

PAKISTAN AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS: CASE STUDY OF LAND BORDER MANAGEMENT IN RELATION TO NATIONAL SECURITY OF PAKISTAN

Dr Rifat Kaleem,

PhD, rifatkaleem@gmail.com

Abstract

Security issues between Pakistan and Afghanistan encompass a complex array of economic, social, and other security challenges, exacerbated by historical, political, and geographical factors. Pakistan faces several national security challenges related to the management of its border with Afghanistan. These issues are primarily centred on terrorism, smuggling, illegal migration, and regional instability. Afghanistan's instability has led to a significant refugee population in Pakistan, straining resources and causing social unrest. This research article examines the intricate dynamics of Pakistan-Afghanistan relations with a focus on land border management and its implications for Pakistan's national security. The study employs a case study approach to explore how border management practices between the two countries impact regional stability and security. Through an in-depth analysis of historical and contemporary border issues, this paper highlights the strategic significance of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in the context of national security concerns. The research identifies key challenges faced by Pakistan, including smuggling, cross-border terrorism, and illegal migration, and assesses how these issues undermine the country's security and stability. It also explores the effectiveness of current border management practices and their role in mitigating security threats. The findings suggest that while existing border management strategies address some security concerns, significant gaps remain. The paper concludes with policy recommendations aimed at enhancing border security and improving relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan. These recommendations emphasize the need for collaborative efforts, increased surveillance, and strengthened diplomatic engagement to ensure a secure and stable border environment. This research contributes to the field of international relations by providing insights into the critical role of border management in shaping national security policies and regional stability.

Key Words: *Pakistan - Afghanistan Oscillating Relations, Pakistan's National Security Challenges, Border Management, Terrorism, Illegal trade and migration, Socio-economic Development, Integrated Border Management System*

Introduction

Pakistan Afghanistan land border covers a length of 2430 kilometers which is commonly known as Durand Line. The region includes desert lands, mountain ranges, and rivers and has various climates, with remarkable biological diversity. Unlike South Asia, Pak-Afghan border is a unique border because of its history of origin and creation. Pakistan's land borders in general and Pak-Afghan border in particular is a different kind in its nature where people of both sides of the border are similar in nature, similar by their socio-cultural and religious practices with a very strong family and marital relationships but divided by a political boundary. There are no two states in the world that have so much in common as Pakistan and Afghanistan carry along, like religion, language, culture, geography and above all social values. The border between Pakistan and Afghanistan is not only a geographical demarcation but also a focal point of significant geopolitical and security concerns. This research article explores the complex dynamics of Pakistan-Afghanistan relations through the lens of land border management, with a particular emphasis on its implications for Pakistan's national security. The stability and security of this border are crucial for Pakistan, given the persistent challenges related to cross-border terrorism, illegal migration, and smuggling, all of which have profound effects on the country's stability and regional dynamics.

Border Management

A country's jurisdiction is defined by its territory and includes all people living within the country's borders, whether they are citizens or not. All nation-states are defined, separated

and established by the international borders or frontiers (**Haywood, 2003, p. 8**). The nature of border relations is important for the determination of all relations between states in the international system. International law recognizes the ownership of a piece of land as essential to state power. International law protects the border as the territorial integrity and border law of private administration. In order to secure the maximum benefits from their land masses as bases of power, international law seeks to protect states in their territorial integrity and independence of decision (**Hay, 2006, pp. 248-250**).

The effective control of international borders is of equal significance for safeguarding national security. Each border presents a unique set of challenges that necessitate targeted and appropriate solutions. In recent times, these challenges have escalated due to the rise of cross-border terrorism and its propagandistic efforts to manipulate and influence the loyalty of border populations. Managing borders involves tackling multifaceted and diverse issues, which have been further shaped by the 9/11 terrorist attack in the United States and subsequent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Consequently, countries must reassess their policies on various fronts, particularly in relation to international border management and security (**Andreas, 2003, pp. 3-7**).

Depending on the location in the region, states create barriers to access whether they have to restrict the armies, tax trade and defend local producers, or keep out perceived "undesirables". Each state monopolizes the right to determine who and what is allowed to enter the territory legally (**Huntington, 1973, pp. 333-368**).

Classical geopolitical analysis fits well into a realistic theoretical framework about regional conflicts between states (**Mearsheimer, 2001**). Not surprisingly, impact of realism is most obvious in security related research that tremendously focuses on the ideas of war and preparation of war. Considering the realist perspective on security, threats are perceived as external and predominantly military in nature, with rational nation-states as the key actors. Borders are strategically established boundaries that serve to either protect or potentially be breached through military means. The preservation of a nation's existence relies on the purposeful demarcation of borders to deter military invasions from other nations. Hence, the realist outlook on borders and territorial security primarily revolves around interstate relations rather than international relations (**Waltz, 2000, pp. 5-41**).

As nations search for a new direction, the national interests have changed and the threats to national security have also been renewed. The significance of national security has increasingly shifted from the protection of territories to encompass other national values. Morton Berkowitz and PO Booke explained "National Security as the ability of a nation to protect its internal values from external threats". Concept of security in common parlance is usually associated with military preponderance. Recently, the concept has undergone a qualitative change. Besides military security, the concept of security includes political, economic, environmental and socio-psychological aspects of security as well. In the present context, it is not possible to maintain security solely through military predominance. The objective of security now has been all round development focusing national attention on political and economic power (**Berkowitz, 1968, pp. 40-42**).

Realism which is the prime mover of the security paradigm emerges out of the individuals fear psychosis that others are trying to destroy for which he must take protective measures. This approach is created under the basic conjecture that rivalry and strife between nations persist in some form or the other. As it emphasises on the struggle or the fight for powers, most of the nations revolve around this power paradigm for protection of their national security. They implement numerous methods like

balance of power, deterrence and coalitions, for effective check of the contest for power (**Hertz, 1951, p. 18**).

Statement of the Problem. Addressing the multifaceted security issues between Pakistan and Afghanistan requires a comprehensive approach that integrates economic development, social stability, and other security initiatives. Effective cooperation, both bilaterally and regionally, is essential to mitigate conflicts, enhance resilience, and promote sustainable development in the region. Effectively managing the Pakistan-Afghanistan border is crucial for Pakistan's national security and regional stability. By addressing issues such as terrorism, smuggling, illegal migration, and cross-border attacks through enhanced border security measures, joint cooperation initiatives, socio-economic development, and diplomatic efforts, Pakistan can mitigate security threats and promote peace and prosperity in the region. Continuous dialogue and coordinated efforts with Afghanistan and international stakeholders are essential for sustainable border management and security enhancement by putting in place the effective and integrated border management system along all crossing places. This study will help to develop a comprehensive perspective of Pak-Afghan land Border management, the contemporary sensitivities about the national security of Pakistan.

Research Objectives

- Examine and evaluate Pakistan's policies, approaches and strategies for Pakistan - Afghanistan border management and the national security.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of current border management strategies and practices employed by Pakistan along the Afghanistan border, focusing on their impact on preventing cross-border threats and enhancing national security.
- Investigate the historical, geopolitical, and socio-economic factors influencing Pakistan's policies and decisions related to border management with Afghanistan, with a specific focus on how these factors contribute to national security concerns.
- Analyze the role of international and regional dynamics, including alliances, conflicts, and cooperation frameworks, in shaping Pakistan's approach to border security with Afghanistan and its broader implications for regional stability and security.
- Assess the technological and infrastructural capabilities and limitations in place for border management along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, and propose recommendations for enhancing these capabilities to better safeguard national security interests.
- Explore possible ways, means, methods, techniques and develop some approaches and strategies to control this border making the border management mechanism more efficient and scientific to maintain the national security of Pakistan
- Delve into different aspects of Pakistan's border management policies with Afghanistan and their implications for national security, providing a comprehensive understanding of the topic from various perspectives.

Research Questions

- How has the historical context of Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan influenced its current border management policies and practices?

- What are the primary challenges and vulnerabilities in Pakistan's current approach to securing the Afghanistan border, and how do they impact national security?
- What are the strategic implications of Pakistan's border management policies for regional stability and international relations, particularly with Afghanistan?
- How do internal factors such as governance, political dynamics, and economic considerations shape Pakistan's strategies and capabilities in managing its border with Afghanistan to enhance national security?
- How far the healthy bilateral relationship or cultural exchange could reduce/solve all the border related problems and help to manage the border effectively.

Significance of the Study

Understanding the management of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border is crucial for addressing the broader issues of regional stability and national security. This research will provide a comprehensive analysis of the factors affecting border management, offering insights into how Pakistan can enhance its strategies to mitigate security threats and improve relations with Afghanistan. By addressing both historical and contemporary issues, the study aims to contribute valuable perspectives to policymakers, security experts, and scholars engaged in South Asian geopolitics and border security.

Historical Perspective of Pakistan Afghanistan Relations

Pakistan-Afghanistan relations have been marked by a complex and often turbulent history since the creation of Pakistan in 1947. The two neighboring countries share a porous border that stretches over 2,600 kilometers, which has led to various challenges and opportunities in their relationship. In the early years after Pakistan's independence, Afghanistan was one of the few countries that opposed Pakistan's membership in the United Nations, primarily due to a territorial dispute over the Durand Line (**Hameed, 1981, p. 35**). This disagreement stemmed from the controversial border drawn by the British Raj in 1893, which Afghanistan did not recognize. Afghanistan's refusal to recognize Pakistan exacerbated tensions between the two countries (**Sattar A. , 2013, p. 70**).

The situation improved briefly in the 1950s when Afghanistan recognized Pakistan and established diplomatic relations. However, their relations deteriorated in the 1960s due to Cold War dynamics and Afghanistan's alignment with the Soviet Union. Pakistan, on the other hand, forged close ties with the United States by joining SEATO and CENTO for defence in 1954 and 1955. These divergent alliances deepened the mistrust between the two countries and set the stage for future conflicts (**Kux, 2001, p. 70**).

The 1970s witnessed a dramatic turn of events with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Pakistan, along with the United States and other Western countries, became a key supporter of Afghan resistance groups, known as the mujahideen. Pakistan provided all kinds of moral and material support to the Afghan fighters. This period marked a high point in Pakistan-Afghanistan cooperation, as they shared a common goal of countering Soviet expansionism (**Hameed, 1981, p. 41**).

The situation changed after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989. Internal power struggles and ethnic tensions in Afghanistan created a power vacuum, which led to a civil war. Pakistan's support for certain factions within Afghanistan fueled regional instability (**Kux, 2001**). The rise of the Taliban in the mid-1990s further complicated Pakistan-Afghanistan relations. While Pakistan officially recognized the Taliban regime, it faced international criticism for providing them with military and financial assistance (**Calvocoressi, 2001, p. 573**).

The 9/11 attacks in 2001 and the subsequent U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan transformed the dynamics in the region once again. Pakistan, under international pressure, aligned itself with the U.S. in the "war on terror" and became a crucial partner in the fight against terrorism (**Musharraf, 2006, p. 201**). However, there were allegations that elements within Pakistan's military and intelligence establishment continued to support the Taliban, which strained relations with Afghanistan (**Tenet, 2007, pp. 182-183**).

The post-9/11 period also saw the emergence of new challenges, including cross-border terrorism and drug trafficking. Both countries accused each other of harboring militants and engaging in activities that undermined regional security. The Afghan government criticized Pakistan for not doing enough to dismantle Taliban safe havens on its soil, while Pakistan accused Afghanistan of supporting anti-Pakistani militants (**Hussein, 2015, pp. 22-31**).

Efforts were made to improve relations between the two countries. Numerous high-level meetings and diplomatic initiatives took place to address the security concerns and promote regional cooperation. However, progress remained slow, and trust between the two countries remained fragile (**Yusuf M. , 2021**).

In recent years, there have been some positive developments. Pakistan played a crucial role in facilitating peace talks between the US and the Taliban, which eventually led to the signing of a peace agreement in February 2020. This agreement aimed to bring an end to the long-standing conflict in Afghanistan (**Hashim, 2021**).

Looking ahead, the future of Pakistan-Afghanistan relations remains uncertain. The withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan in 2021 and the subsequent Taliban takeover have raised new challenges for both countries. Pakistan's support for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan, as well as its role in providing humanitarian assistance, will be crucial in shaping the relationship between the two neighbors (**Group, 2022**).

In conclusion, Pakistan-Afghanistan relations have been characterized by a mix of cooperation, mistrust, and conflict over the years. Historical disputes, geopolitical considerations, and the security situation in Afghanistan have shaped the dynamics of their relationship. Achieving lasting peace and stability in the region will require continued dialogue, mutual trust, and concerted efforts from both countries (**Macmunn, 1977, p. 219**).

The troubled relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan can be attributed to several main reasons:

Durand Line Issue

The Durand Line refers to the 2,640-kilometer border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, established in 1893 by Sir Mortimer Durand, a British diplomat. It was drawn as part of an agreement between the British Raj and Afghanistan's ruler, Amir Abdur Rahman Khan. The agreement was aimed at demarcating the boundaries of British India and Afghanistan. However, the Durand Line has remained disputed ever since its creation (**Khan, 1900, p. 155**).

Afghanistan has never recognized the Durand Line as the official border between the two countries. They argue that the border was imposed on them during the British colonial era without their consent. Afghanistan claims that the line divides the Pashtun tribal areas and separates Pashtun populations on both sides, thereby questioning the legitimacy of the border.

On the other hand, Pakistan considers the Durand Line as the internationally recognized border between the two countries. Pakistan argues that the Durand Line has been accepted and upheld by successive Afghan governments, including during the period of Afghan monarchy. Pakistan maintains that the border issue should be resolved through negotiations and diplomatic channels, rather than questioning its existence (**Caroe, 2004, p. 436**).

The Durand Line dispute has been a recurring source of tension between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Afghanistan's refusal to accept the Durand Line as a legitimate border has fueled cross-border conflicts, accusations of interference, and territorial claims. The issue remains unresolved, hindering efforts to establish a stable and cooperative relationship between the two countries (**Omrani, 2009, pp. 23-44**).

Pakhtoonistan Issue:

The Pakhtoonistan issue is closely linked to the Durand Line dispute. Pakhtoonistan refers to the concept of a separate homeland for the Pashtun ethnic group, which spans both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Pashtuns are the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan, while sizable Pashtun populations also reside in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa and Balochistan provinces (**Caroe, 2004, p. 436**).

During the early years of Pakistan's independence, there were calls for the creation of an independent Pakhtoonistan, separate from both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Afghan leaders, including King Zahir Shah, voiced support for Pashtun nationalist aspirations, challenging the legitimacy of the Durand Line and asserting claims over Pashtun-populated territories in Pakistan (**Hameed, 1981, p. 35**).

Pakistan, however, vehemently opposed the idea of Pakhtoonistan, considering it a threat to its territorial integrity. Pakistan viewed the Pakhtoonistan movement as a tool employed by Afghanistan to undermine Pakistan's stability and unity. Pakistan accused Afghanistan of supporting Pashtun nationalist movements and fomenting separatist sentiments among the Pashtun population in Pakistan.

The Pakhtoonistan issue has contributed to mistrust and conflicts between Pakistan and Afghanistan. It has been used by both countries as a political card to assert their respective interests and influence among Pashtun communities. Over time, the intensity of the Pakhtoonistan movement has decreased, but residual grievances and suspicions related to the issue still linger, affecting bilateral relations (**Sattar A. , 2013, p. 70**).

Proxy Wars and Interference: Both Pakistan and Afghanistan have been involved in supporting proxy groups within each other's territories. During the Soviet-Afghan War in the 1980s, Pakistan supported Afghan mujahideen groups, including the Taliban, against the Soviet Union. Afghanistan, on the other hand, accused Pakistan of supporting militant groups and providing safe havens to insurgents who targeted the Afghan government and security forces. These allegations of interference and proxy war have contributed to mistrust and strained relations (**Curmally, 2009, p. 63**).

Ethnic and Cultural Differences: Pakistan and Afghanistan have diverse ethnic and cultural compositions, which have sometimes led to tensions. Pashtuns, the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan are also present in significant numbers in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa and Balochistan provinces. The Afghan government has accused Pakistan of interfering in its internal affairs and supporting Pashtun nationalist movements, while Pakistan has accused Afghanistan of supporting separatist movements in Balochistan (**Ahmad S. , 1996, p. 88**).

Taliban and Terrorism: The rises of the Taliban in Afghanistan and their connections with Pakistan have been a major source of friction between the two countries. Pakistan's historical support for the Taliban during their rule in the 1990s, as well as allegations of continued support by elements within Pakistan's establishment, has strained relations. Afghanistan has accused Pakistan of providing safe havens and support to Taliban fighters, undermining efforts to establish peace and stability in Afghanistan (**Calvocoressi, 2001, p. 570**).

Strategic Rivalries: Pakistan and Afghanistan's geopolitical alignments and rivalries have also influenced their relations. Afghanistan has historically maintained closer ties with India, which has created suspicions in Pakistan due to the long-standing Pakistan-India rivalry. Pakistan, in turn, has sought strategic depth in Afghanistan to counterbalance Indian influence. This has led to a perception of interference and competition for influence in Afghanistan (**Hasan, 2010, p. 87**).

Infiltration and Cross-Border Attacks: Both countries have accused each other of allowing militants to infiltrate across the border and launch attacks. Pakistan has alleged that anti-Pakistani militants find safe havens in Afghanistan, while Afghanistan has accused Pakistan of harboring and supporting militants who carry out attacks within Afghanistan. These incidents have strained relations and resulted in mutual blame and mistrust (**Hussein, 2015, pp. 22-31**).

Theoretical Framework

Border studies encompass a range of topics stemming from disciplines such as history, sociology, geography, politics, and international relations. Within this field, border management emerges as a significant subject, crucial for ensuring national and regional stability, fostering economic growth, and maintaining state and human security. Border management is commonly referred to as border control, border regulation, or border coordination, each denoting various aspects and levels of intensity. Across the world, borders are typically monitored by border police, paramilitary forces, and, in some cases, armed forces, working in tandem with immigration departments. However, effective border management is a complex national responsibility that involves multiple agencies and necessitates effective communication and collaboration with corresponding agencies in neighbouring countries.

Interstate relations are influenced by numerous factors including the economy, culture, technological advancements, and military capabilities. State behaviour is shaped by these multifaceted influences, and their relative significance can vary depending on the circumstances. This variability arises in part due to the ease of mobility for people and capital, which imposes constraints on state power. The power of the state is inherently limited by geographic borders. International Relation Theory of Realism has been applied during the research.

Realism posits that states operate within an anarchic international system, where their primary reliance is on their own capabilities or power to pursue national interests. The utmost priority among these interests is the survival of the state, encompassing its people, political system, and territorial integrity. Realists also emphasize the preservation of a nation's culture and economy as significant objectives. In the realist perspective, nation-states hold a dominant role in global politics. They are viewed as internally sovereign within their own territories, maintaining a legal monopoly on the use of force. Internal sovereignty necessitates freedom from external constraints imposed by other actors. Cooperation among states is

infrequent due to the limited incentives for it, while conflict is seen as inevitable due to diverging interests among states and the absence of an external authority to moderate disputes.

Applying “Realism Theory” to the Pakistan-Afghanistan border management mechanism involves analysing the situation through the lens of realist principles and considering the self-interested behaviour of states, the role of power, and the pursuit of national security. Realism and Liberalism are two prominent international relations theories that offer different perspectives on border control mechanisms, trade on borders, and open or free borders. Realism emphasizes the importance of state sovereignty, national interests, and the competitive nature of the international system. Here are some key aspects basing on which the “Realism Theory” has been applied to this case study of Pakistan Afghanistan Relations – A case study of land border management in relation to National Security of Pakistan:

Focus on National Security: Realism suggests that states prioritize their own security above all else. Applying this to the border management mechanism, both Pakistan and Afghanistan are primarily concerned with safeguarding their territorial integrity and protecting their citizens from cross-border threats. Any actions taken regarding border management would be driven by the goal of enhancing their national security.

Zero-Sum Game: Realism views international relations as a zero-sum game, where gains for one state are perceived as losses for another. In the context of border management, any security measures implemented by one country are viewed with suspicion by the other if they perceive it as a move to gain a strategic advantage or exert control over the border region.

Sovereignty Concerns: Realism stresses the significance of state sovereignty. In the case of the Pak-Afghan border, both countries are wary of any measures that might compromise their territorial integrity or infringe upon their sovereignty. This has number of times led to disagreements over issues such as the presence of foreign elements or the use of surveillance technologies.

Power Struggles: Realism recognizes power struggles among states in the international system. In the context of the border management mechanism, both Pakistan and Afghanistan seek to assert their influence in the region to protect their interests and security. This could manifest in attempts to gain the support of other regional and global powers to strengthen their respective positions.

Security Dilemma: The security dilemma is a central concept in Realism, referring to how one state's efforts to enhance its security can lead to increased insecurity for others. For instance, if one country strengthens its border control measures, the other may interpret it as a threat and respond with similar measures, potentially leading to an escalation of tensions. This is exactly the situation and concerns with the Government of Pakistan when they enhance the measures at border crossing places along Pak-Afghan Border.

Bilateral Cooperation: Realism suggests that states must rely on their own capabilities (self-help) and form alliances or engage in cooperation when it aligns with their national interests. In the context of Pak-Afghan border management, both countries may pursue self-help measures, such as fortifying their borders and improving their security forces' capabilities. At the same time, they might engage in bilateral cooperation to address common security challenges and coordinate efforts in managing the border region effectively.

Border Control Mechanism: Realists prioritize the interests and security of the nation-state. They view borders as essential for protecting the state's territorial integrity and maintaining sovereignty. Border control mechanisms, such as strict immigration controls, border patrols, and barriers, are considered necessary to safeguard against potential security threats and

ensure the survival of the state. Liberals, on the other hand, recognize the importance of borders but tend to advocate for more open and cooperative approaches. While they acknowledge the need for security, they believe that international cooperation and interdependence can mitigate threats more effectively than isolating through strict border control mechanisms. Liberals are also supportive of measures like international agreements, visa facilitation, and multilateral efforts to manage migration and security issues.

Trade on Borders: Realists are concerned with the distribution of power and national interests. They view trade on borders as a means to enhance the state's economic and military capabilities. However, realists might also use trade as a tool to advance their geopolitical agenda, such as imposing sanctions or using economic interdependence to influence other states' behaviour. Liberals emphasize the benefits of trade on borders as a means to foster economic prosperity and interdependence between nations. They advocate for free trade policies, removing barriers, and reducing tariffs to encourage economic cooperation and increase the overall wealth of nations. Liberals believe that increased economic ties through trade can lead to more stable and peaceful international relations.

Open or Free Borders: Realists generally do not favour the concept of open or free borders. They argue that an unregulated flow of people and goods across borders could pose significant security risks and weaken the state's control over its territory. From a realist perspective, national interests and security concerns should take precedence over idealistic notions of open borders. Liberals are more inclined towards the idea of open or free borders, at least in certain contexts. While they understand the importance of maintaining some level of border control for security reasons, they also emphasize the value of promoting global citizenship and human rights. Liberals may support policies that allow for more relaxed immigration procedures, temporary work visas, and refugee resettlement programs to accommodate the movement of people across borders while addressing humanitarian concerns.

Research Methodology

This research employs a mixed-methods approach to provide a comprehensive analysis of land border management between Pakistan and Afghanistan and its implications for Pakistan's national security. The methodology integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods to address the research objectives and answer the research questions effectively. The study utilizes a case study approach to focus specifically on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, enabling an in-depth exploration of border management practices and their impact on national security. This design is chosen to capture the complexities of border management within a specific geopolitical context and to provide detailed insights into the factors influencing Pakistan's policies and strategies. Analysis of historical records, bilateral agreements, and policy documents related to border management and national security provided background information and insights into the evolution of Pakistan's border policies. As a case study the research focused on specific border regions between Pakistan and Afghanistan, particularly those identified as high-security areas or regions with notable management challenges. This targeted approach allowed for a detailed examination of specific issues and practices relevant to national security.

SECURITY CHALLENGES BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN

The security challenges between Pakistan and Afghanistan are multifaceted and stem from a combination of historical, political, and socio-economic factors. These challenges affect both national and regional stability and have significant implications for border management and bilateral relations. Here are some of the key security challenges:

Cross-Border Terrorism. Pakistan faces threats from militant groups that operate across the border. Groups such as the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the Islamic State (IS) exploit the porous border to launch attacks and establish bases. Militants and insurgents often cross into Pakistan from Afghanistan to carry out attacks, creating security concerns for Pakistani forces and civilians.

Smuggling and Trafficking. Afghanistan is a major producer of opium, and the border with Pakistan is a key route for drug trafficking. This illicit trade fuels organized crime and poses significant security risks. Furthermore, smuggling of arms and ammunition across the border contributes to violence and instability in the region. It also poses a risk to the security forces and local populations.

Illegal Migration. The protracted conflict in Afghanistan has led to large numbers of Afghan refugees and internally displaced persons. Managing these flows poses challenges for border security and humanitarian assistance. Unauthorized movement of people across the border also lead to issues related to security, human trafficking, and economic strain on border communities.

Insurgency and Conflict. The resurgence of the Taliban in Afghanistan has affected border security. Their influence and control over parts of Afghanistan have led to increased cross-border tensions and security challenges for Pakistan. Various insurgent groups, with varying levels of support from across the border, contribute to instability in Pakistan.

Border Disputes and Tensions. The Durand Line, the border demarcation between Pakistan and Afghanistan, is a contentious issue. Afghanistan's historical claims on the territory complicate border management and lead to periodic disputes. There have been instances of military clashes between Pakistani and Afghan forces, often stemming from disputes over border control.

Tribal and Ethnic Conflicts. The border region is home to various tribal communities with strong historical and cultural ties across the border. Tribal conflicts and rivalries exacerbate security issues and lead to cross-border violence. Ethnic tensions and rivalries in both countries spill over the border, affecting local security dynamics and contributing to instability.

Governance and Control Issues. In both Pakistan's tribal areas and parts of Afghanistan, weak governance and lack of effective control contribute to security challenges. Areas with limited government presence are often more susceptible to militant activities and smuggling. Corruption and inefficiencies within border security forces undermine efforts to effectively manage the border and address security threats.

Economic and Humanitarian Strain. Security challenges impact local economies, particularly in border regions. Smuggling, insurgency, and instability disrupt trade and development, leading to economic hardships. The security situation has humanitarian consequences, including displacement of communities, limited access to essential services, and increased vulnerability of border populations.

Regional and International Influence. The involvement of external actors including regional powers and international organizations influences the security dynamics between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Their interests and policies can impact border security and bilateral relations. Strategic rivalries between major powers, such as the US, China, and Russia, also play a role in shaping security policies and border management strategies in the region.

IMPACT ON NATIONAL SECURITY

The border issues between Pakistan and Afghanistan have significant implications for Pakistan's national security. The complexities of managing this border are deeply intertwined with broader security concerns, affecting both internal stability and regional dynamics. Here's how these border issues impact Pakistan's national security:

Cross-Border Terrorism. The porous and rugged terrain of the border allows militants to move between Afghanistan and Pakistan with relative ease. Groups such as the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the Islamic State (IS) use these routes to launch attacks within Pakistan, contributing to internal violence and instability. Areas in Afghanistan, particularly those controlled by insurgent groups or with limited government control, serve as sanctuaries for militants targeting Pakistan. This cross-border terrorism poses a direct threat to Pakistani citizens and security forces.

Smuggling and Organized Crime. Afghanistan, a major opium producer means that Pakistan's border regions are key routes for drug trafficking. This trade fuels organized crime, violence, and corruption within Pakistan, undermining social stability and governance. The smuggling of arms and ammunition across the border exacerbates violence and supports militant activities, further threatening national security.

Illegal Migration and Refugee Flows. The large influx of Afghan refugees into Pakistan due to conflict and instability in Afghanistan places a strain on Pakistan's resources and infrastructure. This can lead to overcrowded conditions, limited access to services, and social tensions. Unauthorized movement of people across the border increases the risk of infiltrators entering Pakistan, potentially leading to security breaches and complicating border management.

Insurgency and Regional Instability. The return of the Taliban to power in Afghanistan has heightened security concerns for Pakistan. The Taliban's control over parts of Afghanistan and their support for anti-Pakistan militant groups destabilizes the region and poses a threat to Pakistan's security. The instability in Afghanistan has regional repercussions, affecting neighbouring countries including Pakistan. Border tensions and conflict spill over can lead to broader regional instability and complicate Pakistan's security environment.

Governance and Control Challenges. Insufficient control and monitoring of the border contribute to the challenges of managing cross-border activities. This can result in increased illegal activities and reduced effectiveness in curbing security threats. The border region, often inhabited by tribal and ethnic communities with cross-border ties, can experience local conflicts that escalate into broader security issues affecting Pakistan's national stability.

Resource Allocation. The need to allocate significant military and security resources to manage the border and address security threats diverts resources from other critical areas, impacting overall national security and development efforts. There have been instances of direct clashes between Pakistani and Afghan forces, often leading to increased tensions and potential escalation of conflict, which undermines stability and security.

Diplomatic and Strategic Relations. Border issues can strain diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan, impacting bilateral cooperation on security, trade, and other regional matters. This strain can hinder collaborative efforts to address mutual security challenges. The involvement of external actors and regional powers can complicate the security situation, influencing Pakistan's strategies and creating additional layers of complexity in border management.

Economic Impacts. Security challenges and instability along the border disrupt trade and economic activities, affecting local economies and contributing to broader economic challenges in Pakistan. Persistent security issues can deter foreign investment and economic development, impacting long-term national security and prosperity.

Public Perception and Stability. The perceived threats and actual incidents of cross-border violence impact public confidence in the government's ability to ensure safety and stability, potentially leading to social unrest and reduced public support for security policies. Tensions and security issues can affect relations between border communities and national authorities, complicating efforts to build trust and maintain stability.

FINDINGS

Current border management Practices. The border management practices between Pakistan and Afghanistan are complex and influenced by historical, geopolitical, and security factors. Following are some key aspects of the current border management practices:

Border Fencing and Infrastructure

Fencing: Pakistan has undertaken significant efforts to secure its border with Afghanistan, notably through the construction of a border fence. Initiated in 2017, this fencing aims to prevent illegal cross-border movement, smuggling, and the infiltration of militants. The fence extends along the Durand Line and is complemented by various physical barriers and surveillance systems.

Checkpoints and Forts: Along the border, Pakistan has established numerous checkpoints and military forts to monitor and control movement. These installations are equipped with surveillance equipment and are manned by security forces to maintain a controlled and secure border environment.

Surveillance and Monitoring

Surveillance Systems: Pakistan employs a range of surveillance technologies, including cameras, drones, and motion sensors, to monitor border activities. These systems are designed to detect and respond to unauthorized crossings and other security threats.

Patrols and Reconnaissance: Regular patrols by border security forces and reconnaissance missions help to maintain a vigilant presence along the border. These operations aim to prevent illegal activities and ensure effective border control.

Security Operations and Coordination

Military and Paramilitary Forces: The Pakistan-Afghanistan border is monitored and secured by both military and paramilitary forces, including the Pakistan Army and the Frontier Corps. These forces are responsible for conducting security operations, responding to incidents, and managing border security.

Coordination with Afghan Authorities: There is ongoing coordination between Pakistani and Afghan authorities to address cross-border security issues. This collaboration includes discussions on managing border tensions, sharing intelligence, and addressing joint security concerns.

Border Crossing Points and Trade

Official Border Crossings: Several official border crossings between Pakistan and Afghanistan facilitate trade and travel. Key crossings include the Torkham and Chaman border posts. These crossings are regulated to control the flow of goods and people, with security checks in place to prevent illegal activities.

Trade Facilitation: Efforts are made to balance security with the facilitation of legitimate trade and movement. Trade agreements and protocols are in place to ensure that cross-border commerce can proceed while maintaining security measures.

Humanitarian and Community Engagement

Humanitarian Aid: Pakistan and international organizations provide humanitarian assistance to communities affected by border issues. This includes support for displaced persons, healthcare, and educational initiatives.

Community Relations: Engaging with local communities living along the border is crucial for managing tensions and building trust. Community outreach programs aim to address grievances and improve cooperation between border populations.

Inadequacies Identified. Basing on the findings mentioned above, inadequacies identified at Pakistan Afghanistan border management are as appended below:-

- Lack of effective Border Management system along Durand Line.
- Acceptance of Durand Line as an international border by Afghanistan.
- Abuse of easement rights given by the British Government and maintained by the Government of Pakistan.
- Issue of cross-border movement and illegal trade due to porous nature of border.
- Issue of repatriation of Afghan refugees.
- Shortage of equipment and well trained LAE staff at check posts along border.
- The absence of any formidable natural or artificial obstacle and thin deployment of relevant law enforcement forces along the border.

Recommendations

Integrated Border Management (IBM) refers to a comprehensive and coordinated approach to managing borders that involves various government agencies and stakeholders working together to facilitate legitimate cross-border movements while ensuring the security and integrity of a country's borders. It is a holistic strategy that aims to strike a balance between facilitating trade, travel, and migration, and preventing unauthorized activities such as smuggling, trafficking, and terrorism. IBM recognizes that border management is not solely the responsibility of a single agency, such as customs or immigration, but requires a collaborative effort among multiple entities.

By adopting an integrated border management approach, countries seek to enhance security, foster economic development, promote lawful trade and travel, and improve overall border governance. It recognizes the interconnectedness of global challenges and the need for collaborative efforts to effectively manage borders in an increasingly interconnected world.

Mechanism based on IBM system can be implemented by political spirit, planning at higher level, coordination amongst various agencies and execution by the LEAs at the site / border as follows:

Enhance Border Infrastructure and Surveillance:

- **Expand Border Fencing:** Continue the construction and maintenance of the border fence along the Durand Line. Extend the fencing to cover vulnerable sections and integrate advanced surveillance technologies to improve monitoring and control.
- **Upgrade Surveillance Systems:** Invest in cutting-edge surveillance technologies, including drones, high-resolution cameras, and motion detectors. These systems should be deployed along key border areas to enhance real-time monitoring and response capabilities.
- **Improve Border Checkpoints:** Modernize and fortify border checkpoints to streamline the processing of legal cross-border movement and strengthen security measures against smuggling and unauthorized entry.

Strengthen Cross-Border Coordination and Cooperation

- **Establish Joint Border Management Mechanisms:** Develop mechanisms for regular and structured dialogue between Pakistani and Afghan border authorities. This could include joint border management committees or coordination centers to address security issues and facilitate cooperation.
- **Enhance Intelligence Sharing:** Foster collaborative intelligence-sharing arrangements with Afghan authorities to improve the detection and prevention of cross-border terrorism and smuggling. Establish secure communication channels and joint task forces for real-time information exchange.
- **Establish Integrated Database Systems:** Establishing integrated database systems that include biometric information and records of individuals crossing the border can help in identifying and tracking potential threats. Sharing this information between relevant agencies can enhance security measures and facilitate quick identification of individuals involved in illegal activities.

Address Root Causes of Instability

- **Promote Regional Economic Development:** Support economic development initiatives in border regions to address underlying socio-economic issues that contribute to instability. Focus on creating job opportunities, improving infrastructure, and supporting local businesses to reduce the appeal of militant activities.
- **Strengthen Governance and Rule of Law:** Enhance governance and administrative control in border areas through improved local governance structures and anti-corruption measures. Strengthen law enforcement and judicial systems to address security threats and criminal activities effectively.

Enhance Security Forces and Capabilities

- **Upgrade Training and Equipment:** Provide advanced training and modern equipment to border security forces, including the military and paramilitary units. Focus on skills related to counter-terrorism, border control, and response to cross-border incidents.
- **Increase Deployment of Border Security Personnel:** Assigning a sufficient number of well-trained border patrol personnel is crucial. They should be equipped with the necessary resources to carry out their duties effectively, including vehicles, communication devices, and surveillance equipment with a focus on high-risk areas. Enhance their operational readiness and ensure sufficient resources are allocated for effective border management. Regular training programs should be conducted to enhance their skills and knowledge.

Implement Humanitarian and Community Support Programs

- **Support Refugee and Displaced Populations:** Develop and implement programs to support Afghan refugees and displaced persons, ensuring their needs are met while managing their impact on border regions. Coordinate with international organizations to provide humanitarian aid and support integration efforts.
- **Engage with Border Communities:** Initiate community engagement programs to build trust between border communities and security forces. Address local grievances, provide support for community development, and involve local leaders in security and border management efforts.

- **Developing the Border Tribes:** Pakistan must take relevant measures to develop our border areas so that people feel more affiliated to Pakistan and act as a shield for the national interests. These people can play an active role in stopping the movement of terrorists inside Pakistan's soil. Formulation of village councils, social security, justice and provision of jobs would encourage people in reporting such matters to the authorities.

- **Border Area Vigilance** is another aspect of border management. The concept of Village Volunteer Forces (VVF) may be constituted and tried to extend help in forestalling all kinds of illegal cross border movements of men and material.

Strengthen Diplomatic and Regional Relations

- **Enhance Bilateral Relations:** Work towards improving diplomatic relations with Afghanistan through regular high-level meetings and negotiations. Address bilateral issues and work collaboratively on shared security concerns to build mutual trust and cooperation.

- **Leverage Regional Partnerships:** Engage regional powers and international organizations to support border management and security initiatives. Seek assistance and collaboration from regional partners to address cross-border issues and promote stability.

- **International Cooperation:** Collaborating with international partners, such as neighbouring countries, regional organizations, and international bodies, can provide additional support and resources for effective border management. Sharing best practices and leveraging technical assistance and training opportunities can further enhance border security capabilities.

- **Public Awareness and Education:** Conducting awareness campaigns to educate the public about the importance of border security, the risks associated with illegal activities, and the need for cooperation can foster a sense of responsibility and support among the population.

Develop and Implement Comprehensive Security Strategies

- **Integrate Multi-Dimensional Security Approaches:** Develop comprehensive security strategies that integrate military, intelligence, economic, and diplomatic approaches. Ensure that these strategies address both immediate security threats and long-term stability goals.

- **Monitor and Evaluate Security Measures:** Establish robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of border management and security measures. Use this feedback to continuously refine and improve strategies and policies.

- **Enhanced Border Control Measures:** Strengthening border control measures such as stricter document verification, visa regulations, and enhanced cargo inspection can help deter illegal activities. Utilizing advanced technologies like biometric scanners and automated systems for immigration and customs clearance can streamline the process while ensuring security.

Promote Confidence-Building Measures

- **Facilitate Cross-Border Trade and Exchange:** Encourage and facilitate cross-border trade and cultural exchanges between Pakistan and Afghanistan to promote mutual understanding and cooperation. Implement measures to ensure that trade and movement are secure and regulated.

- **Support Confidence-Building Initiatives:** Promote initiatives that build confidence and cooperation between Pakistani and Afghan security forces and communities. This could include joint exercises, training programs, and collaborative projects aimed at fostering goodwill and shared objectives.
- **Joint Boundary Working Groups (JBWGs)** needs to be constituted and given statutory powers to solve the border-related issues.

Strengthen Legal and Policy Frameworks

- **Update Legal Frameworks:** Review and update legal and policy frameworks related to border management and national security to address current challenges and ensure alignment with international standards and practices.
- **Enhance Border Security Legislation:** Strengthen legislation related to border security, including measures to address smuggling, illegal migration, and cross-border terrorism. Ensure that laws are effectively enforced and that penalties for violations are clear and enforced.

Conclusion

Addressing these issues and improving Pakistan-Afghanistan relations will require sustained dialogue, trust-building measures, and a mutual commitment to addressing shared challenges. International support and mediation efforts will play a crucial role in facilitating a peaceful resolution of these longstanding disputes.

Border Management is a complex, technology intensive, costly and quite demanding task. It asks for National level policies and an institutionalised approach from a number of government agencies / ministries to work sincerely and hand in glove. The system needs extensive expertise in Information Technology, comprehensive intelligence network and involves huge finances thus requiring a wholesome National / Provincial strategy. To address our border management and security concerns, a comprehensive strategy with graded approach have been suggested which will help in effective management and control of the border. The phased implementation of certain long time measures will develop understanding, political will and allocation of necessary funds to make the concept a reality.

Effective border management of Pak-Afghan border is possible by carrying out required legislations for the "non hazardous visitors" and filtering out criminal elements by isolating them and by effective border security force and mechanism. This will minimize drug trafficking and reduce terrorism and militancy from the country. Bringing the neglected region in mainstream will also help in solving socio-economic issues of the area and eradicate terrorism and militancy from tribal areas in particular and from whole country in general.

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