



BRIDGING THE DIVIDE: PAKISTAN'S ROLE IN MEDIATING U.S.-RUSSIA RELATIONS DURING TRUMP'S PRESIDENCY

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Abstract

The research examines how Pakistan act as an intermediary between America and Russia during the government of Donald Trump. The growing international political tensions resulted in Pakistan establishing itself as a key force to bring together the two superpowers through diplomatic dialogue. The transitional place of Pakistan enables it to use thoroughly balanced relations with Moscow and Washington to develop communication lines for defusing tensions. The research investigates Pakistan's diplomatic actions through its involvement in significant global affairs spanning the Afghan war alongside nuclear arms control and nearby security matters. This research examines Pakistan's success in minimizing tensions between the United States and Russia by analyzing diplomatic activities and policy transformations and international cooperation. It evaluates both the advantages and barriers that Pakistan encounters while attempting to resolve the divide. The research examines Pakistan's foreign policy through the prism of international power structures, which provides understanding about complicated diplomatic practices alongside mid-size power functions in resolving international disputes.

Key words: Mediation, Donald Trump, Pakistan, Geopolitical Diplomacy, U.S.-Russia Relations



Introduction

The international political terrain undergoes continuous evolution from the complex connections between major powers in the world. The conduct between Russia and America continues to generate substantial impact in modern international politics. Throughout the period from World War II termination into the peak of Cold War their hostile relationship led to worldwide alliance shifts and intensified weapons races and generated ideological confrontations (Carter, 2019). The post-Cold War era has shown that the complex U.S-Russia diplomatic relations continue through alternating cycles of strategic cooperation with explicit verbal confrontations.

Donald Trump established himself as a different kind of foreign affairs leader when he took office as President of the United States during his first presidential term. Trump established a warmer relationship with Russia through his friendly ties to Vladimir Putin and his more accommodating policies toward the country which altered traditional U.S foreign policy practices (Sakwa, 2017). Although criticized at home and accused of colluding with Russia this strategy allowed crucial negotiations regarding nuclear arms management and counterterrorism measures.

Under the leadership of Joe Biden America took a different direction than previous administrations had pursued. Since the military invasion of Ukraine in 2022 by Russia the Biden administration opted to establish a pointed diplomatic stance towards Moscow (Tortladze, 2023). Russia invaded Ukraine due to its opposition toward Ukraine entering North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Western nations strongly condemned this move (KHALDI Chaima, 2023). The economic sanctions against Russia intensified alongside NATO military help to Ukraine which worsened United State (US)-Russia diplomatic relations. The war generated international consequences which included disturbances in energy supplies and intensified diplomatic rifts and brought back harsh diplomatic tensions that resembled the Cold War period.

The re-election of Donald Trump generates a new element in the global political structure due to current geopolitical conditions. The strengthening of his governing power has led people to question whether United States foreign policy will experience any changes particularly toward Russia. Trump's background of negotiator behaviours during his first term indicates that his second presidential term could potentially create opportunities for diplomatic reconciliation through practical approaches. The existing animosity and conflicting aims between Russia and the United States burdens any potential diplomatic connection.

As a state possessing unique geopolitical value between Middle East and South Asia along with Central Asia, Pakistan relinquish notable power in international diplomatic practices (Abbas, 2019). Through its actions in mediating US-China reconciliation and Afghan conflict factions in the 1970s Pakistan demonstrated its abilities to mediate between rival entities (Francis). The nation establishes its position as a prospective peace broker in our divisive strategic era because of its enduring diplomatic links with both US and Russia. This research analyses Pakistan's potential to



use its diplomatic skills and geographical advantages for mediating between US and Russian relationships after President Trump's term. Analysis of Pakistan's capability as a mediator between the Russia and US requires an examination of leadership traits coupled with national goals and strategic decision processes.

Theoretical Framework

This study evaluates strategic agent interactions through 'Game Theory' because it analyses normal decision processes occurring between entities under control. The analytical method known as Game theory which John von Neumann together with Oskar Morgenstern developed helps academic fields evaluate the rational decision-making of agents. Two main subdivisions of theoretical framework include non-cooperative game theory together with cooperative game theory. Video games need distinctive theory sections that include zero-sum game play alongside repeated games, Bayesian games and evolutionary game theory to fulfil their gameplay needs. Every self-governing framework operates with specific needs that stem from participant characteristics together with objective monitoring principles. Game Theory delivers essential knowledge regarding the dynamics of conflict and cooperation therefore establishing itself as an exceptional method to study United States, Russia and Pakistan relations.

This research adopts cooperative game theory for conceptual foundation since it provides advanced game theory evaluation to examine Pakistan's mediation role between U.S-Russia relations under Donald Trump during his presidential period. The strategic mathematical system which is called game theory offers organizations an approach to analyse complex actor interactions that involve opposing or supportive goals (Kolokoltsov & Malafeyev, 2020). The research applies cooperative game theory mechanisms to identify potential collaboration methods for a region where countries traditionally have hostile relations. Game theory in cooperative mode finds extensive usage for conflict and mediation activities throughout various situations. By adopting this specific framework Pakistan will establish channels of discourse dedicated to developing trust which will work to decrease tensions between America and Russia. The theory establishes fair divisions of benefits among coalition members while diplomatic goals seek to present clear advantages to each party from collective work. Multilateral interactions between U.S-Russia relations incorporate Pakistan and other stakeholders who influence these dynamics (Khan, 2024). A strong analytical framework from cooperative game theory allows experts to study coalition assembly dynamics as well as maintenance and breaking mechanisms among multi-group members. Through this approach we discern how Pakistan functions as an intermediary between the US and Russia and identifies the potential advantages the country seeks from fostering their collaboration.

Using cooperative game theory analytical evaluation receives improvement from its methodological tools for understanding multi-level collaborative instrument dynamics. The government entered its second year under Trump and cooperative game theory gave Pakistan the analytical clarity needed to handle US-Russian diplomatic relations. The theoretical foundation matches diplomatic targets because it enables partners to cooperate while developing coalitions and



obtaining mutual benefits for keeping stability in complex international political systems.

Evolving Dynamics of US-Russia Relations: A Geopolitical Overview

The framework established by President Trump to understand political relations between U.S and Russia included systemic issues merged with conflicting political agendas and insufficient diplomatic efforts according to Lo (Lo, 2017). The Trump administration formed an experimental foreign policy because Trump kept different opinions about Russia than his military leaders. The political debate surrounding Russian participation in the 2016 the United States presidential election led politicians from both nations to harm their international communication network. Russians' issues created long-lasting divisions among congressional leaders who thus reduced possibilities for establishing dialogue institutions. Continuous conflicts between these two nations made successful cooperation impossible to become a reality. The struggle against terrorism remained the sole matter of cooperation between the U.S and Russia while Russia focused on advancing its territorial control in Syria.

During his research work Aimen (2024) examined the complex combination of positive and negative elements between Biden and Trump presidencies' U.S-Russia foreign relations. The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution led to a tense start of diplomatic relations between both nations after it disrupted their previous relations. These two nations keep their everlasting geopolitical dispute alive because it drove them to build crucial diplomatic information. Different U.S administrations pursued opposite foreign policies that sought to reduce tensions along with increasing them. The policies operating as oppositional entities created a large obstacle which blocked both nations from creating dependable diplomatic connections (Aimen, 2024).

The study by Paplauskas 2021 evaluates the diplomatic results of Donald Trump's presidency on U.S.-Russia relations along with how his foreign policy methods proved difficult to understand. The importance of this matter developed as U.S.-Russia diplomatic relations deteriorated from before Donald Trump became president even though his political experience was limited. This research carefully investigates every change in diplomatic relations between the United States and Russia during the Trump administration period. Treating neoclassical realism as its framework the research examined domestic and international aspects supporting the development of Trump's foreign policies. Naïve nationalist policies from President Trump provoked worsened diplomatic relations as they stalled the advancement of bilateral cooperation between nations. The diplomatic situation became more challenging due to his spontaneous leadership approach which altered his Russian position yet produced ongoing disputes with Congress. U.S.-Russia diplomatic relations had severe shifts during Trump's presidency because existing opportunities for joint objectives evolved into fresh diplomatic confrontations (Paplauskas, 2021). The United States encountered domestic obstacles when Trump wanted to enhance Russian relations through counterterrorism despite his support for Putin because his government remained mostly isolationist. Government decisions at this period developed through oppositional domestic pressures and legislative challenges while blocking several chances to establish stable diplomatic links. Trump's leadership



through aggressive behaviours and hasty decision-making produced unpredictable diplomatic circumstances that reduced diplomatic collaboration among nations and expanded political distances between them.

Korobkov 2019 analyzed the American-Russian diplomatic relations under Donald Trump by examining his efforts to restructure foreign policy approaches while facing shifting global power structures. During the Trump presidential administration there was a dual effort to build Russia into a China-fighting alliance although efforts continued toward Muslim extremism coordination with Russia. U.S. political elites rejected these initiatives after they showed scepticism towards Russian electoral intervention and geopolitical purposes. U.S.-Russia diplomatic relations became an intensely debated issue inside the country following internal political turmoil which prevented cooperative ties and minimized their joint partnership possibilities (Korobkov, 2019). The Trump second term is realistic toward other nations of worlds particularly with Russian in case of Syria and Ukraine war as well because both nation have different interest in these countries. Trump new involvement in Afghanistan is new game of Donald Trump to threaten Iran a close friend of Pakistan and Russia. It is challenging for both Pakistan and Russia to bridging the divide.

Pakistan and the US

Historically, Pakistan has been a key ally of the U.S, particularly during the Cold War, when it served as a frontline state against Soviet expansion in Afghanistan. After the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan became a central ally in the War on Terror, though relations have fluctuated due to various issues such as Pakistan's ties to groups in Afghanistan and its nuclear program. The Afghan conflict, whether framed as part of a “global war on terror” or a struggle against “radical Islamist terrorism,” has proven to be a protracted and ongoing crisis with no clear resolution in sight (Yasmin & Ekanayaka, 2025). The review of U.S. policy towards Afghanistan under President Trump was prompted by an increasing acknowledgment within the Pentagon that America's mission in the country was nearing a critical point of failure. This recognition underscored the challenges and complexities of sustaining U.S. objectives in Afghanistan, signaling the need for a reassessment of strategy to address the deteriorating situation on the ground.

During his first tenure president Donald Trump made an early telephone call to Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif, the Pakistani media widely reported that Trump lavished excessive praise on Sharif. This initial interaction between the two leaders attracted significant attention, as it marked the beginning of a complex diplomatic relationship. The reported praise indicated a potential shift in tone compared to previous U.S. administrations, signaling the possibility of a recalibration of U.S.-Pakistan relations under Trump’s leadership. While high-ranking officials within the Trump administration determined that Pakistan could no longer be relied upon as a trustworthy ally in the fight against terrorism, there were also those who argued that the United States should avoid severing ties with Pakistan entirely. This division within the administration reflected the complexity of the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, with some recognizing the strategic importance of maintaining diplomatic engagement despite concerns over Pakistan's actions, and



others prioritizing a tougher stance due to perceived failures in counterterrorism cooperation (Kaura & Era, 2017).

Trump continued America's constrain approach when he assumed office, intensifying pressure on Pakistan to take more decisive actions. The bilateral relations between the two countries reached a significant nadir when, on the first day of the new year, Trump tweeted that Pakistan had "deserted" the United States, despite receiving billions of dollars in aid, which he characterized as compensation for "nothing other than lies and deceit." Furthermore, the Trump administration utilized the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) as a mechanism to apply further pressure on Islamabad, aligning with its broader objectives. Trump also accused Pakistan of providing "safe havens" to leaders of terrorist groups. In a subsequent press briefing, U.S. National Security Advisor John Bolton emphasized that the U.S was fully aware of Pakistan's role in exacerbating tensions by providing militants in Peshawar and Quetta with escape routes, thus undermining regional stability (Bilal et al., 2025).

President Trump acknowledged the critical role that Islamabad played in facilitating a secure American withdrawal from Afghanistan. In this context, he reached out to Pakistan's prime minister, Imran Khan, requesting Islamabad's assistance in addressing the complexities of the Afghan situation. In response, Pakistan employed a series of diplomatic measures to support U.S. objectives. Notably, Pakistan first facilitated the release of the Afghan Taliban's chief negotiator and subsequently exerted pressure on the Taliban to engage in peace talks. The U.S. special representative for Afghanistan reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad expressed support for this initiative which he validated through his background as an Afghan native and his vital role in negotiating a peace agreement with the Taliban (Afzal, 2020).

In spite of their friendly relationship in different sectors U.S and Pakistan maintain a relationship independent of this issue. Pakistan has adopted an essential relationship with the United States through its foreign policy framework which emerges from economic involvement combined with military needs and security requirements. In different security situations including the war in Afghanistan and the dangers from India Pakistan repeatedly obtained military equipment together with economic assistance and diplomatic backing from the United States throughout its historical development. The partnership enables Pakistan to obtain military supplies plus funds plus diplomatic endorsement particularly in times of crisis. The United States support of Pakistan exhibits frequent changes because U.S interests in China and its South Asian policy adjustments affect how their bilateral agreements unfold. The strategic relations with America remain important to Pakistan yet the nation makes strategic moves toward China and Russia to lower dependence on a single power and enhance both national security and economic stability.

Pakistan and Russia

The Soviet Union's (USSR) invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 severely strained U.S-Pakistan relations, but in recent years, Pakistan and Russia have sought to rebuild their relationship,



especially in the context of the evolving security situation in Afghanistan and Central Asia. Pakistan has also sought to balance its relationship with Russia while maintaining its strategic alliance with the U.S. The trade relationship between Pakistan and Russia (USSR) from 1950 to 2020 demonstrates a gradual and incremental development, characterized by slow growth from the 1950s until the late 1980s. Following the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, there was a modest increase in bilateral trade, signaling a shift in economic dynamics (Yasmin & Ekanayaka, 2025). The trade relationship experienced a fast-paced expansion starting from the beginning of the 2000s where Pakistan imported more from Russia than it exported to Russia.

The year 2010 showcased a major increase in import and export activity which indicated enhanced trade relations between Pakistan and Russia. In the years spanning from 2015 through 2020 Russia exported about 600 million USD worth of goods to Pakistan. The trade imbalance grew noticeably strong during this time because Pakistani imports rose above exports in every year. The extensive growth of imports indicates increasing economic partnership between Russia and Pakistan especially for energy and defense industries. A transformation has occurred within the Russia-Pakistan relationship because of changing geopolitical situations and economic pressure adjustments. Russia's increasing engagement with Pakistan, particularly within the defense and energy sectors, can be understood as a strategic effort to counterbalance the U.S. presence in South Asia while mitigating the influence of India. This shift is most evident in the defense sector, where Russia has adapted its long-standing relationship with India to accommodate its burgeoning partnership with Pakistan. Russia views Pakistan as a pivotal actor in addressing regional security challenges, especially in the context of combating terrorism (Roy & Shahzad, 2025).

During Donald Trump's second term, Pakistan and Russia sought to deepen their bilateral relationship, driven by shared strategic interests in regional security and economic development. The two countries explored enhanced cooperation in defense, counterterrorism, and energy, with Russia providing support to Pakistan's energy sector and military modernization efforts. This partnership also reflects mutual desire of mediation. However, the evolving dynamics were influenced by the broader geopolitical landscape, including U.S.-Russia tensions and Pakistan's balancing act between its traditional alliance with the U.S. and the growing ties with Russia.

Pakistan's Role as a Mediator between US and Russia

Mediation is best tool of diplomacy to resolve the tension between two warring parties. Many times, Pakistan trying to playing a meditating role between U.S and Russia. Unfortunately, there is no such tool used before nor use in the present to come close both of them longtime because of Pakistan during Donald Trump second term. Having good relations with both of the is very important and for them strategic location of Pakistan is very crucial. Both countries play a key significant role in the development of Pakistan so both are considering in Pakistan foreign policy.

Pakistan created a complex diplomatic framework to enable essential dialogues between the key participants of Taliban rebels and Afghan officials with the United States and China and Russia.



Pakistan's role as a mediator between the United States and Russia is quite interesting, especially given the context of its strategic position in South Asia and its relationships with both nations. Over the years, Pakistan has played a nuanced role in global diplomacy, leveraging its geographic location, historical relationships, and evolving foreign policy objectives to serve as a potential bridge in geopolitical divides. Pakistan plays a subsequent role in developing a channel between the antagonistic parties of Afghanistan. The trilateral dialogue between (Russia, China and Pakistan), the trilateral strategic dialogue between (China, Afghanistan and Pakistan) and Quadrilateral dialogue between (U.S, China and Pakistan) has shown that Pakistan can play a bridging role between the US and Russia in different platforms (Abbas & Khan, 2017).

U.S-Russia relations have often been tense, marked by the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and subsequent geopolitical maneuvering. While the U.S and Russia are both powerful nations, their interests sometimes align but often diverge particularly in areas like arms control, regional conflicts, and international institutions. Pakistan has managed to navigate these tensions by maintaining its relationships with both superpowers, which provides it with the unique ability to act as an intermediary.

The relationship between the United States and Russia has been marked by significant tension over the past several years. Diverging positions on various global issues have contributed to this strained relationship. A primary source of contention has been the U.S. proposal to deploy anti-nuclear missile defense systems across Eastern Europe, which has faced strong resistance from Russia. Additionally, there are notable disagreements concerning the handling of the Syrian conflict and Iran's actions toward Israel. Russia advocates for resolving both issues through bilateral or multilateral negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations, while the United States favors implementing stricter sanctions against Iran (Noor, 2025) and pursuing unilateral military intervention in Syria to support opposition factions.

According to BBC news a recent development in Syria, the Trump administration and Russia have maintained distinct yet converging positions, with both countries seeking to influence the region's trajectory through strategic engagements. While the U.S. has focused on limiting Russian influence and countering Iranian presence in Syria, Russia has bolstered its support for the Assad regime, reinforcing its geopolitical footprint in the Middle East. Amid these tensions, Pakistan has emerged as a potential mediator, leveraging its diplomatic relations with both Washington and Moscow to advocate for a peaceful resolution to the conflict, thus positioning itself as a key player in the shifting dynamics of Syrian geopolitics.

The two countries also maintain sharply opposing views on the U.S. development of a global missile defense system. Despite several attempts to "reset" diplomatic relations, these efforts have not yielded significant improvements. Although both nations continue to engage in active diplomatic dialogue, the overall state of their relationship remains tense. This ongoing discord is further compounded by the potential threat of future global financial crises. Furthermore, although the 2010



signing of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) represented a notable step in arms control, it has not led to a substantial shift in the broader geopolitical dynamics between the two countries (Ali et al., 2023). Pakistan holds strategic importance for both Moscow and Washington, particularly in the context of the current tensions between the U.S and Russia. For Russia, Pakistan is of considerable interest due to its geostrategic location. It provides Russia with access to the Gulf and the Arabian Sea, serves as a gateway to Iran, and is a critical route for various pipeline projects. Furthermore, Pakistan acts as a strategic counterbalance to neighboring powers such as China, India, and Russia itself. From the perspective of the United State, Pakistan plays a key role in maintaining a presence in the region, offering strategic value in the broader context of geopolitical stability and influence (Khan, 2024).

In the context of current geopolitics, Pakistan has a few potential areas in which it could act as a mediator between the U.S and Russia. During the second term of Donald Trump's presidency, Pakistan assumed a significant role as a mediator in facilitating dialogue between the United States and Russia. Several conditions in present geopolitics offer Pakistan a possibility to function as a middleman between the U.S and Russia. The second term of Donald Trump's presidency saw Pakistan undertake important responsibilities as it served as a bridge for U.S-Russian diplomatic dialogue. Through reservations about weapons control and security risks and territorial conflicts Pakistan tried to establish itself as an objective party that could link Russia and the United States together. The unique geopolitical situation of Pakistan and its specialized relationships with the United States and Russia enabled it to pursue reduction of strained relations through successful dialogues. Pakistan carried out this mediation task to achieve two main international goals which included strengthening its global standing and creating regional peace mainly to safeguard both security interests in Afghanistan and evolving diplomatic relations with the United States and Russian Federation.

The position of Pakistan as a negotiating middleman between America and Russia stands out in its South Asian strategic position and ongoing relations with both powers. International diplomacy has rewarded Pakistan through its balanced approach to geopolitics which uses strategic placement along with previous alliances and developing diplomatic goals to function as an intermediary between quarreling global forces. The development of communication between hostile Afghan factions happens after Pakistan fulfills its role. The trilateral dialogue between (Russia, China and Pakistan), the trilateral strategic dialogue between (China, Afghanistan and Pakistan) and Quadrilateral dialogue between (U.S, China and Pakistan) has shown that Pakistan can play a bridging role between the U.S and Russia in different platforms (Abbas & Khan, 2017).

Russia's involvement in the Syrian conflict operates as a complex enterprise that derives its motives from foreign strategies and domestic needs as well as international strategic objectives. Russia uses this intervention to hold onto its main friendly power while extending its influence across the Middle East in addition to countering Western global leadership. Strategic diplomacy and military force combination enabled Russia to establish itself as the major regional player after achieving its



Syria objectives. Through military forces alongside non-military strategies Russia demonstrates its hybrid foreign policy practice for achieving national security goals. This strategy in Syria creates insights about Russia's prospective methods to address upcoming security problems and foreign interventions across different global contexts. Knowledge of Russia's involvement in Syria ensures proper preparation for its upcoming global moves and development of suitable defensive measures (Jorge Trujillo, 2025). Now Russian position in Syria is weak after elimination of Assad regime (Basbugoglu, 2025). On 27 November 2024, Syrian rebels led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham launched a successful offensive from Syria's isolated northwestern enclave, resulting in the collapse of the 54-year Assad regime within just 11 days.

The rebels' remarkable success in overthrowing Bashar al-Assad was significantly facilitated by the withdrawal of his foreign backers, a shift driven by changes in the regional and international landscape. Assad's downfall marks the beginning of a new era in the Middle East and beyond. The transition in Syria will be shaped by the interests and actions of seven key stakeholders Iran, Israel, the Gulf states, Turkey, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)-led Kurds, Russia, and the United States each of whom will pursue distinct and, at times, conflicting ideological, geopolitical, and economic objectives. The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), primarily composed of Kurdish fighters and supported by the United States, captured the Albu Kamal border crossing, which Syria shares with Iraq (Hall, 2025). The United States (Donald Trump) actively engaged and will engage in a direct or indirect conflict in Syria by supporting two of its allies, Turkey and Israel (Pinfeld, 2025). Official of Pakistan stance toward removal Assad regime was neutral but public have different stance toward Syria. Pakistan's geostrategic position plays a pivotal role in shaping its influence on Middle Eastern politics, serving as a critical link between the eastern Middle East and the western Indian Subcontinent. Historically, the Islamic Emirate facilitated connections across this vast region, with Pakistan's borders with Afghanistan and Iran acting as a conduit for diplomatic relations between key players, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in the Gulf, as well as Egypt and Syria in the Levant. The uniqueness of these interregional relationships underscores Pakistan's role as a natural continental bridge, highlighting its strategic importance in facilitating cross-regional diplomacy and security dynamics (Kousar & Behan, 2025). The ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict has significantly reshaped the geopolitical landscape of Europe and triggered global economic, political, and social repercussions. For countries like Pakistan, located in South Asia, the consequences of the war are profound and multifaceted. As the conflict persists, Pakistan faces several challenges across economic, political, social, and security domains, necessitating careful diplomatic navigation. Historically, Pakistan has balanced its relations with both Russia and the United States, but the war has intensified the need to reassess its foreign policy stance.

Pakistan's strategic partnership with Russia spans defense, energy, and infrastructure, with Russia serving as a key supplier of natural gas, military equipment, and technology. Conversely, Pakistan's relationship with the West, particularly the United States, remains crucial for military aid, economic support, and trade. The U.S. and European Union's vocal condemnation of Russia's invasion of



Ukraine, along with the imposition of sanctions, has placed Pakistan in a delicate position. While Pakistan has publicly adopted a neutral stance, calling for dialogue and diplomacy, its refusal to join sanctions against Russia has drawn criticism from Western nations, potentially straining relations with countries that expect alignment with Western political norms. However, maintaining neutrality allows Pakistan to preserve its strategic cooperation with Russia, especially in defense and energy sectors. Ultimately, Pakistan's foreign policy must balance these relationships while safeguarding national security interests in a constantly evolving geopolitical environment (Noor, 2025).

Likewise, Afghanistan plays a central role in the politics of Pakistan, the USA, and Russia, as each country seeks to influence its stability, security, and governance, with Pakistan focusing on regional security, the U.S. prioritizing counterterrorism, and Russia seeking to limit Western influence in Central Asia. Currently, Afghanistan's situation is influenced by a range of actors, which can be grouped into various categories. The region is marked by both competition and cooperation between different states. The primary influence on Afghanistan comes from its neighboring countries, including major nations like Pakistan, China, Russia, India, Iran, and the Central Asian Republics, all of which play vital roles in shaping the political landscape of the region (Khan et al., 2025).

From the perspective of above discussion Pakistan play a mid-role with U.S and Russia. During Donald Trump's second term, Pakistan assumed a significant mediating role between the United States and Russia, navigating the complexities of international geopolitics and fostering dialogue between these two major global powers. Due to its position in South Asia along with traditional diplomatic relations with both states Pakistan worked to create stability in Afghanistan Ukraine and Syria and accomplish peace talks while making use of regional security dynamics. Through diplomatic initiatives Pakistan successfully mediated the conflicting interests of Washington and Moscow especially during the period when alliances in the Middle East and Central Asia started to show growing differences. Pakistan emerged as an essential player to control the rising tensions between the United States and Russia so that their relationship stayed away from direct military conflict.

The Future: A Bridge or a Proxy?

As Pakistan aims to continue playing a mediation role it must strike a perfect balance between pursuing its national interests and pursuing foreign interests of both the United States and Russia. The establishment of China while the United States directs its focus toward Asian interests represents key global political changes. Pakistan should consider developing new directions in its foreign policy system. A constructive role for Pakistan requires building mutual confidence with both U.S and Russian authorities to prevent its actions from looking like support for one side against the other. Pakistan should utilize multilateral organizations such as the United Nations or regional security platforms to establish extensive dialogue with both Russia and the United States for creating suitable spaces to negotiate. Russia's diplomatic ties and Pakistan's diplomatic relations with the United States will be shape by how their strategic interests develop together alongside



changing global arrangements of power. Since it maintains historic bonds and a strategic location between Russia and the United States Pakistan must decide whether to maintain its bridge-building function or start acting as their proxy forces during their global power competition.

Through its strategic position Pakistan holds significant potential to link the United States and Russia so they can work together in matters regarding counterterrorism initiatives and regional security programs and Afghanistan stabilization projects. The stability operations of Pakistan in Central Asia create possibilities for U.S-Russian collaboration to manage their interests independently while preventing their relations from deteriorating further. A goal of successful diplomacy coupled with sharp navigation through the multiple interests in the region remains necessary for this initiative to succeed.

The U.S-Russia geopolitical tension might force Pakistan to participate as a proxy state in this ongoing dispute. The cooperation between Russia and U.S in South Asia may intensify because these powers would utilize Pakistan as their strategic ally to control each other's reactions. When this occurs, Pakistan will need to choose between one major power over another which might compromise its ability to maintain independent foreign policy choices.

The future alignment of Pakistan depends on its capabilities to maintain balanced relationships between global powers alongside preserving its national interests. Whether it serves as a bridge or a proxy will be shaped by its strategic decisions, the evolution of global geopolitics, and the capacity of the U.S and Russia to manage their differences diplomatically.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper which relies on Cooperative Game Theory presents essential findings about possible diplomatic solutions for Pakistani mediation between America and Russia during Donald Trump's presidency. The research framework delivers final results which build knowledge in the field of international mediation and strategic diplomacy. Multiple vital findings from the study establish significant insights about Pakistan's relations with America and Russia. Throughout the entire Cold War period Pakistan has created diplomatic equilibrium because it previously supported both the United States and Soviet Russia. Due to unpredictable international policy changes under the Trump administration America develop antagonistic ties with Russia which require outside intervention.

Using Cooperative Game Theory, the research showed how Pakistan could develop mutually advantageous strategies for all three actors. Through different scenarios the Nash equilibrium illustrated that Pakistan could assist in tension reduction as an intermediary role. Historically Pakistan has performed diplomatic mediation successfully between different nations during the Cold War period and by enabling US-China reconciliation in the 1970's. The previous cases serve as practical evidence which demonstrates Pakistan's potential to continue serving as mediator between America and Russia today. Pakistan's mediatory role requires analysis through Cooperative Game Theory because it reveals how strategic partnerships produce advantageous



diplomatic resolutions in foreign affairs. Cooperative frameworks differ from non-cooperative models by showing that alliances built from shared interests lead to collaborative beneficial outcomes.

The study extends academic understanding of middle-power foreign policy through demonstration of how state position helps smaller nations enable diplomatic mediation between major powers. Through its model-based investigation International Relations receives critical enhancement as it unites game theory elements with diplomatic history to develop a new method for mediating actual diplomatic initiatives. The study proves that Pakistan should act as a mediator between the United States and Russia through Cooperative Game Theory applications. The mediator role of Pakistan will become more important as world powers continue their development trajectory. Pakistan shows capability to boost its geopolitical standing among nations as well as ensure world peace and security through strengthened diplomatic initiatives which operate under game-theoretical frameworks.

Recommendations

Following are the few recommendations which should be consider

1. Pakistan should create a specific diplomatic framework for mediation which utilizes existing platforms including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the United Nations.
2. Economic cooperation alongside trade agreements should serve as important tools for prompting diplomatic talks between Russia and the United States.
3. The country needs to start Track-II diplomatic dialogue through think tanks along with academic institutions and non-governmental organizations to establish informal discussion channels before formal negotiation periods.
4. Pakistan serves as a neutral platform for military dialogues between America and Russia because of its existing military ties to these superpowers. So, there should be a rational decision-making policy.
5. Decision-making processes should include game-theoretic modelling for determining ideal approaches to negotiation and conflict resolution.

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