

Analytical Review of Pak-China Strategic Cooperation 1950-2017

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ABSTRACT

The present study is aimed to provide analytical review of Pak-China strategic cooperation starting from 1950 to 2017. Pakistan started to establish her strategic relations with the outer world soon after her independence in 1947 in order to maintain balance of power in the region. Bilateral ties remained very encouraging from the beginning of Pak-China relations. However, bilateral ties touch its heights in the decade of 1960s. After 1960s, bilateral relation turned to diplomatic relations because of changing world scenario i.e. cold war, terrorism, One China Policy and change of world order. Still China helped Pakistan financially, technologically and assisted in developing nuclear program. In 21st century, relations became stronger of and both the nations started helping each other to materialize their goals in diverse fields. One such example is the implementation of (China – Pakistan Economic Corridor) CPEC which is expected to change the fate of both the countries in future.

Key words: China, Pakistan, Diplomaticities, CPEC

Introduction

International relations are very important for the development of any country. In addition, these relations are key determinants for gaining international support in disputed matters between different countries. Therefore, the development of international relations is a requisite for the progress and stability of any nation (Hertz, 1996). Therefore, it is very important to understand strategic relations and analytically review these relations which determine bilateral ties. In a globalized world order, every state needs to develop her relations with other states. Now states are interdependent (Hollis & Smith, 1990). Consequently, it is the need of the hour to understand and recognize the importance of international relations between different nations.

After independence Pakistan started her international relations with other states. It was necessary to develop her bilateral and trilateral relations with other

states for the sake of survival (Sridharan, 2005). For materialization of this goal, leadership of Pakistan visited different states and started developing relations with them. Same is the case with People Republic of China (PRC) (Aziz, 2007). After the independence of PRC, Pakistan became the second country from South Asia and first Muslim country to recognize her as sovereign state. Formally, this declaration initiated bilateral relations between both the countries (Kronstadt, 2009).

As, both the states are in the same region, South Asia, therefore, both the countries showed very keen interest to develop their bilateral relations. These relations became very important with the passage of time for national interests and because of the historical rivalry between Pakistan and India (Irshad, 2015). India always tried her best to sabotage strategic relations between Pakistan and China and tried her best to harm their relation either by involving superpowers like United States of America (USA) and Russia or by creating tensions across Sino-India borders (Kumar, 2003). Despite the involvement of many other international players in Pak-China relations, Pakistan and China both showed much firm commitment to increase their bilateral ties by increasing strategic relations in both economy and defense (Vallet & David, 2012).

This study is aimed to understand the nature and extent of relations between both the states with a deep insight from the history of both the countries particularly strategic cooperation since 1950s till 2017. In addition, this study will also focus upon the role of Pakistan-China relations in socio-economic development in Pakistan. For achieving study goals, researcher reviewed both national and international books and research articles to deeply analyze and describe the phenomenon of Pak-China strategic relations. This implies that the present study is descriptive in nature and used secondary data published in the form of books and articles by different political scholars and scholars of international relations.

Theoretical approach

The use of theoretical approach remained very doubting in the field of International Relations (IR) (Griffiths, 2007; Kauppi & Viotti, 2009). Weber (2013) claimed that theoretical approach and its less application in IR is the result of ambiguous nature of its subject matter. However, with the efforts of many decades, different theoretical approaches emerged in IR which have long history of theoretical development (Elman & Elman, 1997). Despite empirical efforts, the researchers of IR were not able to develop grand generalizations (Griffiths, 2007). IR remained greatly under the influence of Realistic school of thought because of their theoretical generalizations. In addition, they also combined state behavior with the behavior of human beings for analyzing the nature of bilateral relations in the world. According to Realism, state behavior is determined by the behavior of human beings who govern each and every state (Irshad, 2015). The behavior of human beings is not peace loving but it is more greedy, selfish and power seeking.

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Therefore, when such human beings govern states, states seek their selfish interest and power. In addition, feeling of insecurity is also worth mentioning. Human beings remained and are insecure from their enemies. When they see their enemies getting more power, human beings become insecure (Joseph & Wight, 2010). Similarly, when such human beings govern any state, they become insecure from the power of their enemies such as neighboring states etc. In such situations, every state tries to maximize her power for balancing her power in the region and in the world as well. This balance of power, as expected by realistic scholars will work as a threat to external world to not engage in any matter of dispute with other states (Donnelly, 2000).

International Relations of Pakistan are subject to such changes which were based on insecurity, balance of power and quest for survival. For the same objectives, Pakistan developed her bilateral relations with China. Pakistan after her independence faced many internal and external threats from her neighbor country India. India remained in search of any visible and hidden opportunity to destabilize Pakistan (Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff, 1971). Soon after 1947, Pakistan has to face the problem of Kashmir with India. In such circumstances, the roles of allies become very important. Therefore, Pakistan and India went towards maximization of power. Therefore, Pakistan for her survival, look towards different countries i.e. USA and China. However, USA was more skewed towards India therefore, Pakistan start searching for new friends (Guzzini, 2013).

China as a regionally powerful country in South Asia became priority choice for Pakistan and both the countries were also skeptical about increasing power in the region in the form of India and USA was also helping India to develop her military power which was a clear threat to Pakistan and China (Ayoob, 2002). Therefore, both Pakistan and China resolved their mutual issues and started their bilateral relations in economy and defense. In 1960s, bilateral relations between Pakistan and China touched its peak and China supported Pakistan both in battle field as well as on diplomatic forums. However, from 1970 to 1990, bilateral relations between both the nations became more diplomatic and indirect because of increasing world politics and trilateral relations by involving USA. China helped Pakistan in economy as well as developing military power (Boucher, 1998).

From 1990s to 2017, bilateral relations between Pakistan and China went to its peak. China starts helping Pakistan in different sectors such as technology, trade, agriculture, health and communication. In addition, nuclear explosions of Pakistan were not welcomed by the world especially by USA and USA imposed sanctions on Pakistan. In that time, Pakistan got complete support from China. After the turn of century, new form of relationship developed between Pakistan and China i.e. free trade agreement and other agreements which were helping for both Pakistan and China (Mingst, McKibben & Arreguin-Toft, 2018). However, in 2013 both the countries started working on China-Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC) and signed 51 Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) and decided about 46 billion dollars of investment in Pakistan for developing her in different fields. China's investment in Pakistan, according to Realistic perspectives is expected to

create balance of power in the region. China helped Pakistan to develop nuclear power which created balance of power in the region as India also developed her nuclear power with the help of USA. On the other hand, CPEC will create economic balance in the region as India is getting more and more economic attention from United States of America (USA) (Ayooob, 2002).

This implies that realism rightly explains bilateral relations of Pakistan and China. Because both the nations are working to help each other for gaining more and more economic and military power to cater powerful countries i.e. USA and India.

Initiation of Pak-China relations

Pakistan and China are not similar ideologically. Both the countries are different in terms of religion and culture. Still, both the regions have very long history of relationship in terms of economy and trade (Seth, 1969). However, formal relations between Pakistan and China started in 1950s when Pakistan became one of the pioneering countries to recognize sovereign status of PRC. From this day, both the countries decided to develop their bilateral relations in different fields i.e. economy, trade and military. The reasons were obvious because both the countries were in the same region and have more or less same enemies (Lavoy, 2005).

Pakistan supported China on many forums and China in return did not disappoint Pakistan. Pakistan also tried to develop her relations with other countries i.e. USA and USSR but the response was not very positive. In addition, these countries were more skewed towards India. Therefore, Pakistan started developing peaceful relations with China (Levi, 1962). According to Small (2010), geostrategic position of Pakistan is very important. Pakistan is linked to deep sea water and has operational sea port as well. In addition, Pakistan is also linked to many land locked countries of Central Asia which increased her geostrategic importance. China was aware of the importance of Pakistan in this region and prospective importance for trade. Therefore, China also showed keen interest in Pakistan. As claimed by Lavoy (2005), diplomatic relation between Pakistan and China are not new. But these ties developed with the passage of time starting from 1950s. In the early days, both the nations were not fully engaged with each other. However, with the passage of time, bilateral ties became stronger and stronger. After the change of government in China, a challenge emerged in front of Pakistan either to continue bilateral relations with Communist government of China or to support Capitalist bloc. Leadership of Pakistan very wisely tackled this situation and adopted two way policies as Pakistan was getting help from USA and other European countries as well. Relations with China in such situation might ban financial aid for Pakistan. In addition, Pakistan and China were also not fully engaged in their bilateral ties because of their unfamiliarity with each other. At that time, the efforts by Sir Zafarullah Khan are appreciable. He tried hard to develop diplomatic ties with China as he was only leader in Pakistan who was familiar with China (Barnds, 1972; Kapur, 2005).

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Chaudhri (1986) claimed that Pakistan was facing many problems to initiate her foreign policies. At one end Pakistan was trying to get closer to USA and her allies and on the other end USSR invited Pakistan to visit Soviet Union. Both USA and USSR were rivals and therefore, it was very a delicate matter for Pakistan to support only one superpower. But Pakistan was in favor to adopt a diplomatic and neutral position towards both the superpowers. Therefore, Pakistan did not approve invitation of USSR. At that time, approving invitation from communist government in China was a big decision (Chaudhri, 1986). Ramay (2016) found that another incident helped Pakistan to not only recognize Communist government in China but to start her economic relations as well. Pakistan was importing coal from India but India refused to provide coal to Pakistan because of conflicting matters including Kashmir issue. At that time, China offered Pakistan coal in return of cotton. This barter system proved very helpful for Pakistan and Pakistan start exporting cotton to China and importing coal from China. This was a very positive initiative by China which helped Pakistan not only to overcome her coal issues but also assisted her to start's of friendly relations with China (Dobell, 1964).

Fisher (1971) wrote that Pakistan relations with China were very helpful yet Pakistan was in need of more allies to overcome conflicting issues with India. Kashmir issue was one of the hottest topics between Pakistan and India. To resolve this issue, Pakistan was in search of support from USA and other powerful countries because China lost her permanent seat of United Nations Security Council (UNSC). However, Pakistan was optimistic that after the revival of seat, China could be helpful to Pakistan. Therefore, Pakistan supported China for gaining her permanent seat in UNSC (Ramay, 2016). In addition, USA and China were also conflicting with each other because of the clash of ideology which was very negative for Pakistan as Pakistan was getting help from both the countries (Garver, 1996). At the time of voting about China's revival of permanent seat in UNSC, Pakistan fully endorsed and supported China. It was again a clear message to China that Pakistan is with her at any diplomatic platform and will help her. In addition, this was also a direct message to the world that both the countries are close allies (Ayoob, 2001). Consequently, both the nations intensified their diplomatic relations and appointed their ambassadors and exchanged their envoys as well. In addition, both the countries claimed that they will help each other in every matter (Nanda, 1972).

Pakistan and China started signing different agreements to increase their ties in the field of economy. However, both the nations were still facing border issues and China was neutral over Kashmir issues Yet Pakistan and China kept on helping each other and signed barter agreement. This implies that both the nations were helping each other despite their conflicting issues (Hilali, 2001; Hilali, 2016). After that Pakistan and China also signed trade pact as well. However, after one year of trade pact, Pakistan starts thinking diplomatically about different countries. USA, USSR and capitalist bloc were favoring India and also increasing technology and military power in India for catering China. At that time, Pakistan signed two

pacts agreement with USA for getting technology which might create balance of power in the region and Pakistan was also thinking to share this technology with China. However, China was rightly very skeptical about these agreements with USA and therefore, China accused USA for disturbing balance of power in the region (Rose, 2005). China also accused that Pakistan's agreement with USA is also dangerous for the peace in the region because USA will interfere in the region and might disturb internal security and stability of the region (Kayani et al., 2013).

According to Kundi (2009), China was not happy with the agreement between Pakistan and USA. However, the visit of Pakistani Prime Minister Mr. Bogra proved very helpful. Mr. Bogra participated in Manila Conference and met with China's leadership. He assured China that Pakistani agreement with USA will not affect bilateral ties with China. In return, Chinese leadership also declared that China wished to establish very pleasant and cordial relations with Pakistan because both the countries were in the same region and USA was only after her own interest. This implies that both Pakistan and China handle this issue of agreement after diplomatic talks. In their meetings, both the nations reconfirmed their support and alliance to each other. In addition, both the nations also declare that they will continue their trade for mutual benefits. In addition as Levi (1962) claimed, acceptance of Chinese invitation to participate in Bandung Conference by Pakistan showed that Pakistan was willing to continue her relations with China and trying to handle mistrust very peacefully with the help of diplomatic talks. In the conference, Prime Minister of Pakistan met with many representatives from different countries which were not aligned to any bloc. In addition, premier for Pakistan also met with Chinese leadership and also assured that Pakistan is willing to start peaceful ties with China. In return, China assured Pakistan that China would not be a part of any aggression towards Pakistan because China was willing to establish cordial and peaceful relations with Pakistan. China also assured to the participants of conference that Pakistan is a peaceful country and is ready to work for regional peace and prosperity. Moreover, Pakistan also assured that her agreements are only for creating balance of power in the region. However, Pakistan will not be part of any aggression with USA against anyone (Montagno, 1965). Bandung Conference proved very encouraging for Pakistan as China fully endorsed ten-point agenda and seven pillar of peace proposed by Pakistan. At that time, the role of Indian leadership was again very negative as Mr. Nehru rejected both the proposal by (Pakistan (Naseer & Amin, 2011).

In Bandung Conference, another very important development took place. Both China and India were in search of maximizing their power in non-aligned countries. Therefore, India tried to bypass China and tried to strengthen her relations with other countries by excluding China. China, after realizing Indian intentions, started looking at Pakistan for possible future alliance instead of India. Before this development, China was favoring India which proved very wrong for China (Sawhny, 1999). At the same time, conflict over India and China increased which was in turn very favorable for Pakistan. Bilateral conflict between India and China brought Pakistan and China closer. China realized that India is not true

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alliaally of China and through Pakistan China might get access to deep sea water and Gulf States as well. Therefore, China decided to strengthen her relations with Pakistan.

From conflict to cooperation in Ayub regime

The era of President Mr. Ayub proved very fatal in cordial relations between Pakistan and China. Mr. Ayub was not only a supporter of Western policy but he was also against One China Policy. He challenged Chinese legitimacy many time over China's internal matters such as Tibet issue and Taiwan issue. In addition, he also welcomed Haji Mission from Taiwan in Karachi which was a negative message for China from Pakistan (Subrahmanyam, 1974). At that time, the role of Mr. Bhutto and Mr. Delvi is worth mentioning. They both rightly motivated and persuaded Mr. Ayub that his polices were not wise and Pakistan might lose her true friend after such policies. In addition, it is not right for Pakistan to involve in internal affairs of China for getting favor from USA and her allies because they are not true allies of Pakistan (Kardon, 2011). After successful motivation, General Ayub realized that he was wrong. Consequently, he decided to develop diplomatic relations with all the three major economies i.e. USA, USSR and China. He also declared that it is not wise to have conflicting relations with any neighbor country. As a sign of good will, he proposed demarcation of border with China which was readily accepted by China. However, China asked for support to gain membership in UN by Pakistan which was accepted by Pakistan. After successful demarcation of border with China, Pakistan supported China on all diplomatic forums which was a sign of friendship between both the countries (Buzan, Rizvi & Foot, 1986).

Agreement for the demarcation of border between Pakistan and China proved very helpful. Both the countries started working on this matter on priority bases. In 1963, both the nations singed border agreement which increased friendship and closer economic and military ties. According to border agreement, Pakistan got control over 750 square miles of land including salt range, three quarters of K-2 peak and control of border of Xinjiang province of China. On the other hand, Pakistan also compromised her territory to develop her peaceful and cordial relations with China. This border agreement was important because it brought Pakistan and China closer because previously both the nations were not having any common border. It was also decided that after the resolution of Kashmir issue, border agreement will be reopened. After successful implementation of border agreement, both the nations also signed another agreement which is commonly known as transport agreement. Mansingh (2005) wrote that after border agreement and transport agreement both the nations started new phase of bilateral ties. Pakistan and China decided to start international airline to increase their cooperation and da-business with each other. These agreements proved very helpful to win the hearts of people.

Another historical development took place in 1965. A war of 1965 started between Pakistan and India. During this war, China fully supported Pakistan.

China not only provided economic support to Pakistan but also provided military support. One thing that is worth mentioning is the diplomatic and verbal support which Pakistan got from China. China warned India to stop her aggression against Pakistan otherwise be ready for worse consequences. At the time of war, such support can be only provided by a true friend like China (Khan, 2006).

Decade of 1960s was very encouraging for bilateral relations between Pakistan and China. Soon after the end of 1965 war, Pakistan and China signed many new agreements. These agreements were related to economy, trade and commerce. In addition, Pakistan and China also signed an agreement of the most favorite nations. China also provided heavy mechanical machinery to Pakistan which was worth of about 15 million rupees for the construction of Heavy Mechanical Complex in 1968 (Amin, 2011). China also provided interest free loans to Pakistan for her socio-economic development. Particularly, this loan was for small scale industry in Pakistan. It is claimed that interest free loan to Pakistan from China was about 50 million US\$ even in the era of Mr. Ayub (Naseer & Amin, 2011). However, Chinese support to Pakistan was not digestible for India and USA. They claimed that Pakistan is supporting Soviet Union therefore; China is providing financial support to Pakistan. China on the other hand, declared that she will not only support Pakistan but will also retaliate if Pakistan is attacked by anyone. In the decade of 1960s, China also started supporting Pakistan over Kashmir issue. Javaid and Jahangir (2015) claimed that Chinese support to Pakistan over Kashmir issue was not acceptable for India. Despite Indian pressure, China again signed cultural agreement with Pakistan in 1966. On the other hand, Pakistan also supported China on her internal and external policies as well as on different diplomatic forums. Riedel and Singh (2010) claimed that Pakistan got about 445 million US\$ from China starting from 1965 to 1971. Moreover, China also supported Pakistan for building her nuclear program.

Pak-China relations from 1969 to 1990

In General Ayub regime, relationship between Pakistan and China very pleasant. Both the countries were enjoying close cooperation. However, General Yahya Khan proved dangerous for Pakistan even in the field of international relations. During his regime, Pakistan lost one of her part, Bangladesh and also has to fight a war with India (Ramay, 2016). During this time, China warned Pakistan about these consequences but Pakistani leadership was not able to calculate the risk. However, China did not help Pakistan directly in war with India and over the issue of Bangladesh (Naseer & Amin, 2011). China did not recognize Bangladesh until Pakistan formally declared that Bangladesh is an independent state. On the other hand, Pakistan kept on persuading USA to start diplomatic ties with China. Resultantly, Henry Kissinger visited China from Islamabad which was a clear support from Pakistan to China. As a result, China and USA start developing their ties which was a very positive development for Pakistan (Javaid & Jahangir, 2015).

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In early years of 1970s, Pakistan starts developing trilateral relations with China and USA. Soon after starting trilateral relations, Pakistan realized that USA was not supporting Pakistan. For example, USA did not support Pakistan in the matter of Bangladesh as a reaction, Pakistan left SEATO and CENTO. On the other hand, the support of China was also not significant and direct but more indirect and verbal (Javaid & Jahangir, 2015). China openly declared that India interfered in internal matters of Pakistan. At the same time, China also put forward a resolution in UN and condemned Indian actions related to internal affairs of Pakistan. In 1971, Pakistani Prime Minister Mr. Bhutto visited China but the response from China was very cold and diplomatic. Consequently, Pak-China relations touched to its lowest level in 1970-1980 (Malik, 2017). Leadership of Pakistan started realizing that China was no more supporting Pakistan and making new allies and friends. For example, China was investing in Bangladesh and India which was doubtful for Pakistan. However, after few attempts by Pakistani leadership, China again started helping Pakistan in the field of military and defense. Two projects are worth mentioning in this regard i.e. construction of ordinance factory and aeronautical complex, which was a joint venture between Pakistan and China. In addition, China also helped Pakistan to develop nuclear program because India was declared 5th nuclear power in the world (Malik, 2013). Although, it is clear that Pakistan's relations with China were not pleasant still China provided military support of 630 million US\$ and also started developing Karakoram highway with the help of Pakistan (Javaid & Jahangir, 2015).

From 1979 to 1989, bilateral relations between Pakistan and China were under the influence of cold war. In addition, a nexus was formed between Pakistan, USA and China which was also helpful for Pakistan. Both China and USA supported Pakistan to withdraw USSR control in Afghanistan and China and USA both promised to provide economic and military aid (Afridi, Yousufi & Khan, 2014). In the mid of 1980s, world politics and the situation of cold war again changed which formed new friends and allies. However, Soviet Union left Afghanistan. But Pakistani leadership was still skeptical about nuclear power in India. Therefore, Benazir Bhutto continued nuclear policies of Pakistan. After the end of USSR, main powerful actor in the world was USA. USA started accusing China for not granting human rights and also asked Pakistan to support her in this matter. However, Pakistan kept on supporting China on One China Policy (Faqr & Islam, 2013).

At that time, trilateral relations between Pakistan, India and China started emerging on the globe starting from 1987. However, Pakistan was very doubted about Chinese neutral policy over Kashmir issue (Faqr & Islam, 2013). Later on tensions between Pakistan and India increased over Kashmir issue and China declared her support to Pakistan. With this support and economic and military support by China and non-response attitude of USA became very helpful for Pakistan to again strengthen her ties with China (Afridi, Yousufi & Khan, 2014; Khan, 2011).

Pak-China relations from 1991 to 2005

After the end of cold war, world politics changed to great extent. USA became sole superpower in the world. However, China emerged as a strong economic and military power as well. In addition, China also gained the membership of global non-proliferation regimes. In the start of 1990s, China remained neutral over Kashmir issue but later on, China changed her policy because of cold and non-responsive attitude towards disputed matters with India (Kondapalli, 2013). On the other hand, economic relations between Pakistan and China entered in new era in 1990s. Pakistani exports to China increased to 30.1 million US\$ and imports also increased to 70.2 million US\$ during 1994 to 1995. At that time, economic ties with China were of great significance as Pakistan was sanctioned by USA for developing nuclear power and China remained very firm ally with Pakistan at that time (Afridi, Yousufi & Khan, 2014).

In many reports prepared by the intelligence agencies of USA and India, it was declared that Pakistan was getting help from China for developing her nuclear program i.e. China gave 500 ring magnets and M-11 missiles to Pakistan. But both Pakistan and China denied these allegations. However, USA imposed serious sanctions on Pakistan as she was certain that Pakistan is near to complete her nuclear program. However, Pakistan in 1998 successfully tested her nuclear capacity after nuclear explosions by India. India accused China for supporting Pakistan but China blamed that India's explosions are actual reason for Pakistan to think about power imbalance in the region (Afridi, 1971).

China remained silent about nuclear explosions by Pakistan and also supported Pakistan over Kashmir issue. Resultantly, China remained natural at the time of Kargil war between Pakistan and India in 1999. This implies that China helped Pakistan in defense and diplomatic matters. In addition, China also supported Pakistan in the field of economy (MALIK & NAIKOO, 2012). From 1990-2006, Pakistan imports increased from her exports to China. However, this trade deficit kept one increasing. Turn of the century proved a new dawn in bilateral relations between Pakistan and China. Both the countries signed Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) in November 2003. This agreement was a new start of economic ties between both the countries. In April 2005, two more agreements were signed i.e. Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Good Neighboring Relations. These agreements proved very fruitful for Pakistan and China, because of her policies, rightly earned confidence and trust of Pakistan (Ilyas, 2015).

Pak-China relations from 2006-2017

Pak-China relations have very long history as mentioned in the previous sections. Both the countries showed much firm commitment to develop their relations in the field of defense and economy. However, in last two decades, relations between both the countries went too far from military and economy to mutual cooperation

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in the field of infrastructural development for the sake of mutual benefits. In this matter, the free trade agreement is worth mentioning. Free trade agreement increased Pakistani export to China. Specifically, Pak-China relations are strengthened in many aspects i.e. diplomatic support, economic support, military support and infrastructural development (Ilyas, 2015).

Diplomatic relations in 21st century started with the visit of Mr. Musharraf to China and successful dialogues related to economy, military and infrastructural development. Leadership of both the countries stated that they would work together to increase bilateral ties in every field because Pakistan and China had trustworthy relations (Rahman & Shurong, 2017). In 2001, Chinese premier announced that China would help Pakistan to develop Gwadar port and coastal highway which would increase bilateral ties between both the nations. However, after 9/11, Pakistan joined her hands with USA to fight against terrorism but Mr. Musharraf also visited China to assure that Pakistan support to USA would not affect the partnership between Pakistan and China. As a result, China along with European Union helped to prevent possible nuclear war between Pakistan and India (Yaseen, Afridi & Muzaffar, 2017).

In 2003, new prime minister of Pakistan, Mr. Zafarullah Khan Jamali visited China and met with new prime minister of China, both the leaders signed many new agreements including an agreement of peaceful nuclear plan transmission. In addition, different agreements related to economic uplift of Pakistan were also signed between both the countries. In the same year, Mr. Musharraf also visited China (Rahman & Shurong, 2017). During his visit, Pakistan and China agreed to start mutual cooperation in different fields and signed Pak-China Joint Declaration of Cooperation. Similarly, different trade agreements were also signed between Pakistan and China in 2005 which indicated that the change of government in either Pakistan or China did not affect bilateral relations (Abid & Ashfaq, 2015).

The start of 2006 is also very encouraging in terms of Pak-China economic ties. In 2006, Mr. Musharraf again visited China and asked her to help Pakistan to secure membership in Shanghai Cooperation Organization as Pakistan can play very important role to stabilize region (Bhattacharjee, 2015). In return China assured full support to Pakistan. In the end of 2006, Chinese president visited Pakistan and declared that our friendship is very old and we have a long history of trusted bilateral relations with each other. In return he was awarded the highest civil award of Nishan-e-Pakistan. In addition, both the countries signed free trade agreement which proved very helpful to Pakistan (Abid & Ashfaq, 2015).

In 2008, two prominent incidents took place as Pakistani Prime Minister Mr. Gillani and President Mr. Zardari visited China and during their visit, both the nations signed many agreements related to economy, trade, agriculture, technology and communication etc. In October 2008, Mr. Gillani again visited China and this time he met with representative from different Asian countries and with businessmen from China (Bhattacharjee, 2015). He invited business community to invest in Pakistan and to start any possible joint venture as well. In 2009, Mr. Zardari visited China to attend annual meeting of Boao Forum for Asia and there

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he met with Chinese leadership along with businessmen and motivated them to start business activities in Pakistan (Ali, 2015).

In August 2009, Mr. Zardari again visited China and this time he met with new leadership of China. His visit was successful as both the nations signed three MoUs related to the field of fisheries. In addition, an invitation was given to China to invest in the sector of energy, technology and dam construction. In 2010, Pakistan and China signed different agreements related to agricultural development, health, communication, technology and economy during the visit of Pakistani president Mr. Zardari to inaugurate photo exhibition of Mohenjo-Daro in Shanghai (Yaseen, Afridi & Muzaffar, 2017). In December 2010, Premier of China visited Pakistan and here he met with all the significant leaders and parliamentarian. He also met with civil and military leaders and officials. In addition, he inaugurated “Pak-China Friendship Centre” in Islamabad. He announced that 2011 will be celebrated as Pak-China friendship year as both the nations have a long history of 60 years of friendship. Both the countries were very hopeful to start new era of cooperation in different fields starting from 2011 (Ali, 2015).

Next two years proved very helpful in increasing bilateral ties between Pakistan and China. During 2012, President and Prime Minister of the nations, parliamentarians, civil and military leaders visited each other. Different MoUs were signed between both the countries and they also announced that they would increase cooperation and bilateral ties in the field of technology, economy, trade, science and communication. In 2013, again the new elected leadership in Pakistan visited China and Chinese leadership visited Pakistan. Leadership of both the countries reconfirmed that they were close friends and they would work together to achieve mutually beneficial goals (Kataria & Naveed, 2014).

In 2013, Chinese President proposed “One Belt One Road Initiative”. According to this proposal, China will be connected to about 65 countries including Pakistan. This connection will decrease physical and cultural differences between different countries. According to this proposal different land routes were proposed i.e. Silk Road Economic Belt and Maritime routes (Ali, 2015). This proposal was expected to give benefits to China along with all the linked countries in the field of economy, defense and infrastructural development. Finalization of this proposal is in the form of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in 2015. In 2015, both Pakistan and China signed memorandum of understanding which were about 46 billion US\$. However, sources also claimed that amount planned to be invested in CPEC is nearly 62 billion US\$ (Kataria & Naveed, 2014). CPEC is considered very important component of One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative. According to the agreement of CPEC, China will invest in different projects related to energy, technology, education, communication, dams and agriculture (Ali, 2015). In addition, different schemes were planned to increase socio-economic development in Pakistan. On the other hand, Pakistan will provide China a land and maritime route to Arabian Sea. According to CPEC agreement, China will start her trade from Gwadar port and different roads will touch Western

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China by crossing different cities of Pakistan. Chinese import and exports from Pakistan will generate revenue for Pakistan and will create bilateral and trilateral ties between different countries include Pakistan and China (Abid & Ashfaq, 2015). As Pakistan faces a lot of energy crises starting from 1990s, therefore, more than 35 billion of US\$ were allocated for energy sector in Pakistan. However, after official launching of CPEC, trade between Pakistan and China increased. Total trade volume increased to 13.77 billion in 2015-2016 and Pakistan exports also increased from millions to billions in about 10 years. This implies that both the nations are working closely to increase their ties and CPEC once completed is expected to change the fate of Pakistan (Kataria & Naveed, 2014).

Conclusion

Pakistan and China started their relations formally from 1951. However, initially there were some issues between both the nations and these issues were mainly the result of no interaction and lack of proper communication. Later on bilateral relations start developing between both the countries as both the nations start showing interest over bilateral ties. During 1960s, relationship between both the nations went to its peak. China being very close partner of Pakistan not only helped Pakistan in war of 1965 but also threatened India for dire consequences. However after 1970s, China became more diplomatic in terms of bilateral relations with Pakistan. China starts developing her ties with USA and other regional states and start providing lip service to Pakistan over Kashmir issue. However, aid and assistance by China remained still active in the fields of economy and military. China also helped Pakistan for developing her nuclear program regardless of economic help. Because of cold war new ties were developed by both Pakistan and China however, their cooperation and agreements remained still firm. At the end of cold war, China emerged as new economic and military power in 1990s. In addition, ties between Pakistan and China developed in other sectors i.e. technology, trade, infrastructure and agriculture. In the end of 1990s, Pakistan tested her nuclear weapons and China remained with Pakistan when USA imposed sanctions. Twenty first century proved more encouraging for both the countries as many agreements and MoUs were signed about economy, technology, free trades and energy. The frequency of visits by leaders and officials also increased and both the countries start celebrating their bilateral ties. The most significant change came with the proposal of OBOR and CPEC starting from 2013. These proposal comes to final drafting in 2015 and investment of 46 billion US\$ was allocated to materialize CPEC. It is believed if CPEC is fully materialized; it will be a game changer for Pakistan.

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