

Name of Scholar: Sajad Hussain Wani

Name of Supervisor: Dr S.R.T.P Sugunakara Raju

Name of Department: Department of Political Science (Jamia Millia Islamia, New Dehli)

Title of Thesis: Role of Major Powers in Indo-Pak Conflict with special Reference to USA and China.

### **Abstract**

Since emerging as independent states in 1947, India and Pakistan have been engaged in one of the world's most dangerous and sharply contested rivalry, which is often portrayed as most intractable. The combination of unresolved disputes, recurrent crisis, terrorist incidents, and the spectre of nuclear war arguably makes Indo-Pak standoff one of the greatest threats to international peace and security. Moreover, the apparent reluctance of both India and Pakistan to reconcile their difference has triggered a conventional and nuclear arms race that jeopardizes the stability of the region, and also leads to an immense drain of resources that otherwise could have been used at tackling more grave and necessitous social and economic problem.

History reveals that the itinerary of India-Pakistan relations has never run smooth. The bitterness, prejudice, and negativism left on both sides by the traumas of partition continue to cast violent shadows and acrimony on their bilateral relationship. This inimical relationship has flared into a number of wars, military standoffs, and innumerable border clashes. The bitter exchanges on a number of other issues and diplomatic disagreements caused an obstruction to the efforts aimed at encouragement of harmony and cordiality between the two countries. Despite several efforts at reconciliation the two sides remain locked in an embrace of seemingly unending conflict.

The absence of cooperation between India and Pakistan has made the region vulnerable to external powers' influence. It would not be an exaggeration to say that no other bilateral relationship has engrossed such intense global scrutiny for over six decades as India Pakistan relationship. Although, Indo-Pak conflict is primarily rooted in the colonial past as well as the dynamics of socio, economic, political, and cultural development of the two states, nonetheless, the security scenario of the Indian subcontinent has been all the time influenced by the extra-regional major powers. In the post cold war era, it was expected that end to the cut-throat involvement of major powers in South Asia would create favourable conditions for the resolution of conflicts in the region; however, contrary to the expectations, Indo-Pak conflict has defied this assertion. It also appears that India-Pakistan relations have been largely insulated from the course of external powers involvement. In other words, the

prospects of foreign intervention have apparently diminished after the end of Cold War. However, overt nuclearization of India and Pakistan, recurrent crises between the two nuclear-armed neighbours, and the unleashing of global war on terrorism since 9/11 has once again generated global concern for Indo-Pak conflict. It should be noted that India and Pakistan neither through the ferocious arms race nor through their alignment with the respective major powers achieved a decisive advantage to turn the regional balance of power in their favour. The wars fought in South Asia did not resolve the conflicts; instead have only intensified bitter rivalries and kept disputes lingering.

The present study is an attempt at analysing the role of major powers, primarily, the United States and China in Indo-Pak conflict. From the very beginning these two major external powers were vocal commentators on the unfolding events in South Asia and, in fact, by the mid 1950's they had developed plausibly well defined, if not always an invariable, policies towards South Asian states that the region could not easily ignore. The study tries to analyse Indo-Pak conflict through a historical perspective and examines the efficacy of initiatives that India and Pakistan have undertaken in order to improve their bilateral relations. It also examines the changing nature of major powers' involvement in Indo-Pakistan relations in a historical context and also explores the role of the United States and China during the active phases of India-Pakistan conflict. Furthermore, it analyses the policy of China and the United States towards Kashmir conflict.

The history of Indo-Pak engagement is a detailed story of frequent failures with rare instances of success. So far, the dialogue process has turned out to be a chequered one, as hope is always alternating with despair, or cordiality with frostiness. Unlike several other regions of the world, diplomatic exchanges and dialogues have miserably failed to resolve the enormously complex disputes between India and Pakistan. The goal of living in peaceful coexistence remains a distant dream. Although it is essential for the international players, especially the United States and China to continue engaging the top leaders on both sides, outsiders must rely on strictly low profile and quiet diplomacy. The international community has a role to play in containing or resolving conflict in the region, but there are limitations in trying to impose a settlement externally. In the long run, International community could play the critical role of a catalyst in supporting and sustaining the ongoing peace process, though much of the groundwork and ideas must emanate from within the region.