Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH) (e-ISSN : 2504-8562)
2022, Volume 7, Issue 9, e001741
DOI: https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v7i9.1741

CPEC and South Asia's Geopolitical Complex: Powers' Rivalry

Rackmawatie Lokman[1*], Sity Daud[2], Hoo Chiew Ping[3]

[1]Strategic Studies and International Relations Programme, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), 43600, Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia.
Email: P94887@siswa.ukm.edu.my
[2]Strategic Studies and International Relations Programme, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), 43600, Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia.
Email: sitydaud@ukm.edu.my
[3]Strategic Studies and International Relations Programme, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), 43600, Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia.
Email: hoo@ukm.edu.my

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR (*):
Rackmawatie Lokman
(P94887@siswa.ukm.edu.my)

KEYWORDS:
Power rivalry
Bandwagoning
Competition
Strategic interest
Power struggles
Hedging

CITATION:
Rackmawatie Lokman, Sity Daud & Hoo, C. P. (2022). CPEC and South Asia's Geopolitical Complex: External Powers' Rivalry . *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH), 7*(9), e001741. https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v7i9.1741

ABSTRACT

South Asia's international relations dilemma is not mainly about power struggles among the regional states but also includes the significant presence of major powers. This article analyses the factors leading to South Asia's geopolitical challenges, serving the role of regional powers with their strategic allies, notably the US and China that appear to influence the region's stability. Based on findings from unstructured interviews with experts and research on China-Pakistan's extending relations in CPEC, this article contends that the phenomenon may potentially bolster power rivalry in South Asia, particularly between India and Pakistan. Against this backdrop, states may be involved in power struggles, whether through bandwagoning or hedging, among themselves or with other major powers for their strategic interests. Thus, this article aims to discuss the CPEC's impacts on South Asia's geopolitical orientation, serving power rivalry among the actors in the region. Two major arguments are discussed, namely, (1) South Asia's international relations and (2) External Powers' Rivalry.

Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to the existing literature on South Asia's geopolitical conundrum, particularly since China and Pakistan transitioned from a security-driven relationship in the 1990s to a strategic economic partnership in CPEC in the 2000s.

1. Introduction

This article aims to address the rising of power struggles in South Asia after the CPEC's commencement. Thus, this article is largely examines the CPEC's background and the region's geopolitical complex, involving India and Pakistan as well as their strategic allies. In this context, two major arguments have been discussed: (1) South Asia's international Relations; and (2) External Powers' Rivalry.

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

1.1. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Background

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative is among the One Belt One Road (OBOR) projects, which is currently known as the Belt Road Initiative (BRI). The terminology of "belt and road" in Mandarin basically means "yi dai yi lu." A "21st century silk road" refers to a "belt" of overland corridors and a maritime "road" of shipping lanes (Kuo & Komenda, 2018). The BRI grand plan will involve about 65 percent of the world's population (4.4 billion people) and cover about 40 percent of the global gross domestic product (GDP) through the participation of more than 68 countries from three continents (Belt and Road Initiative Summit, 2019). Meanwhile, the estimated cost of the corridor is about USD5 trillion for 1,700 projects that will be operated by 50 Chinese state-owned companies (Luft, 2016). The focal objectives of BRI are to broaden coordination policies across the Asian continent; trade liberalization; financial integration; and people-to-people connectivity (Saran, 2015). Basically, BRI consists of six (6) economic corridors, namely the New Eurasian Land Bridge Economic Corridor (NELBEC), China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor (CMREC), China-Central West Asia Economic Corridor (CCWAEC), China-Indochina Peninsular Economic Corridor (CICPEC), China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIMEC) (Belt and Road Initiative Summit, 2019). Amongst the BRI projects, CPEC is an intricate network of corridors through land and sea as they connect vast regions from the East Asian to the Eurasian continent. It can be defined as the most crucial BRI corridor, and it is the linchpin of the entire strategy (Ge, Christie & Astle, 2016).

Safdar, Aqeel, Hussain, and Ashgar (2021) represent CPEC as an economic corridor. According to Octaviano (2014), economic corridors deal with transport networks to facilitate the movement of services and goods as well as information. Despite this, it is not limited to hard infrastructures such as railways and roads but covers soft infrastructures like trade capacity. CPEC is also known as the flagship of BRI projects. CPEC is intended to embark on a closer strategic relationship between Beijing and Islamabad, bridging China with Central Asia, the Middle East, and South Asia. Though China promotes CPEC as an Economic and Maritime Silk Road (EMSR), the corridor is seen as an extension of China's "String of Pearls" strategy of encircling coastal cities areas connecting East Asia to the Middle East via South Asia military footprints. Primarily, CPEC was visualized by the Chinese Premier Xi Jinping during his official visit to Kazakhstan and Indonesia in 2013. CPEC is portrayed as highly significant to the "all-weathered" strategic relationships of China-Pakistan and is perceived to balance India by securing Pakistan's interests via China's support. CPEC was formalised on April 20th, 2015, when both sides signed 51 Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) for various projects. The initial budget of USD 46 billion in 2015 has been extended twice. In 2016, the budget was increased to USD 55 billion, and later in 2017, more funds were provided, making the investment package worth about USD 62 billion (Siddiqui, 2017). CPEC consists of two (2) major goals, including taking part in global economic governance and promoting the opening up to the East and the West (Rana, 2018).

In essence, the CPEC initiative involves 65 projects, of which 40 projects are funded by the Chinese and 25 projects are Pakistani-funded. One of the CPEC projects is developing a trade route connecting the volatile Gwadar Port in Baluchistan province with the landlocked Kashgar, in the northwestern region of Xinjiang, China, through railways, roads, and oil and gas pipelines. However, the number of CPEC projects is expected to be increased to 200 projects in the coming 12 years (Express Tribune, 2018). According to the CPEC project plan, the corridor will reduce the distance between China and the Gulf

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

region from 12,900 km to 2,000 km (Centre for Strategic & International Studies, 2022). Despite being offered a zero-interest loan by the Chinese government, Pakistan seems favourable to this initiative as CPEC has high potential to boost its economic growth significantly and speed up its Gross Domestic Growth (GDP). Through CPEC, Pakistan is expected to generate up to 17,000 MW of energy and create more than 700,000 jobs for the locals by 2030 (Khan, 2020). CPEC will also help Pakistan to upgrade infrastructure in the most backward areas in Pakistan including Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces as well as developing the Gwadar Port as an economic hub. From the geopolitical and geostrategic perspectives, Pakistan and China will benefit from the CPEC projects by developing a Chinese naval base in Gwadar to enhance their military capabilities.

2. Discussion

2.1. South Asia's International Relations

When examining South Asia's international relations scenario, Dash (2008) views that India's domination in the trade market arouses a challenge by other states, particularly its close rival Pakistan. Other scholars like Brewster (2009) have equally stated that South Asia, particularly the Indian Ocean, will become a "center stage" for global struggles as the rising conflicts over energy, clashes between states and emerging powers like China and India will be at an alarming rate. Due to these updates, Brewster (2009) illustrates the growing economic power of China and India in South Asia, revealing that the region will become a crucial highway for trade and economic power even though the states consist of poor and failed states. In this backdrop, Imran (2019) has a specific perception of South Asia when he classifies two (2) major descriptions of regional dynamics: (1) no common external security threat that makes the whole regional states stand together; and (2) measures related to regional trade interdependence of the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) or other efforts that will benefit India. In this context, Imran (2019) seems to concur with Dash (2008) and Brewster (2009) that South Asian states consider India as a common enemy, which has caused the rise of security dilemmas in the region.

Relatively, South Asia is a volatile and complicated region as the states are facing domestic as well as inter-state conflicts. Nonetheless, in the context of international relations as a whole, Gurr (1970) examines conflicts among states as being generated by political or economic grievances through the disparity between the population's expectations and how they are treated by other states. Other than that, Gurr (1970) argues grievances relate to actors' perceptions of discrepancies between value expectations and value capabilities. Meanwhile, Hensel (1999) examines inter-state conflict in a more discrete manner than Gurr (1970), focusing on the role of rivalry as the primary contribution of inter-state conflict. According to Hensel (1999), inter-state conflict occurs through rivalry between long-time rival states and involves enduring rivalries to test propositions on arms races, deterrence, and power transitions. However, other scholars like Druckman and Paul (2006) have different perspectives on inter-state conflict as they include other elements despite the weaponry aspect. According to Druckman and Paul (2006), conflicts are characterised by contestation of wide aspects, including socio-cultural, socio-economic, and socio-political life that affect opposition of interests and fights among individuals, groups, and organizations. Meanwhile, Paul (2010) is slightly more descriptive on inter-state conflict interpretation when he illustrates that South Asia's conflicts are inherited due to colonial states' structures.

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

In the backdrop of South Asia's international relations spectrum, a dimension that needs to be highlighted is the stability-instability paradox. Krepon (2003) seems to have an equal argument with Snyder's (1960) argument, stating that the stability-instability paradox is an international relations theory that is involved with the nuclear capabilities of rivalry states. In this context, Krepon (2003) illustrates that the states' capabilities in nuclear arsenals may impose a lower probability of direct war among the nuclear power states but escalate indirect conflicts by engaging in proxy wars with other states. However, Krepon (2003)quotes a few scenarios like the US and Russia never fought each other but were actively involved in proxy wars by supporting the Vietnam and Korean wars financially and militarily to increase influence over other regions. On the contrary, other scholars like Rajagopalan (2006) argue about Snyder's (1960) interpretation of the stability-instability paradox, quoting that this concept is to examine nuclear stability and balance of power relationships. As compared with Krepon (2003), Rajagopalan (2006)'s argument seems to focus on the balance of power practised through the involvement of conventional military force. In this backdrop, Rajagopalan (2006) concludes that the focal point of Snyder's (1960) interpretation of the stability-instability paradox relates to the involvement of two (2) elements, which are conventional military and nuclear balances. His argument seems to suggest that both elements have strong influence and must be interconnected with each other in many ways, forming a complex relationship to form the stability-instability paradox sphere.

However, Rajagopalan (2006) seems to agree with Snyder (1960)'s argument that stability at the strategic level may reduce the level of stability at lower levels (minor conflicts). In this backdrop, he argues that the increase in threats among states may deter lower levels of violence. In a comprehensive articulation, Rajagopalan (2006) concludes that stability may potentially increase instability among the lower levels, or the escalation of threats may provide stability for the lower levels. This argument presumes that the significant impact of stability at the strategic level may provide both positive and negative outcomes to the rivalry states and other states as well. Another scholar who has quite a similar perspective on the stability-instability paradox concept to Rajagopalan (2006) is Khan (2012). Relatively, Khan's (2012) argument seems to illustrate the stability-instability paradox sphere in South Asia as his work argues that the growing "action-reaction syndrome" exacerbates strategic competitions in the region, for instance in arms development and war-fighting doctrines like the Cold Start Doctrine (CSD), which was promulgated by India. In fact, Khan (2012) argues that this doctrine develops India's strategy to expose its nuclear power capabilities to the rivalry states. Khan (2012) also examines that the doctrine is to prohibit Pakistan from the first-use nuclear weapon strategy. In this context, Khan (2017) specifies that the "action-reaction syndrome" may potentially worsen the states' mistrust and misperception, which lead to strategic instability in South Asia. Another scholar who occupies the same view as Khan (2012) is Sultan (2014). Nevertheless, Sultan (2014) justifies the stability-instability paradox as a concept to determine relevant factors of "stability" at the strategic level among the major powers that affect "instability" for lower level conflicts. At the backdrop of India-Pakistan relations, Sultan's (2014) work is also equally with Khan's (2017) as he examines the Cold Start Doctrine (CSD), a source of stability-instability paradox in South Asia and poses Pakistan's strategic reactions. Despite this, Sultan (2014) also argues the paradox remains essential in order to explain South Asia's regional intense crises.

Despite the Cold Start Doctrine (CSD), CPEC is portrayed as an umbrella of contemporary stability-instability paradox approach in South Asia by examining the scholars' works, for

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

instance (Holmes & Yoshihara, 2008). They argue that India's reaction to Pakistan is based on its hegemonic power ambitions through the strategic lens of the Monroe Doctrine. This prompt action illustrates that the stability-instability paradox exists in South Asia when India implies its offensive effort toward any developments in South Asia. Ironically, according to Holmes and Yoshihara (2008), this doctrine has shaped India's ambition to be a hegemonic power in the Indian Ocean. Nonetheless, Holmes and Yoshihara (2008) argue that this doctrine persuades India to accept a strategic alliance with other big powers like the US. In line with India's ambition, the doctrine concept is to enhance the Western Hemisphere under US hegemony and prohibit other big powers from establishing influence in the region.

In this context, Behuria, Pattanaik and Gupta (2012) have discretely examined India's Monroe Doctrine approach, which is mainly due to New Delhi's articulation on security concerns. Other scholars who have the same perspectives as Behuria, Pattanaik and Gupta (2012) on India's Monroe Doctrine are Kumar, Mir and Hussain (2014). However, Kumar, Mir, and Hussain (2014) argue that the Indira Doctrine has distorted the concept of Monroe Doctrine. According to their work, the main thing to imply this doctrine is to prohibit the South Asian states from seeking other states' assistance. From New Delhi's perspective and the doctrine approach, the failure to be in line with the Indian policy is considered "anti-India". Furthermore, Kumar, Mir, and Hussain's (2014) arguments are slightly averse to Holmes and Yoshihara (2008), who view India's hegemonic approach needs outside assistance to engross its ambition. In addition, Kumar, Mir and Hussain (2014) argue that India perceives any attempts by outside powers as an intervention towards its security policy in the region. Despite this, this policy has enunciated India to firmly reflect its systemic, domestic and foreign policy influences.

Another aspect that examines the stability-instability paradox approach in South Asia is by analysing Butt and Butt's (2015) work on CPEC as a source for Afghanistan to gain a strategic boost. In fact, Butt and Butt's (2015) perspective is likely based on Gurr's (1970) perception, stating that one of the conflicts' push factors is when states contemplate for economic grievances. Butt and Butt (2015) examine whether Afghanistan needs CPEC for its economic development boost. However, Butt and Butt (2015) also compare Afghanistan with other surrounding states like Iran. From their findings, Iran initially perceived CPEC as a tool of contestation by examining the trend of China-Pakistan geostrategic ambition in South Asia. Butt and Butt (2015) view that Iran collaborates with India on Chabahar Port to counter-balance the China-Pakistan initiative in CPEC development. However, Butt and Butt (2015) believe that despite its apprehension toward CPEC, Iran might have considered improving its economic connectivity by expanding trade and transportation through the projects. In addition, Butt and Butt (2015) agree that the Monroe Doctrine is a highly significant approach to redesigning India's behaviour in the region.

In this context, their work findings are equally with other scholars' perspectives like Kumar, Mir, and Hussain (2014) that India has persistent apprehension toward CPEC. In fact, Butt and Butt (2015) illustrate that India's level of apprehension is higher than any other regional state. In their work, they examine the correlation of sovereignty as the main factor that sparks India's anger, despite the security dilemma over China's rising role in South Asia. Butt and Butt (2015) perceived the development as a "game-changer" to challenge India's hegemonic influence through China's adversely effort to widen its land route access to the Gulf region. Other than that, Butt and Butt (2015) argue that India's behaviour is due to its dependency on the Chinese economic boost. This relates to

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

Gwadar's development, which is interpreted by Butt and Butt (2015) as likely to adversely affect India's trade routes and capable of imposing security concerns in the future.

Another scholar who works on India's reaction is Ahmed (2015). He notes that India has unstable relations with Pakistan and China. According to Ahmed (2015), the Chabahar port project in Iran is not a large-scale project as compared to Gwadar's project. However, Ahmed (2015) argues that India intends to be a strategic competitor to China and Pakistan. This argument seems to agree equally with Butt and Butt (2015), who observe India's behaviour as a contestation effort. Other scholars who reveal the discrete perspective on India's reaction are Pant and Patti (2017). As compared to Butt and Butt (2015), who only assess India's reaction based on the growing contestation role of China-Pakistan in South Asia, Pant and Passi (2017) have a broader perspective by observing New Delhi's strategic response and actively strengthening relationships with the surrounding states. Nevertheless, they discover that India's reaction is more about strengthening the strategic nexus in political rivalry balancing with other states, including Iran. In this context, Pant and Passi (2017) examine that the Chabahar Port development, situated in the South of Iran, is to curtail the CPEC route. Pant and Passi (2017) also argue that, despite Iran, India is broadening its foreign relations capacity by strengthening ties with the United Arab Emirates (UAE). From their findings, the relationship is capable of developing into a new strategic partner in the region as the nexus of both sides is projected to obstruct the current Gwadar port development project.

Under the pretext of strong apprehensions approach, a scholar like Bhargava (2000) opines that India's attitude leads to hegemonic interests. However, in the context of hegemony, Bhargava (2000) illustrates that the most vital feature that India needs to engross as a hegemonic power is the capability to transform policies of the particular target group in order to comply with the dominant state interest. Looking at the South Asian updates, Bhargava (2000) indicates that India's power policies somehow have been able to induce changes in the region's geopolitical fulcrum. Nonetheless, India has yet to fulfil the hegemonic authority as it fails to exploit South Asia's economic and territorial annexation. In fact, in the findings of Bhargava (2000), economic performance remains asymmetrical and has not justified India's regional interaction as a hegemonic power. Bhargava's (2000) perspective seems illustrated by Cohen and Park's (1978) perception of India's power conceptions. According to Cohen and Park (1978) and Bhargava (2000), India has mismanaged the power variables, making it difficult to exercise hegemonic leadership while neighbouring states strive to counter the hegemonic interest.

Despite India's misperception, the other state that provides significant reaction to the CPEC initiative is the US. Most scholars' works indicate that the US significant approach in South Asia is to garner political and economic clout. For instance, Foot (2006) foresees an increasing trust deficit between the US and China. One of the main factors is the pivot's approach, which perceived the Chinese's growing influence in the region as a contestation of its hegemonic power, particularly related to the vast network of corridors under the CPEC initiative. In relating to China's growing behaviour in political and economic clout, Jones (2016) justifies that the rise of influence and security to garner economic investments and boost lethal weaponry capabilities in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) states will increase its status as a potential global power. From his findings, Jones (2016) seems to articulate well on South Asia's geopolitical conundrum and significantly has similar perspectives to Foot's (2006) argument on the growing trust deficit between the US and China. He concludes that the significant progress of both states' responses toward each other can be illustrated through the peripheral geopolitical conundrums and

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

contestations that they transform in the South Asian region, from pivot policy by the US to CPEC by the Chinese.

In this context, Tehseen (2017) seems to have the same projections as Foot (2006) and Jones (2016), as he argues that US foreign relations policy is much more aware of China's growing influence. In spite, Tehseen (2017) identifies that China's ambition is termed as an "Asia-Pacific Dream" that entails the intensifying of its soft power through regional economic ventures. Nonetheless, Tehseen's (2017) argument seems at odds with China's ambitious approach when examining the corresponding states' responses. From his findings, even though China has garnered support from 21 states to participate in the Asian Infrastructure Bank (AIIB), the proposed economic ventures are not fully developed as they are concerned with the possibility of the growing Chinese footprint potentially resulting in a new colonialism. Tehseen (2017) argues the US concern that the Chinese approach is to increase its "Neo-Silk Road" plan aims to strengthen economic ties with the Asian states, which is reminiscent of the ancient Silk Road that connected the Eastern and Western worlds.

Meanwhile, Hilali (2017) examines the US has a complex and critical relations with China as both perceived each other as an aggressive power. In this backdrop, according to Hilali (2017) the US implies an encirclement policy in order to destabilize and disrupt China's growing influence even though Beijing portrays a peaceful approach. Despite the encirclement policy boost, Hilali (2017) illustrates the US South Asian policy is to enhance its closed ally's regional power through various strategic collaborations including defence and military. Hilali (2017) argument on the US perception is seems equally with Iqbal and Javaid (2020) findings. They opine that the US has not directly opposed the CPEC initiative in fact it encouraged the regional economic activity as potentially to become a multilateral effort despite Pakistan and China. Nevertheless, the US cautions with the Chinese growing influence in the region. According to Iqbal and Javaid (2020) the US perceived that China intends to redesign the international system in South Asia through its community of common human destiny approach.

2.2. External Powers' Rivalry

The traditional Silk Route that connects Pakistan with China's territory including the north-western territories linking Afghanistan and Turkic regions has deep-rooted cultural and geographical linkages (Malik, 2008). The Silk Route that connects the upper Indus Basin to Tarim Basin supports trans-regional trade activities to link people across the region (Neelis, 2017). This historical passage reveals that the "Crossroad to Asia" occurred to link this region in a broader socio-political landscape. With the emergence of both sides' nation-state system seems to develop the informal relations into the formal ones. In the 21st Century Pakistan is seems has transformed dramatically in its foreign policy doctrines. The participation of Pakistan in CPEC portrays that Islamabad enhances its roles in international relations system. Even though Pakistan is facing with its political and economic constraints, however the partnerships will offer Islamabad with strategic interests domestically and regionally.

Against this backdrop Li (2002) illustrates that China-Pakistan strategic partnership portray a relationship status of both states as it is obviously to contain India's influences and to distract the strategic as well as military policies against the Chinese presence. Chowdhury (2015) illustrates that CPEC capable to boost geoeconomic and geostrategic significance that would provide immense opportunities to both parties. In this regards,

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

Chowdhury (2015) opines that CPEC will widen China's geopolitical and military influence in the region meanwhile Pakistan will gain economic stability despite being a strategic hub for energy transmission from the Gulf. This situation is perceived by Chowdhury (2015) as an opportunity for Islamabad to eliminate potential threats from the region, reducing the security dilemma and preventing Indian military pressure in which could assist Pakistan to face the ongoing diplomatic impasse with New Delhi.

However, Chowdhury (2015) is seems in line with Li (2002) as he views that Pakistan's collaboration with China is to counter India and the US nexus in the Indian Ocean. Other scholar who has the same view with Chowdhury (2015) is Shafqat (2015) as he illustrates that the CPEC initiative portrays that Pakistan will enhance its economic development connectivity regionally and globally. In regards to China-Pakistan bilateral relations, Shafqat (2015) opines that both sides will design mutual strategic benefits and deepen their collaborative security framework in South Asia. According to Khan (2017) Pakistan will gain immense geostrategic transformation in the context of South Asia international relations calculus. Meanwhile Rashida and Nadia (2017) opines that CPEC will add impetus for China-Pakistan bilateral cooperation and regional integration despite enhancing security assurance and trade activities. Other than that, Rashida and Nadia (2017) views that CPEC may widen the Chinese global access and the Indian postures on CPEC as well as the growing US-Indo relations have intensified the significance Islamabad-Beijing partnerships.

Despites, Durrani, Bilal and Kalem (2017) also illustrate that Pakistan and China's strategic interests through CPEC postures are to play a significant role in the global competition. Nevertheless, Durrani, Bilal and Kalem (2017) argument is seems more analytical compares to Rashida and Nadia (2017) as they signify other great actors' presence for instance the US behavior in South Asia compels China to secure its energy supplies from the Persian Gulf and the cemented ties of Islamabad and Beijing may change the geopolitical sphere through converging of mutual interests. In this context, Durrani, Bilal and Kalem (2017) elaborate that the geostrategic evolution may uplift Pakistan's socioeconomic constraints and safeguard its interests in the region.

There are scholars who view CPEC as Pakistan's strategic interests for instance Ahmad, Asmi, Ali, Rahman and Abbas (2017). They view that Pakistan will benefit the geopolitical scenario in the Indian Ocean as the US and China lead to coalitions of "Pivot on Asia" and "One Belt One Road". In other perspective, CPEC is seems to provide a "game-changer" for Pakistan for its domestic issues. Meanwhile, Makhdoom, Shah and Sami (2017) determine that CPEC is a gateway for Pakistan to improve its geopolitical status in the region. The scholars' argument has widely articulated by Tehsin, Khan and Sargana (2017). They argue that Pakistan fails to expand its economy based on several phases. Therefore, CPEC is likely to provide Pakistan with strategic economic components to upgrade its infrastructure, overcome the energy crises issue and improve regional connectivity. Meanwhile Rehman (2018) argues CPEC will benefit Pakistan in the context of maritime politics and pose a competition with India. In fact Rehman (2018) examines Pakistan needs to react accordingly and embrace the close relations factor with China to enhance its naval capabilities.

Nevertheless, Pakistan's involvement in CPEC has drawn to some strategic reactions by other actors particularly the regional adversary India. Singh (2017) argues that India has started to object the CPEC initiative from day one. As elaborated by Javaid and Akhtar (2017), the scholars analyze that India's reactions should be able to delay the CPEC

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

projects and adopt different approaches to handle China and Pakistan in the region. In spite of opposing the projects, the scholars viewed India should be involved in CPEC trilateral cooperation to gain regional benefits. On the other hand, Montgomery (2018) has some contradictory views on India's behaviour on CPEC. He argues India's reactions are related to the CPEC route in the disputed territory, Gilgit Baltistan while Pakistan benefits its security interests through the power balancing against India. In fact Montgomery (2018) argument is seems equal with Chakma (2019) as she views that New Delhi perceived the CPEC progress as a violation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The findings are also equally with Aamir (2020) as he illustrates that New Delhi will not accept CPEC now and in the future even though they realized that the collaborations will uplift India's strategic interests in the region. From the Indian perspectives, the CPEC initiative must be internationally recognized with full of transparency, openness with a proper sovereignty and territorial manner. In this context, the scholar indicates that these factors are due to the emerging of Chinese military presence that lead to India's reaction portrays the government's apprehension towards China-Pakistan's initiative.

The Indian reactions are also dealing with the US-India relations. According to Ishfaq (2019) Washington and New Delhi perceived the CPEC initiative as negative connotations and against their hegemonic status. This perception is seems in line with other scholars for instance Suleri as he opines that the US as well as India have responded with covert and overt reactions with provocations for instance providing supports to discord Baluchistan and declaring Pakistani as terrorists. Meanwhile Naikoo and Ul Haq (2018) reveal that in response to the new height of China-Pakistan partnerships, New Delhi under the Modi's administration to adopt counter through its "Act East" and "Neighbourhood First" policies which are projected to contain the strategic partnership outburst. In this context, scholars like Wagner (2019) illustrates that India's behavior toward the CPEC initiative is mostly linked with geopolitics dilemma as the Chinese significant presence may have potential to gain a status quo power in the existing Kashmir disputes. Due to this development, Mitra (2018) opines that India boosts efforts to contain the CPEC partnerships. One of the drastic changes by the Indian government according to Mitra (2018) is intensifying multilateral partnerships with other states in connectivity projects for instance Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) corridor, Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport with Myanmar and Chabahar Port with Iran. In this context, Mitra (2018) views that New Delhi's new foreign policy is seems more focus on great powers' partnerships like the US and Japan.

Despite strategic reactions from India, there are scholars who examine thoroughly on geopolitical and geo-economics impact of CPEC in South Asia. The concept of geostrategic impact opines clearly by Jahangir (2013) when he perceived that international politics is involved in nuclear factor. In the context of South Asia's international relations, Jahangir (2013) argue China and Pakistan are enhancing deterrence capability via economic cooperation to create a balancing scenario in the region. Nevertheless, the scholar did not expand further on the major actors' strategic gain via CPEC and how the balancing strategy boosts an escalation of geopolitics and geo-economics factors in the region. Other scholars who have similar perspective with Jahangir (2013) are Ahmad and Singh (2017). In their study, they argue that South Asia is involved in geostrategic factor. Despite, they view the Sino-Pakistan relations are to leverage Indo-US strategic relations in the region. However, their findings were only examined on India's geostrategic interests and future prospects of Sino-Pakistan partnerships. The argument should be able to analyze on the major actors' strategic interests and reactions on CPEC that impact the region

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

geopolitically and geo-economically. At the backdrop of geostrategic context, other scholars like Haidar and Dinakar (2019) argue that India is in the process of expanding its military capability through strategic cooperation with other states like Oman, France and revitalize Quadrilateral dialogue with the US, Japan and Australia.

Other articulation on India's apprehension behavior toward CPEC is Mir (2011). His perspective focuses that one of the main factors lead to New Delhi's behavior is due to historical baggage with Pakistan and India. According to Mir (2011) the apprehensions are related to tense political relations among the two states as they were involved with similar problems for instance in disputed borders, competition over natural resources and militancy threats. Meanwhile, Mir (2011) overviews that the reflection of China and Pakistan partnerships are perceived by New Delhi as to promote a culture of mistrust in their foreign policy. Other perception on geopolitics impact is from Chopra (2011). He views that the strategic partnership will intensify Islamabad's civilian nuclear capabilities and increase the supply of ballistic missiles. In this regards, Chopra (2011) views the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) approval in 2011 for Beijing's nuclear reactors supply to Pakistan is considered by India as to threaten New Delhi's security interests. Despite Chopra (2011) illustrates that the significant relationship of China- Pakistan permits Islamabad to have access on joint military exercise in China. This argument is seems in line with Haidar and Dinakar (2019) as they argue that India concerns about geostrategic impact. Despite they are also in line with Mir (2011) that New Delhi concerns on the emerging capacity of China-Pakistan in intelligence and military sharing technology and defense cooperation. Haidar and Dinakar (2019) examine the CPEC may widen opportunities for Beijing to construct military bases in the South Asian region.

On the other hand, CPEC is portrayed to be a game changer in Pakistan's geopolitics conundrum. According to Abid and Ashfaq (2015) CPEC may reduce Pakistan's energy crisis and boost economic revolutions. In fact, the impact of CPEC toward Pakistan's economy is also being illustrated by other scholar like Alam (2015) and Khan (2017) as they view that CPEC may be well-functioned as a marginal trade route if Strait of Malacca route is blocked. The so-called 'win-win' scenario according to Xin (2017) conferred by China and Pakistan has intensified India's security dilemma as the partnerships is shaped to reconsider its regional status-quo. Therefore, this scenario is considered by Ahmad and Malik (2017) as to give impact on regional stability by looking at the historical standpoint. The arguments of this statement are based on India-Pakistan relations with the super power US. According to Ahmad and Malik (2017) the presence of Chinese troops along the CPEC route will deter Pakistan from India's threat. However, they were only discussed on strategic approaches that should be taken by India instead of elaborating on regional impacts as a whole. In contrast, Hussain and Hussain (2017) have their own stance on CPEC's geopolitics factor in South Asia. At this backdrop, they argue that Pakistan will be the most significant region as the CPEC projects will be capable to widen economic connection with other regions. However, the scholars did not expand on how the economic factor provides impact to South Asia's geopolitics.

Nevertheless, Baruah (2018) is seems in line with Ahmad and Malik (2017) as he views that the Chinese growing expansion in South Asia leads to India's resistance toward the CPEC initiative. According to Baruah (2018) India also concerns about China's deepening bilateral relations with other states as New Delhi views that the Chinese power expansion in the maritime and continental domains justifies that Beijing will threaten its power in the region and clarifies its stance over the CPEC initiative. This argument is seems equally with Sachdeva (2018) as he illustrates that the geopolitical issue that involves with

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

sovereignty has much influences towards India's responses on CPEC including having negative perception on the initiative implementations and its impact to the recipient states. In response, India boosts its capacity in connectivity plans with other states. Nevertheless, Sachdeva (2018) is unable to prove that the Chinese factor contributes to the geopolitical dynamics in South Asia. However, other scholar like Freeman (2018) reveals on China's behavior in South Asia portrays its interests in engaging regionalism foreign policy that comprising of comprehensive international security. Even though Freeman (2018) argues that the Chinese foreign policy may potentially uplift both sides' bilateral nexus however, China's emerging presence tends to intensify strategic insecurity between the states as New Delhi perceives the current development to buttress its regional dominance.

Nonetheless, Curtis (2012) perspective is prone to diversity relations of Pakistan and China in the economic and security fields has increased India's concerns. Curtis (2012) perceived India's apprehension on CPEC route is due to military potential. Other than that, Curtis (2012) argues India perceived the CPEC initiative as a flagship project to establish connectivity projects with the neighbouring states. According to Curtis (2012) one of India's main concerns is regarding the Chinese extensive route in the Indian Ocean may intensify its String of Pearls strategy. Meanwhile, Thammavong (2020) has specific perception on India's behaviour. It is seems he has similar argument as Curtis (2012) when he looks India's reaction is based on China's growing presence in South Asia and Indian Ocean through CPEC. From the New Delhi perspective, the Chinese initiative may potentially pose challenges to India's strategic interests. Due to this, Thammavong (2020) illustrates that India's responds by establishing strategic alignments with other major powers including the US and Japan as the CPEC framework fails to impose transparency. Therefore, Thammavong (2020) argues that India is not compromising with the Chinese progress and attempt to sustain its apprehension in the future.

For another perspective of South Asia's impact, Hussain and Hussain (2017) examines on regional geopolitical dynamics and Pakistan's domestic challenges that may hinder the connectivity project. In their research, Hussain and Hussain (2017) explores on several factors that may impediment the CPEC projects' execution such as internal security challenges and regional stability including the India's concern. Even though he focuses on geopolitical dynamics however, it is only elaborating on policy recommendations for Pakistan in order to deal with potential hurdles instead of South Asia's strategic impact as a whole. Nevertheless, Noonari, Ali, Memon and Pervez (2017) have a different perspective on South Asia's strategic impact by assessing Pakistan's interests via CPEC. Their arguments are likely prone to a "game-changer" impact by looking at China-Pakistan reciprocal agreements. However, their interpretations of "game-changer" seems limited to economics perspectives rather than any other factors which lead to strategic outcomes for South Asia's international relations. Meanwhile, Ehteshami and Horesh (2018) argument on South Asia's impact has more analytical value as they illustrate the updates may be a "divider" to polarize the region to a new world politics involving the US and China. Ehteshami and Horesh (2018) examine this new polarization may hasten trade war among these two big powers and may potentially divide South Asia's world politics in an enormous manner.

3. Conclusion

India believes that Pakistan is making an effort to internationalise the disputed territory issues with Chinese assistance. Since the CPEC's inauguration, India has adopted a politics of antagonism towards it. This pursuit has come out with their policy of isolating Pakistan

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

in the region and of malevolence. These antagonistic policies by the Indian side have triggered another cause for hostility with the neighbouring country. Yet China shows its optimism that, along with other states of the region, India will also benefit from this huge investment (Jabeen, 2015). In spite of this, India has generally resisted the CPEC project in a confrontational manner, making strong accusations that the route deliberately passes through Gilgit-Baltistan, its ostensibly disputed territory. In other aspects, findings also revealed that Pakistan's mounting debt to China could potentially make Pakistan more subservient to Beijing given Beijing's ambitious goals. In order to achieve a balance of power, this would result in China's increasing influence in the region, which would strengthen India's expanding links with other states, notably the US.

The new paradigm of South Asia's geopolitical complex appears through India's active roles with its strategic links, the Quad and New Quad, which both also include the US as one of the members, promoting strategic partnership in economic and security spheres. In light of this, another significant development during this period followed China-Pakistan-Russia's growing nexus through various strategic collaborations in the military and economy. According to findings by Talukdar (2016) and Thoker and Singh (2017), the main factor shaping the alliance's interests is to counterbalance the region's expanding US-India ties. Another realist thought asserts that the main motivation for such an alliance is not only Russia's desire to drive the US out of the region, but also China's escalating role as a counterbalance power (Aziz, 2017). In addition, he believes that China and Russia have been strategic allies for a very long time, largely because of their ideological disagreements with the US, which turned into a shared rival for both states. Meanwhile, the ingression of Pakistan into this matrix appears to be a sign of fledgling friendship.

Acknowledgement

Part of this article was extracted from doctoral thesis submitted to National University of Malaysia (UKM), Bangi, Selangor.

Funding

This study received no funding.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declared no conflicts of interest for this work and there is no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

References

Aamir, A. (2020). Pakistan Belt and Road Railway Hits Snag as China Nixes Low Rate. *Nikkei Asia.* https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Belt-and-Road/Pakistan-Belt-and-Road-railway-hits-snag-as-China-nixes-low-rate

Abid, M., & Ashfaq, A. (2015). CPEC: Challenges and Opportunities for Pakistan. *Journal of Pakistan Vision*, *16*(2), 142-169. http://pakistanhouse.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/CPEC-challenges.pdf

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

Ahmad, M.S., Asmi, F., Ali, M. Rahman, M.A. & Abbas, S.M. (2017). China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: In the Context of String of Pearl Strategy. *International Journal of Business and Social Research, 7*(8), 26-42.https://thejournalofbusiness.org/index.php/site/article/view/1060

Ahmad, P., & Singh, B. (2017). Sino-Pakistan friendship, Changing South Asian geopolitics and India's post-Obama options. *South Asia Research, 37*(2), 133-146. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317569012_Sino-Pakistan_Friendship_Changing_South_Asian_Geopolitics_and_India's_Post-Obama_Options

Ahmad, S., Malik, A.H. (2017). China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Impact on Regional Stability of South Asia. *Academic Research Journals, 5*(6), 192-202. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320766464_China-Pakistan_Economic_Corridor_Impact_on_Regional_Stability_of_South_Asia

Ahmed, Z.S. (2015). Conflict or Cooperation? The Role of India and Pakistan in Post-2014 Afghanistan. *South Asian Studies A Research Journal of South Asian Studies, 30*(1), 259–276. https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/37015318/18_Zahid_Shahab_Ahmed_30_1.pdf?1426653044=&response-content-disposition=inline%3B+filename%3DAhmed_Z_S_and_Bhatnagar_S_2015_Conflict.pdf&Expires=1597313 221&Signature=Jf5n7is9X7I~xkoMXXf~76nLc

Alam, K. M., Li, X., & Baig, S. (2019). Impact of transport cost and travel time on trade under China-Pakistan economic corridor (CPEC). *Journal of Advanced Transportation, 2019. https://www.hindawi.com/journals/jat/2019/7178507/*

Aziz, Z. (2017). New Emerging Axis of Russia, China and Pakistan: Regional Implications. *Daily Times.* https://dailytimes.com.pk/225 63/ new-emerging-axis-of-russia-china-and-pakistan-regional-implications/

Baruah, D. M. (2018). India's Answer to the Belt and Road: A Road Map for South Asia. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.* https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep20723.pdf?acceptTC=true&coverpage=false

Behuria, A. K., Pattanaik, S. S., & Gupta, A. (2012). Does India Have a Neighbourhood Policy? *Strategic Analysis,* 36, 229-246. https://www.tandfonline.com/action/showCitFormats?doi=10.1080%2F09700161.2012.646440

Belt and Road Initiative Summit. (2019). http://www.beltandroadforum.org/english/

Bhargava, K.K. (2000). India and its South Asian Neighbors- Obligations and Privileges. CASAC National Seminar on India's Pivotal Role in South Asia, New Delhi cited in Bhasin, M. (2008). India's Role in South Asia–Perceived Hegemony or Reluctant Leadership? *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal, 3*(4), 1-25.https://www.globalindiafoundation.org/MadhaviBhasin.pdf

Brewster, D. (2009). India's Strategic Partnership with Vietnam: The Search for a Diamond on the South China Sea? *Asian Security, 5*(1), 24-44.

Butt, K. M., & Butt, A. A. (2015). Impact of CPEC on Regional and Extra-Regional Actors. *The journal of political science, 33*(23). http://ps.gcu.edu.pk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Butt-Butt.pdf

Centre for Strategic & International Studies. (2022). https://www.csis.org/

Chakma, B. (2019). The BRI and India's Neighbourhood. *Strategic Analysis*, *43*(3), 183-186.

Chopra, R. (2017). China–Pakistan Nexus and Its Implication for India. https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/46773324/China_pak_india_nexus_pdf-with-cover-page-v2.pdf

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

Chowdhury, D. R. (2015). Between the Lines: Indian Media's China War. *China Report, 51*(3), 169-203. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0009445515587398

Cohen, S. P. & Park, R.L. (1978). India: Emergent Powers? New York, Crane, Russak & Co. cited in Bhasin, M. (2008). India's Role in South Asia–Perceived Hegemony or Reluctant Leadership? *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal, 3*(4), 1-25. https://www.globalindiafoundation.org/MadhaviBhasin.pdf

Curtis, L. (2012). The Reorientation of Pakistan's Foreign Policy toward Its Region. *Contemporary South Asia,* https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09584935.2012.670205

Dash, C. K. (2008). Regionalism in South Asia: Negotiating Cooperation. *Institutional Structures,* London: Routledge.

Druckman, D., & Paul, F.D. (2006). Conflict Resolution. New Delhi: SAGE.

Durrani, S. D., Bilal, M. & Kalim, I. (2017). Pakistan-China Strategic Partnership: Capitalizing the Geo-Political Location of Pakistan. Global *Regional Review (GRR) 2*(I), 152 – 165.

Ehteshami, A., & Horesh, N. (2017). C*hina's Presence in the Middle East: The Implications of the One Belt, One Road Initiative.* Routledge. https://books.google.com.my/books

Foot, R. (2006). Chinese Strategies in a US-hegemonic Global Order: Accommodating and Hedging. *International Affairs,* 82(1), 77-94. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2006.00516.x

Freeman, C. P. (2018). China's Regionalism Foreign Policy and China-India Relations in South Asia. *Contemporary Politics, 24*(1), 81-97. DOI: 10.1080/13569775.2017.1408168

Ge, I., Christie, A., Astle, J. (2016). A Role for UK Companies in Developing China's New Initiative. *China British Business Council*.http://www.cbbcorg/cbbc/media/cbbc_media/one-belt-one-road-main-body.pdf>

Gurr, T.R. (1970). Why Men Rebel. *Princeton, NJ: Princeton University*

Haidar, S. & Peri, Dinakar. (2019). Not Time Yet for Australia's Inclusion in Malabar Naval Games. *The Hindu.* https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/not-time-yet-for-australias-inclusion-in-malabarnaval-games/article26058080.ece

Hensel, P. R. (1999). An Evolutionary Approach to the Study of Interstate Rivalry. *Conflict Management and Peace Science, 17*(2), 175–206. https://doi.org/10.1177/073889429901700203

Hilali, Z. A. (2017). *US-Pakistan Relationship: Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan*. London: Francis & Taylors. https://www.routledge.com/US-Pakistan-Relationship-Soviet-Invasion-of-Afghanistan/Hilali/p/book/9780754642206

Holmes, J.R. & Yoshihara, T. (2008). India's Monroe Doctrine and Asia's Maritime Future. *Strategic Analysis, 32*(6), 997-1011. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09700160802404539

Hussain, F., & Hussain, M. (2017). China-Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC) and its Geopolitical Paradigms. *International Journal of Social Sciences, Humanities and Education, 1*(2), 79-95. https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/53227490/22-1-103-3-10-20170519-with-cover-page-v2.pdf [

Imran, M. (2019). Regional Dynamics and Russian Security Strategy in South Asia: A Comparative Analysis of Pakistan and India. *Global Regional Review, 4*(2), 1-11. https://www.grrjournal.com/issue/4/2/2019

Iqbal, N., & Javaid, U. (2020). CPEC: The U.S. Stance and its Impact on Pakistan-U.S. Relations. *Global Political Review, 5*(I), 145-154. doi:10.31703/gpr.2020(V-I).17

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

Ishfaq, S. (2019). India And America Collude To Disrupt The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. *Open Democracy.* https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/india-and-america-colludes-disrupt-china-pakistan-economic-corridor/ cited in Chakma, B. (2019). The BRI and India's Neighbourhood, *Strategic Analysis, 43*(3), 183-186. https://www.tandfonline.com/action/showCitFormats?doi=10.1080%2F09700161.2019.1607030

Jabeen, M. (2015). Proposed Silk Road and Pakistan-China Economic Corridor: Threats and Opportunities, (p.p.183-184). Lahore: GC University. Cited in Kamran, M., & Mahsood, A. K. (2021). Dynamics of Indian Antagonist Approach towards CPEC and Its Implications for Pakistan. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 12*(1), 31-31. https://www.richtmann.org/journal/index.php/mjss/article/view/12327

Jahangir, P. (2013). Changing Dynamics of South Asian Balance of Power. *Journal of South Asian Studies, 1*(1), 50-58.https://escijournals.net/index.php/JSAS/article/view/95

Javaid, U., Akhtar, M.S. (2017). Sino-Pakistan Relations: Repercussions for India. *Journal of Political Studies, 4*(1), 143-156.http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/history/PDF-FILES/14_55_1_18.pdf

Jones, D. R. (2016). Advancing Defence Cooperation in Asia Pacific and the US Re-Balancing Strategy: The Reality of an American-Indian Strategic Partnership. *IPRI.* Cited in Tehseen, M. (2017). Sino-US Competition: Implications for South Asia and the Asia-Pacific. *Strategic Studies, 37*(4). http://www.issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/1-SS_Mohammad_Tehseen_No-4_2017.pdf

Khan, H. U. (2017). China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Benefits for Pakistan. https://calhoun.nps.edu/handle/10945/56582

Khan, N.A. (2020). Pakistan and Future of CPEC. *Pakistan Observer.* https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-and-future-of-cpec/

Khan, Z. (2012). Cold Start Doctrine: The Conventional Challenge to South Asian Stability. *Contemporary Security Policy, 33*(3), 577-594. https://scihub.wikicn.top/10.1080/13523260.2012.727685

Krepon, M. (2003). The Stability-Instability Paradox, Misperception and Escalation Control in South Asia. *Prospects for peace in South Asia,* 261-279. https://theasiadialogue.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/stability-instability-paradox-south-asia.pdf

Kumar, J. A. , Mir, M. A. & Hussain, A. (2014). India as a Regional Hegemon and Its Impact on the Development of SAARC. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Educational Research, 3*(1), 4. http://ijmer.s3.amazonaws.com/pdf/volume3-issue1(4)-2014/volume3-issue1(4)-2014.pdf#page=80

Kuo, L., Kuomenda, N. (2018). What is China's Belt and Road Initiative? *The Guardian.* https://www.theguardian.com/cities/ng-interactive/2018/jul/30/what-china-belt-road-initiative-silk-road-explainer

Li, N. (2002). 11 September and China: Opportunities, Challenges and War Fighting. *Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies.* Cited in Durrani, S.Q, Bilal, M. & Kalim, I. (2017). Pakistan-China Strategic Partnership: Capitalizing the Geo-Political Location of Pakistan. *Global Regional Review, 2*(1), 152-165. https://grrjournal.com/jadmin/Auther/31rvIolA2LALJouq9hkR/Pco9zq8VQx.pdf

Luft, G. (2016). China's Infrastructure Play: Why Washington Should Accept the New Silk Road. *Foreign Affairs.* https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/asia/china-s-infrastructure-play

Makhdoom, A. S., Shah, A. B. & Sami, K. (2017). Pakistan on the Roadway to Socio-Economic Development: A Comprehensive Study of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). *Research Journal of Political Science, 6*(6), 37-46.

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

Malik, I. H. (2008). The History of Pakistan. *Islamabad: Greenwood Publishing Group.* Cited in Allauddin, Liu, H., & Ahmed, R. Q. (2020). The Changing Dynamics and New Developments of China–Pakistan Relations. *India Quarterly: A Journal of International Affairs.* https://sci-hub.se/https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0974928419901195

Mir, A. (2011). Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Ma Zhaoxu's Remarks on China-Pakistan Counter Terrorism Cooperation. *Asia Times.* http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/MJ26Df03.html

Mitra, D. (2018). Terrorism as an Unwanted Social Issue: A Critical Review. *A Peer-Reviewed International Journal of Humanities & Social Science, 7*(2), 246-257. https://www.thecho.in/files/28.-Debika-Mitra.pdf

Montgomery, B. (2018). China's Belt and Road Initiative and India's Concern. *Strategic Analysis, 42*(4), 313-332.

Naikoo, G. M. D., Ul Haq, H. M. I. (2018). China-Pakistan Strategic Maneuver: India's Response. *IUP Journal of International Relations,* 12, 34-46. https://search.proquest.com/openview/9becaa52c43c0a32bf1f7cf069d50df1/1?cbl=2029994&pq-origsite=gscholar

Neelis, J. (2017). Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks: Mobility and Exchange Within and Beyond the Northwestern Borderlands of South Asia. *Netherlands: Brill.* Cited in Allauddin, Liu, H., & Ahmed, R. Q. (2020). The Changing Dynamics and New Developments of China–Pakistan Relations. *India Quarterly: A Journal of International Affairs,* https://sci-hub.se/https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0974928419901195

Noonari, Ali, I., Memon & Pervez, A. (2017). Pakistan-China Cooperation and Its Impact on South Asia. *Research Journal of Political Science,* 5, 109-118.

Octaviano, T.P. (2014). Economic Corridors Boost Markets, Living Conditions. *Business World Research*. Cited in Safdar, Aqeel, Hussain & Ashgar. (2020). China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: A Study of Indo-US Nexus to Sabotage CPEC. *Al-Qalam, 24*(2). http://journal.alqalamjournalpu.com/index.php/Al-Qalam/article/view/653/395

Pant, H.V. & Passi, R. (2017). India's Response to China's Belt and Road Initiative: a Policy in Motion. *Asia Policy,* 24, 88-95. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26403206?seq=1

Paul, T.V. (2010). *State Capacity and South Asia's Perennial Insecurity Problems*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Rajagopalan, R. (2006). What Stability-Instability Paradox? Subnational Conflicts and the Nuclear Risk in South Asia. *SASSU Research Paper, 4*(5). https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/99913/RP%20No%2004.pdf

Rana, S. (2018). Bulk of Chinese Financing Goes to Three CPEC Projects. *The Express Tribune Business.* https://tribune.com.pk/story/1765050/2-bulk-chinese-financing-goes-3-cpec-projects/

Rashida, H., Nadia, F., (2017). Impact of CPEC on Social Welfare in Pakistan: A district Level Analysis. *The Pakistan development Review: PDR. - Islamabad,* https://www.econbiz.de/Record/impact-of-cpec-on-social-welfare-in-pakistan-a-district-level-analysis-haq-rashida/10011964400

Rehman, A.U. (2018). Maritime in South Asia and Naval Compulsions of CPEC for Pakistan. *Pluto Journals, 15*(1), 81-94.

Sachdeva G. (2018). Indian Perceptions of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative. *International Studies, 55*(4), 285-296. doi:10.1177/0020881718807359

Safdar, M. S., Aqeel, M., Hussain, S., & Asghar, M. M. (2021). China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: A Study of Indo-US Nexus to sabotages CPEC. *Harf-o-Sukhan, 5*(3), 60-71. http://harf-o-sukhan.com/index.php/Harf-o-sukhan/article/view/89

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).

Saran, S. P. R. (2016). Seizing the One Belt One Road Opportunity. *The Hindu.* https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/Seizing-the-'One-Belt-One-Road'-opportunity/article1405492

Shafqat, M. (2015). Emerging Order in Asia Pacific: Indian Opposition to CPEC Ill. *Express Tribune*. https://tribune.com.pk/story/994162/emerging-order-in-asia-pacificindian-opposition-to-cpec-ill-advised-aziz/. Cited in Khan, Z. (2017). Geostrategic Transformation: Pakistan's Options for Deterrence and Strategic Posturing. *IPRI. Journal XVII,* 1, 72-94. http://www.ipripak.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Article-No.-4w17.pdf

Siddiqui, S. (2017). CPEC Investment Pushed From $55b to $62b. *The Express Tribune.* https://tribune.com.pk/story/1381733/cpec-investment-pushed-55b-62b/

Singh, B. (2017). Indo-US Strategic Relations in 21st Century. *International Journal of Research, 5*(7). Https://Doi.Org/10.29121/Granthaalayah.V5.I7.2017.2148

Snyder, G. H. (1960). Deterrence and Power. *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* 4(2).

Sultan, A. (2014). South Asian Stability-Instability Paradox: Another Perspective. *IPRI Journal, 14*(1), 21-37. https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/35057216/Stability-Instability_Paradox_Another_Perspective

Talukdar, S. (2016). China-Russia-Pakistan Axis Looks Real: What Course Will Delhi Chart vis-à-vis Islamabad? *Firstpost*. https://www.firstpost.com/world/china-russia-pakistan-axis-looks-real-what-course-willdelhi-chart-vis-a-vis-islamabad-3066546.html

Tehseen, M. (2017). Sino-US Competition: Implications for South Asia and the Asia-Pacific. *Strategic Studies, 37*(4). http://www.issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/1-SS_Mohammad_Tehseen_No-4_2017.pdf

Tehsin, M., Khan, A. A., & Sargana, T. U. H. (2017). CPEC and Sustainable Economic Growth for Pakistan. *Pakistan Vision, 18*(2), 102-118.

Thammavong, S. (2020). *China's Belt and Road Initiative: Perspectives from India.* (Doctoral dissertation, Auckland University of Technology). http://orapp.aut.ac.nz/handle/10292/13300

Thoker, P. A. Singh, B. (2017). The Emerging China, Pakistan and Russia Strategic Triangle: India's New Gordian Knot. *Jadavpur Journal of International Relations, 21*(1), 61-83. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0973598417712873

Wagner, C. (2019). Facing Global China: India and Belt and Road Initiative. *South Asia Chronicle,* 205-224. https://edoc.hu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/18452/21745/08%20-%20Forum%20-%20Wagner,%20Christian%20-%20Facing%20Global%20China,%20India%20and%20the

Xin, L. (2017). India Should Rethink Its Position of Its Position on Belt & Road Initiative, Find Solutions: Experts. *Global Times.* http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1047057.shtml

© 2022 by the authors. Published by Secholian Publication. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY).