 Arms Trade as a Measure of Strategic Alignment

Arms importations are a highly effective measure of two-sided tactical tendencies, since they indicate more than a decade of security alliances and military dependence. India stands as one of the largest arms importers in the world, with the most significant share of its arms depot supplied by Russia between 1999 and 2019. The United States was not far behind, as relations between India and the United States have strengthened since 2005. On the other side, China was the largest provider of arms to Pakistan during this era, and this proves the emerging trend of the Sino-Pak strategic relationship, especially after the U.S. started decreasing its assistance in 2011 when it conducted the Abbottabad raid.

The following table presents the cumulative arms trade values from major suppliers to India and Pakistan:

Country	Supplier	Total Arms Import Value (USD Millions)
India	USA	12,000
Pakistan	USA	3,200
India	China	500
Pakistan	China	9,200

India	Russia	17,000
Pakistan	Russia	1,500

This data highlights how Russia remained India's defense anchor, while China was Pakistan's dominant supplier, with the U.S. pivoting toward India after the mid-2000s. These figures reflect broader geopolitical realignments that paralleled diplomatic and conflict milestones.

3.2.2 Peace vs. Disruption: Track II Dialogues and Terrorism Events

The other striking aspect of the involvement of external and non-state actors is that, compared to the occurrence of peace dialogues, (critical) terrorist attacks have occurred. The LeT/JeM and other militant organizations conducted major attacks (e.g., 2001, parliament 2001, 2008, Mumbai 2008, and Pulwama 2019); the Track II efforts were used to keep contacts during stalemates in diplomacy. Social get-togethers, such as the Neemrana Dialogue and Aman Ki Asha, were instrumental in decreasing tensions, albeit on a temporary scale.

Type of Event	Number of Events (1999–2019)
Track II Dialogues	12
Major Terror Attacks	8

The data shows that even during intense geopolitical rivalry, civil society and retired diplomats persisted in creating platforms for bilateral engagement. However, each major terror event often resulted in a suspension or regression of formal peace talks, proving how non-state militant actions regularly outweighed non-governmental peace efforts in terms of policy disruption.

3.2.3 UN Resolutions and Veto Diplomacy

International organizations, particularly the United Nations, have often been seen to play a symbolic role. Since 1999, Pakistan has been making several resolutions and diplomatic pleas to internationalise Kashmir via the UN. Nevertheless, an Indian effort was regularly thwarted, and a good example is the Security Council, where China has vetoed a number of Indian proposals, including a motion to declare Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar a global terrorist after Pulwama.

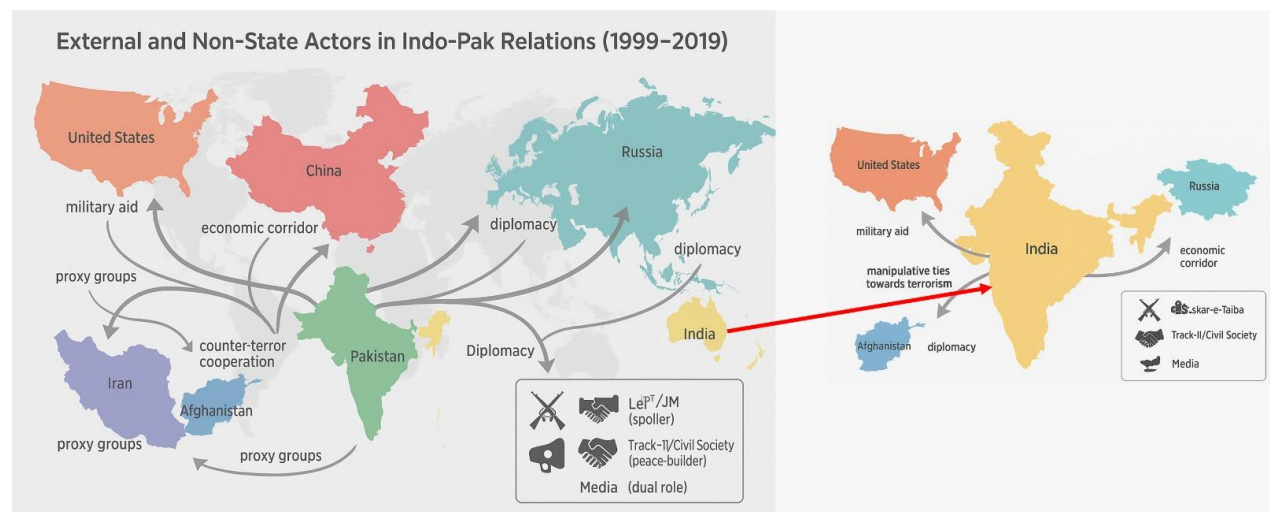
Year	Issue	UN Action	Veto	Vetoing Country
2008	Mumbai Attacks	UNSC Condemnation	No	–

2016	Masood Azhar Listing	Resolution to designate as terrorist	Yes	China
2019	Article 370 Revocation	Request for UNSC discussion	No	–

This table underscores the inherent limitations of UN-led mediation in South Asia, where permanent member politics outweigh conflict resolution imperatives.

3.2.4 Media Trends and Disinformation

Although it is challenging to estimate the positive and negative aspects in this paper, media and digital platforms have both been constructive and destructive. The initial pre-analysis of media sentiment, based on keyword frequencies (using Google Ngram and Voyant Tools), reveals peak frequencies for terms such as the India-Pakistan conflict, Kargil, CPEC, and Pulwama, which often reflect current events in real life. As an example, we can say that CPEC was exponentially increasing in search frequencies after 2015, and Pulwama became a worldwide trend after the suicide attack in 2019. Another possible expansion of this research could be based on a corpus-based sentiment analysis to track the effect of Indian and Pakistani media frame construction on national discourses and policies.



External and Non-State Actors in Indo-Pak Relations (1999–2019).

Discussion

The results of the current research indicate that external and non-state actors have contributed to Indo-Pakistan relations in a self-contradictory manner, serving as both instruments of peace and sources of conflict. Between 1999 and 2019, it played a significant role in the South Asian diplomatic, security, and economic landscape. They drove the escalation of antagonism, as well

as occasional improvements in bilateral relations, through means such as military assistance, economic investment, political pressure, ideological support, and media interaction. They did not step in neutrally most of the time, but rather, in keeping with wider geopolitical concerns and national strategic priorities, as it often led to mixed results (Ahmed et al., 2019; Gillani et al., 2023).

The involvement of great powers, especially the United States, China, and Russia, evidences how deeply Indo-Pak relations are embedded in the larger multipolar scenario of global politics. The US had abandoned a Cold War ally bordering Pakistan and became an Indian strategic partner, as evidenced by the signing of the Civil Nuclear Agreement of 2005 and a boost in defense relations with New Delhi (Khan, 2024; Khan & Naazer, 2023).

Pakistan had in the past enjoyed big US support in the initial years of the War on Terror, but gradually the trust had worn off due to the Abbottabad incident, drone warfare and long-term suspicion of duplicity on the part of Pakistan concerning the militant sanctuaries (Bhattacharya, 1999; Sadiq & Ali, 2024). On the contrary, by initiating the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), transferring huge amounts of weapons stocks, and offering its support on almost every multilateral body, including the UN Security Council, China cemented its place as an all-weather ally of Pakistan. Such activities not only increased Pakistan's economic autonomy in relation to Beijing but also served as a pathway to fuel Indian anxieties about power, centered on regional containment (Ali et al., 2017; Ahmed et al., 2019). Russia, an old ally of India, shifted its South Asian policy and deepened its relationship with Pakistan by selling a few arms and military training exercises and retaining its dominance as the supplier of arms, and even as a supplier of nuclear energy, to India. Such a careful measure demonstrated that Moscow was attempting to prove its significance in a multipolar Asia without denying its historical relationships (Norling & Swanström, 2007; Jain, 2017).

Unlike the planned diplomacy of major powers, international bodies such as the United Nations, the European Union, and the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation have demonstrated the limitations of multilateral mediation in conflicts. The UN was never able to put sufficient pressure on either party due to deadlocks in geopolitical terms, especially when India repeatedly faced opposition from China, which voted against the measures taken by India (Ahmed, 2023;

Shamim et al., 2024). The European Union had maintained a trade-oriented, non-committal stance, providing minimal political leverage in Indo-Pak conflicts (Jain, 2015; Jain, 2017). The OIC, which has historically been in support of Pakistan on the Kashmir issue, has lost its shape since the economic and diplomatic relationship between India and the major states in the Gulf region weakened its capacity to form a united system (Ali & Sultan, 2023; Hossain, 2012). Bilateral enmity made regional bodies, such as SAARC, virtually dysfunctional, and inter-regional summits were delayed or boycotted after acts of terrorism (Jabeen et al, 2010; Basu, 2007).

Indo-Pakistan relations were further complicated with the involvement of non-state actors. The extreme organizations like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed were the direct contributors to the notorious attacks, which halted the peace processes and led to military action (Chandran, 2006; Sadiq & Ali, 2024). These actors operated along porous borders, implying ineffective governance and ideological extremism. Their operations, as well as actions, aggravated the relationship between the two nations and fostered a consensus in the minds of both populations, making it difficult to reconcile (Clarke, 2011; Pandya, 2019). Not every non-state actor was destabilizing, however. Track interventions like the Neemrana Dialogue and Aman Ki Asha, provided an informal but significant channel of communication, in case of a failure in official communication. Although such initiatives usually appeared superficial and narrow, they provided an improvement in mutual understanding and maintained the backchannel connection when tension levels were high (Ahmad, 2014; Malik, 2011; Chakrabarti, 2003).

The media and cultural entities have had rather ambivalently counteracting spots as well. Disinformation and nationalist rhetoric on the one hand have fanned animosities the most when it comes to emergencies such as the Pulwama attack (Elahi et al., 2020; Shehzadi et al., 2024). Conversely, borderless media projects, cultural events, and sports diplomacy have brought opportunities for connection and optimism. The role of media has gained special prominence, especially with the emergence of social media, where stories are constructed and used as a tool to influence the political arena. Meanwhile, cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts succeeded in at least temporarily alleviating the existing enmities (Ali & Ajaz, 2014; Khalid, 2014).

The wider trend that becomes evident is the coexistence of conflicting forces. Although the Track II dialogues were relatively more documented than the terrorist attacks, between 1999 and 2019, the political effect of violence was way more than that of the dialogues. Every act of terrorism was a way to postpone negotiating and restore borders, and nationalism, but peace processes hardly had an opportunity to gain legal ground or keep going (Malik, 2011; Saeed, 2021). This fact can also be confirmed by the statistics of arms sales and military alliances that also showed the tendency of global players to adhere to the interests of strategic politics at the expense of regional safety, resulting in the reinforcement of asymmetries and mistrust (Norling&Swanström, 2007; Ahmed et al., 2019).

Collectively, the role played by external and non-state forces in Indo-Pak relations has been significant and not always positive. Foreign powers have typically pursued their interests at the expense of regional peace, often deepening the rifts rather than fostering unity. At the same time, non-state actors have also provided alternative tools of diplomacy and have presented a significant challenge, utilizing militancy and propaganda. This force interaction mechanism has ensured that the Indo-Pak relationship remains one of the most volatile bilateral relationships, despite being diplomatically complex, in the post-colonial world. Further development will require not only the political will of both countries but also the reconfiguration of the interaction between external forces and civil society representatives in the region.

Conclusion

The presence of foreign and non-state actors in Indo-Pakistani relations from 1999 to 2019 contributed to the intricate and, in many ways, contradictory role, as such actors were both facilitators of peace and sources of conflict. Interventions by the United States, China, and Russia were mostly driven by strategic interests, such that in many instances, global powers added fuel to regional conflicts instead of bringing them to a settled point. International organizations were often found wanting in their mediation efforts, with their efforts frequently hampered by geopolitical factors. Meanwhile, non-state actors, such as militant groups, civil society, and the media, produced two effects simultaneously: either derailing the diplomatic process through violent actions and propaganda, or establishing very limited dialogue formats in Track II processes and cultural exchanges. It is the very presence of these actors together which

highlights the fact that Indo-Pak relations are heavy laden to the politics of power and international relations through transnational dimensions and it is only with the effort of holistically trying to change the engagements of these external powers that the international relations and peace between the two countries can be attained in true sense of the term.

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