



INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS AFGHANISTAN 2001-2018

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ABSTRACT

This study focus on India's foreign policy towards Afghanistan since 2001 while the Taliban government collapsed and the Afghan Interim Administration (AIA) came to power.

Methodology: This study is a qualitative study case study on Indian relations with Afghanistan. The reason behind this choice is manifold. Firstly, the nature of the proposed by this study requires investigation of the essence and meaning behind the foreign policy of India towards Afghanistan. The so-called "meanings" can only be perceived through the lenses of the qualitative researcher. The study is based on primary and secondary sources the data is collected from official statements, economic incentives, academic journal, and online sources, achieves and print and online media.

Discussion: The relation of India, Pakistan mostly affects the ties between Afghanistan & India. Afghanistan since a while is a platform of competitions among the region's countries, specifically two historical rivals India and Pakistan. Geo-political and Geo-economic location of Afghanistan as a corridor between Southern Asia, Central Asia, West Asia and Eastern Asia increased the significance of this country not only in the region but in all over the world.

Keyword:

Bilateral relations, Geo-economics, Geo-political, Foreign policy, Qualitative case

1. Introduction

India and Afghanistan are located in South Asia. Both countries share a long history, culture, economic and social ties. Thus, Kabul and Delhi have always had friendly relations throughout history and have even closer ties now. These relations are not limited only between the governments but also have roots among the nations of these two countries. Afghanistan as a country that suffers from a harmed conflict for many decades has an unstable economic, political and security situation. Therefore, the country is highly dependent on foreign aid and economic support. India is one of the countries that has been investing politically and economically in Afghanistan.

The new chapter of Indo-Afghan relationships started in 2001, after the end of Taliban regime in Afghanistan which has been directly under the support of the Pakistan government, the internal changes in Afghanistan after the Taliban's era since 2001 provided a great opportunity for this country to develop and build up its economic and political ties and relations with regional countries and other countries in the world. India is one of the regional strategic partners and one of the largest investors in Afghanistan. India has been supporting the Afghan central government strongly after 2001 and has been investing in state-building. India also focuses on the development and economic reconstruction in Afghanistan.

However, Afghanistan suffers from the interference of regional countries in its political and security affairs. Thus, the ongoing tensions and conflict between India and Pakistan also contribute to the fact that both countries compete in Afghanistan to safeguard their national interests as well.

India had invested in some big projects in Afghanistan which shows the close economic relation among the two countries. The Chabahar port, Salma Dam, the new parliament building is examples of these big projects. The TAPI project (Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India) India plays crucial role in that project.

The objective of the research is to find the impact of India involvement in the security and economic stability of Afghanistan. The main aim is to understand the Indian policy toward Afghanistan and its impacts on both country relations.

2. Theoretical Framework:

Realism as the theory of international relations used in this research to explain the multi-dimensional (economic, social, security, and political) foreign policies of India towards Afghanistan. The neo classical Realism is composed of the concepts of "power politics", "balance of power", "anarchy", "national interests" and the "security dilemma" (Ashley 1981, p. 204).

The literature about Indian foreign policy generally supports the classical realism theory of IR to analyze the foreign policy of India. The realist approach presents India as a rational and pragmatic state in the international system.

The classical realism is a theory which is related with realist school of thought. This theory follows the principles of the country or state main actors, in relations to the international system, there is no supranational international authority, country or state act in its own interest and

country need power for its self-preservation. (Reus Smit, C & Snidal. D 2008).

The classical realism theory can be different from other theories of realism. This theory show deep understanding on the human nature as a main factor in defining the state behavior and the reasons of the internal state conflicts. (Donnelly, Jack, 2000.)

The classical realist theory describes the pessimistic shape of human nature and stress that humans are not inherently benevolent rather they are self-interested and act out of fear or aggression. (Williams, MC. 2007) This theory further focus on the human nature which is affected by states in the international politics because of international anarchy. (Korab-Karpowicz, W. Julian, 2018.)

The classical realism theory has some assumption which is below:

The realism classical theory states the international relation via assumptions regarding the human nature. (Donnelly, Jack, 2000) The theory is pessimistic regarding the human and focuses that individuals neither are basic motivation by self-interest nor by higher dictated by the base primal emotions. For instance Thomas Hobbes defines fear as basic fundamental for motivations. (Williams, MC. 2007).

Realism classical theory view balance of power as inability to dominate another country and therefore it maintains security as it is less likely that states will engage in conflict or war which cannot be winning.

Based on the realist theory, states are the main actors in the international system and the power is governing and shaping the relations between states in the international system.

In this article, the realism in international relations will analyze the Indian foreign policy in relation to Afghanistan. Thus, realism is taken to see what the goals are and aims behind the Indian FP towards Afghanistan by analyzing its economic, political, and security based projects and support of the Afghan government.

Indian foreign policy towards Afghanistan is focus on two main things, the regional economic cooperation and security concern of India's.

The regional economic cooperation are part of India foreign policy is gain economic benefits which now a days is the real power as in classical realism theory it is stated: international relations is all about power" so therefore India first goal is regional development and economic cooperation. Geographically Afghanistan is located in the middle of Central and South Asia. India motive is to get access to the Central Asian markets. The other economic development which is part of India's foreign policy towards Afghanistan is the energy sector which demand is high level. As the theory of classical realism suggest state want more power to control other state and in today era economic and wealth is big source of power (Harsh V. Pant, 2011).

The security is another major part of India's foreign policy towards Afghanistan, India suffers large from terror organization, this terror organization hit India's interest and they also attack Indian soil director particular in Indian Kashmir. Afghanistan is a safe haven for anti-India terror group which is funded and supported by Pakistan. As in

the era of the Taliban the idea of “global Jihad” was supported there which was a red line for Indian national security and India’s position in South Asia. As stated in classical realism theory that balance of power as inability to dominate another country therefore it’s better to provide them security, this is the reason and concern for India that they are providing security and training the Afghan National Army in order to defend their country from these terror group (Sharma 2011).

3. Indian Foreign Policy Engagement in Afghanistan from 2001:

After achieving its independence in 1947 India positioned itself in the international system as a new state namely in the region. As the first Prime Minister Jawaherlal Nehru government faced numerous domestic problems and issues to address and solve. The partition of India and the Kashmir conflict was also one of the factors of destabilization not only for the new government in India but also in the region.

The geo-strategic and geo-political location of Afghanistan originates why the later remind in the core of Indian FP in the South Asia region. The cordial relations between India and Afghanistan from 1950 (Friendship Treaty) and then in 2011 by Strategic Partnership Agreement remind mutual based interests.

As the two guiding principles, opposition to colonialism and safeguarding Indian citizens was announced by Nehru. Achieving these goals by an active diplomacy based on the non-violent approach of M.K. Gandhi and teaching of the Buddha’s approach. These two principles shaped the main idea of the Indian foreign policy. Indian foreign policy in the time of Nehru can be categorized in two basic features, non-alignment and anti-colonialism which was born from the history of India as a nation in South Asia.

According to Raja Mohan, India defines its strategic interests to three main circles: first, their relations with immediate neighbours. Second, it covers the extended neighbours in the South Asia region which India tries to balance the power with other players in the region and prevent them from undercutting India’s interests. Third, their relations with the entire world, in this stage India wants to raise as a moderator and key player of peace and security related issues in the South Asia region. In order to achieve the mentioned strategic goals India relies on economic growth and political influence (Mohan 2006, pp. 17-34).

India’s relations with Afghanistan entered a new area after the Taliban government in Kabul was overturned by the US leading war against the latter together with NATO in 2001.

Afghanistan as a country which came out of a long civil war in a great need of international aid and support. The state-building was supported by India as a first move right after 2001. Thus, India became one of the biggest regional supporters of the new government in Afghanistan in terms of economic and political support.

As a pillar of the Indian FP the later believes the economic growth and stability in Afghanistan can provide political stability and improvement of the security situation. Therefore, India supported major construction and re construction projects in Afghanistan and at the same time large amounts of humanitarian aid was supplied to Afghanistan.

India follows three main strategic interests in the region. First to stabilize its preeminent power within the Indian Ocean. Second, Regional Security, and Third New Delhi is willing to be proactive to prevent any movement in contrast to their interests. India uses two instruments of Soft Power to achieve these objectives: Economic and political influences.

The three-main strategic objective which shapes India’s interests towards Afghanistan. First, the geo-economics position of Afghanistan as a transit corridor for India goods to Central Asia. Second, India supports the Afghan government in the war against terrorism to secure their national security interests. Different terrorist groups (Al Qaida, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Harkat-ul-Ansar, etc) are active in Afghanistan with the direct support of Pakistan (Abou Zahab 2007, pp.133, 158). Third, those extremists and terrorist’s groups active in Afghanistan and Pakistan are aiming to build a Sharia-based Islamic State namely in Afghanistan, which is against the Indian politics in the region due to Pakistan’s support of the Taliban. Thus, according to Indian foreign policy makers these extremist’s groups can be counted as a concern due to their effects and support from Islamic minorities within India (Fair 2010, pp. 101—119).

In terms of the geopolitics India is investing in the south Asia region to play a powerful role and to put Pakistan in a strategic-blocked state, India will not miss any opportunity to increase its involvement in Afghanistan. Therefore, India is gathering a great level of cooperation in the region to receive the support and help of neighboring states. We can also see that India in the eyes of international player is becoming an emerging state in the south Asia region and she is capitalizing power as a goal to influence. As an outcome, adopting such politics can also increase the political and financial gains to her hegemony in the region (Pant and Harsh, 2010).

4. India’s Political Engagement in Afghanistan:

It is quite understandable that the Indian FP towards Afghanistan is not based on the ideological or humanitarian concerns. For India, it is important to limit Islamabad’s influence in Afghanistan, this is not only affecting Indian’s position in Afghanistan but also can promote to more security problems in India and the Indian position in the region (Pant and Paliwal 2019).

As a strategic interest, India seeks to have its political influence in the Afghan political sphere. Thus, in addition to the political relations between two states, Indian economic efforts are part of the political agenda the latter has for Afghanistan. Indian economic involvement and providing support to the Afghan government and people can reinforce Indian’s political involvement in Afghanistan. Apart from the Taliban leading administration in Kabul from 1996 to 2001, India kept its political ties with Afghanistan right after Afghanistan got its independence in 1919.

From 2001 when the Pakistan backing Taliban was defeated a new opportunity shaped for India to have its political and friendly relations and involvement with the new government in Afghanistan and create a pro-Delhi government in Kabul not only to compete with Pakistan but also to strengthen its position as a regional player.

India's support to Afghan government has three political agenda behind: first, to make sure that Afghanistan is not a safe haven for Taliban and other terrorist groups. Second, to establish its relations with not only the Afghan government but local leaders via its diplomatic presence in Kabul and other big cities in Afghanistan. India believes gaining the support and sympathy of Afghans can help India to fight Pakistan in the Afghan soil and can be a pressure point on Islamabad. Third, by its involvement in Afghan peace building process India wants to make sure that the Afghan government is a multi-ethnic government and India is to make sure that Taliban will not return back as a major force in the Afghan politics. A multi-ethnic government in Kabul can be closer to India than only a Pashtun dominated government. Thus, during the civil war and then the fight against Taliban India was supporting mostly non-Pashtun anti-Taliban militant and therefore, it is much relevant for India to have their old friends in power then the Taliban as a Pakistan proxy terroristic group (Hanauer and Chalk, 2012, p 14).

Indian position on the ongoing Afghan peace talks in Doha is critical. India believes the agreement between Taliban and the US government is not only unbalanced but also it is a bad message for Afghan government and people. Indian experts believe that agreement between Taliban and US means the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan and leaving the country back to the hands of Taliban and it is supporting Pakistan.

At the same time, India keeps good relations with the non-Pashtun leaders of Afghan Mujahidin who were fighting the Taliban and still not in favor of the Taliban taking a remarkable part in the Afghan political future. Such leaders are still influential individual in Afghan society and

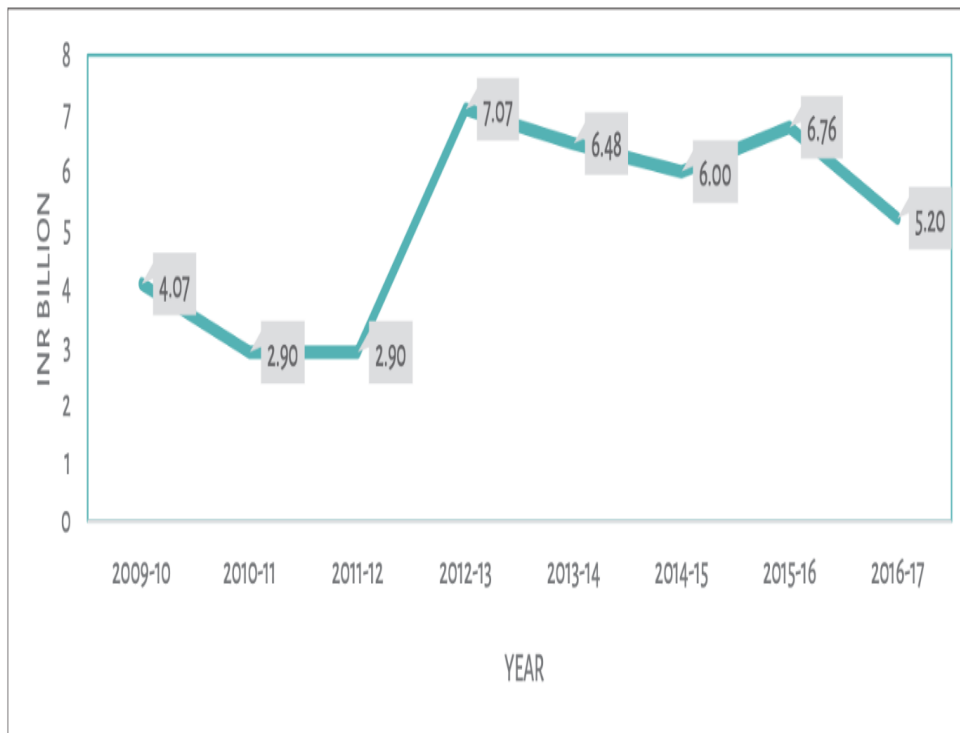
Afghan government and are actively involved in the peace talks between the Afghan government and Taliban.

The political influence as a part of the Indian agenda for Afghanistan became more important than ever. Modi's government is keeping its political ties and influence in Kabul will not only safeguard its national interests but also improve its position as a strong regional player in South Asia. India by its active involvement aiming to minimize the role of the Taliban if the Afghan government and Taliban will come to a peace agreement. By using the soft power and humanitarian aid India managed to have its saying to the government of Kabul regarding their concerns on the security and issues which are related to the cross border terroristic activist which can threaten the national security of India (Pant and Paliwal 2019).

5. Indian Economic engagement in Afghanistan:

India has played a significant role in the economic growth of Afghanistan since 2001. India as one of the large economic and trade partners for Afghanistan invested in a number of development projects which contributed to the economic stability of Afghanistan. Thus, India funded infrastructure projects as part of the humanitarian aid. The Parliament Building in Kabul, where India donated \$178 million USD, The \$150 million Zaranj Delaram highway project connecting western Afghanistan with the strategic Chabahar port in Iran, as an important project for the country's development. The \$42 million Salma Dam Project on the Hari Rud River in Herat province. India has also signed a trilateral preferential trade agreement with Afghanistan and Iran (D'Souza 2016, p 8).

Table 3.1: Grants and loans committed (cumulative sum) by India towards Afghanistan



Source: (Mullen and Arora 2016, p 2).

Afghanistan depends highly on foreign aid and the country still has a long way to achieve a stable economic independence.

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Afghanistan was worth 19.10 billion US dollars in 2019, according to official data from the World Bank and projections from Trading Economics. The GDP value of Afghanistan represents 0.02 percent of the world economy.

There is a great lack of information and statistics on the trade exchange and the projects that India invested. The state-driven economic engagement of India with Afghanistan could promote economic development in Afghanistan. India's private sector and investors are yet not interested to invest in Afghanistan due to the number of issues such as the security problems and the security of the investments itself (Jin 2017, p 114).

India's foreign policy in Afghanistan is mainly driven from economics. Thus, 9/11 provided India with an opportunity to securitize their strategic, economic and political

objectives and interests in Afghanistan. One of the significant ways was economic cooperation, India invested 2 billion dollars (fifth largest donor of Afghanistan) to support the Kabul government in the reconstruction process (Ganguly 2012).

The trade exchange between India and Afghanistan is growing by each year due to the number of projects and policies adopted by both countries. India is the among three biggest trade partners of Afghanistan.

The value of bilateral trade between India and Afghanistan from 2019-2020 was 1.5 billion USD. The air Freight Corridor between two countries operated 100 flights starting from 2017 and carried good valued 216 million USD (Indian Embassy 2020).

The Chabahar port of Iran as a transit route to the Indian goods to Afghanistan via Iran started operating in 2018.

Table 3.2: Trade Intensity Index between Afghanistan and India

Table 5: Trade Intensity Index between Afghanistan and India

Year	Trade Intensity Index between Afghanistan and India	Trade Intensity Index between . India and Afghanistan
2008	5.57	8.37
2009	4.34	5.65
2010	2.34	4.54
2011	2.14	4.97
2012	2.67	4.11
2013	2.79	5.62
2014	3.02	7.79
2015	6.74	9.56

Source: Calculation based on data from UN COMTRADE database SITC Revision III.

Based on the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) both Kabul and New Delhi committed to strong economic, trade, technological, business, agriculture, industry, rural development, information technology, mining, communication, and transport cooperation in the interests and development of Afghanistan and further economic cooperation and interdependency between two countries. To promote economic and trade both sides agreed to create a favorable environment for cooperation:

1. Increase investment security and create more opportunities for investors.
2. Removing non-tariff barriers and gradually lowering tariff barriers in order- Simplifying customs and other procedures.
3. To promote credit and insurance facilities and cooperation in the banking and finance area.
4. In order to promote commercial exchange both sides agree on creation of air-cargo.
5. Increase cooperation at international economic, financial and trade bodies.

Kabul and New Delhi governments have taken steps in order to achieve sustainable bilateral trade and economic ties in long terms. These measurements content:

1. In order to promote economic, trade and cultural cooperation both sides agreed to encourage regional and provincial connections between countries.
2. Explore regional trade and economic relations with third countries.
3. Enhance cooperation between Chambers of Commerce and Industries of both countries.
4. Cooperation between "Institute of quality and standardization" to increase quality of goods in order to qualify for international competition.

Regional economic cooperation in order to economic prosperity is important. Therefore, both countries agree to promote their regional economic cooperation.

1. Geographically Afghanistan is located between Central and South Asia. India assisted Afghanistan in trade, transportation, transit and energy sectors to like these two Asian regions though Afghanistan.
2. Develop and increase regional projects.

3. Cooperation under SAARC (South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation) organization, of which both sides are members.

4. Opening Afghan-Indo markets for both countries products for mutual benefits, and integrating Afghanistan in the South Asian and global economic market.

Afghanistan Geo-strategic location and Land-Bridge or Gateway between Southern Asia and Central Asia made this country important for India. Afghanistan is not only important from a political and security point of view to India, but also it can be a good economic partner for Delhi. Afghanistan is located as a way between central Asia and South Asian countries; therefore India can import their energetic supplements from Central Asia countries through Afghanistan (Sharma 2011, p 111). Central Asia countries are rich in mineral and hydrocarbon resources which can satisfy the primary necessary of 1.2 billion population. India believes that a stable and secure Afghanistan can play an important role in export and import between India and Central Asia countries. India invests on railroads and transit ways in Afghanistan to facilitate their access to oil and gas rich countries of Central Asia. Indian Minister of State of External Affairs stated “connectivity in the region has to be the centerpiece of all our efforts to enhance trade, commerce and investment among regional countries... better connectivity can enable more investment and private sector participation. It can help fully harness Afghanistan’s trade and transit potential”. (Shafaq, 2020)

Indo-Afghan trade relations are growing each year; both countries invested on number of projects to facilitate the import and export of goods via transit routes and air corridors.

6. India’s Security Concerns in Afghanistan

Security is among one of the major issues for Indian policy makers. India suffers heavily from the militancy which has safe shelters in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Thus, during the Taliban role in Afghanistan the latter and all other militant extremists were trumpeting the idea of “global Jihad” which was a red light for Indian national security and India’s position in South Asia.

The other argument is focusing on the role and presence of the US led force in Afghanistan. After almost two decades’ international forces could not be achieved to bring stability and security to the country. The fragile situation in Afghanistan provided Taliban and other same nature groups to challenge not only Afghan government but also international forces in the war against terrorism.

Yet Afghanistan is still a country which can’t be labeled as a post war country. The country is not only the part of the dominant conflict but also promoting the conflict in the South Asia region. Number of Islamic extremist groups are active in Afghanistan and on the border with Pakistan. Such parties are not only destabilizing the internal security situation in the country but also creating security challenges to the region.

To safeguard their national security most the regional countries are seeing themselves involved in Afghanistan and keeping the right to interfere in the internal affairs of the country from providing support to the Taliban to taking part in the fight against the later.

Iran, Pakistan and central Asia countries are somehow in the front line of this project. Iran supports and keeps ties with Taliban which can be seen as a big change in the FP of Iran after 2001. Iran believes by supporting the Taliban they can make challenges to the US troops and make them leave the country at the end. Thus, Iran never count on Pakistan as a regional partner for the regional security as Pakistan has long historical ties with US during and after he cold war (Muttaqi 2019).

The narrative of the Indian influence in Afghanistan is the reflection of the regional hegemony process. Nor Iran nor India are against the expansion of so-called Afghan-Pak engagement, as Tehran and Delhi have their strategic interests in Afghanistan and see Pakistan as a strategic competitor. At the same time, Pakistan also sees India as a threat to its strategic involvement in Afghanistan and its hegemonic goal in South Asia. According to President Parviz Musharraf in a conference (2004) “we are like two elephants in South Asia, devastated by the grass in our fight...Look where it has taken us. The bitter truth is that South Asia is one of the poorest regions and its economy refuses to take off because of our obsession with this”.

Iran remains to be an important partner for India for a number of reasons: transit, trade and transport to Afghanistan and then to Central Asia, energy related interest and security, countering Pakistani Taliban in Afghanistan.

In terms of security India is following a clear goal: Afghanistan free of Islamic radicalism supported and backed by Pakistan since 1979 the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the creation of a number of militant groups in Pakistan to fight the Red Army. Thus, this is also clear that security stability in Afghanistan is not a domestic issue but also a regional one and a potential threat to the national interests of India as well (Yamin, 2013). From the first days of the creation of a country named Pakistan in 1947 the goals and objectives of both states in Afghanistan were opposite to each other.

Indian support to the Northern Alliance during the 90s supports the argument that Pakistan backing the Taliban was at the same time a “proxy war” or a source of pressure on India from the Pakistan side. Therefore, Delhi’s FP towards Afghanistan in the 90s called a zero-sum game of influence with Islamabad.

India has several security priorities in Afghanistan. India’s presence in Afghanistan has two main dominations. First, to address its own internal security concerns and second, help to build a stable regional security in the Southern Asia region. After the invasion of Afghanistan by the US; Taliban and other terrorist groups mostly shifted to the Pakistan territory and the close relations among these terrorist groups, increased the concerns about India’s internal security (Gareth Price, 2013). Security and strategic importance of Afghanistan arise Indian concerns. Failure in Afghanistan will increase the security threat of the region and globally. Moderate role of Pakistan and non-function able and stable state in Afghanistan will pressurize India security.

Pakistan and Taliban domination in Afghanistan through a peace deal would be a negative development for India. While the Taliban ensured the strategic depth for Pakistan,

the ISI would be encouraged to increase terrorist attacks against India (Pattanaik, 2012).

Around 20 years after Taliban government distraction, Afghan government and Taliban show green light to the peace process. The Taliban coming back to Kabul's power corridor will create diplomatic challenges to New Delhi. India despite of close relation with Afghan government and significant investment stayed out from triangle of peace negotiation among Afghan government, Taliban and US.

India's security will be in threat in context of penetration, insurgency and cross border terrorism, if in case US fail to defeat the Taliban or the peace process concluded with insensible achievements. (Teresita and Schaffer, 2011) India's growing call for increasing militaristic role in Afghanistan concerned west. Indo-Tibetan Border Police is part of this process which has been sent to Afghanistan in order to protect the Indian personnel employees.

Kabul and New Delhi also cooperating in intelligence gathering as the Afghan intelligence involved ISI in the bombing of Indian Embassy in Kabul which Pakistan quickly reject it. US due to fear of confrontation with Pakistan; discourage India from military presence in Afghanistan. Simultaneously, US failed to convince Pakistan to take India's security concerns seriously, therefore it caused a stake in the last decade development of India in Afghanistan and caused a deterioration in the New Delhi security environment and it forced India to seek its priorities in vis-à-vis Afghanistan and Pakistan (V. Pant, 201).

According to The Indira Doctrine, India tries to keep external powers outside of South Asia as they count it as a national security environment (Devin T. Hagerty, 1991). Afghanistan is the front line of insecurity between traditional rivals India and Pakistan. The 9/11 tragedy creates a platform to damage relationships between India and Pakistan. Actually, the Afghan India relation was under the shadow of Pakistan's close ties with Taliban and their role as a mediator in peace negotiations with West, and simultaneously their cooperation with radical groups kept their strategic advantage in Afghanistan compared to India.

At the earlier stage of 9/11 India had a favourable position in Afghanistan due to their close relations with North Alliance members, but over the time United States favoured Pakistan as a strategic partner for war against terrorism in Afghanistan, and it caused the fade of India role in this country (Chaudhuri 2010, p 206).

India's main goal in Afghanistan is to eliminate Afghanistan from being used as safe haven for the extremist group which are mostly supported by Pakistan and they launch terror attack on India or on India interest in the region. For instance the Indian Ambassador to the UN stated that "security in Afghanistan & joint efforts to stop terror from lurching with impunity beyond Afghanistan's border must be the paramount priority of all collective efforts in Afghanistan." (Nirupam Sen, 2008).

A similar fear are found in some Indian thinkers that once the NATO & American troops are completely gone from Afghanistan, Pakistan will definitely try to influence Kabul's political landscape, which will eventually give Pakistan an opportunity to use the country as third party and motivate and train the terrorist group against India. (Mint, 2010).

To eliminate such kind of activities, India need to promote, multi ethnic Afghan government which can make control all over the country, maintain peace, the oppose the return of Taliban type regime which support anti India agenda. In order to achieve this type of activities it is necessary for Delhi to counter Pakistani political influence. (Mint, 2010). The main concern of India was support of the US from Pakistan, which creates a good surface for this country to increase their influence in Afghanistan and use it against India. (Price 2013, p 3). According to Indian Policy makers one of the concerns was creation of Islamabad controlled government in Afghanistan in the post 9/11 era, as this situation will allow Pakistan government to have military presence in borders (Roy 2011, p 69).

Indian and Pakistan both are facing energy problem, both need new energy source to maintain their growth and economic development. India's economic growth is 7 percent since 1997 which make India second fastest energy market, by the analysis India will need more than 75 percent of energy fuel by 2030. The 7 billion TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) pipeline project will transfer thirty three billion cubic meters per year (bcm/y) of Turkmen gas, which will provide 1.3 Billion dollar per year to Afghanistan for using the transit. This project will give benefit all the countries which are included in it particular to Pakistan and India. Both India & Pakistan will receive 14bcm/y. For the success of this project it is necessary that there should be stability in Afghanistan, because the pipeline will cross from the country this TAPI project give strong reason to both the country Pakistan & India to promote security in Afghanistan (Sharma, 2009).

India's economic development and growth in the global economy have increased the significance of trade oriented foreign policy. In fact it is a perception among Indian that the economic growth in the country is bring them closer to become a global power. India has deployed small unit of forces to Afghanistan, their core duties is to give security to Indian diplomatic mission & rebuild projects. These kind of policy and moves which is made by Delhi, many Indians believe that there motherland should makes these kind of policy more in order to extended their influence in all the region. Kabul is one of the particle tests for Delhi foreign policy to become a regional power in South Asia. (Harsh V.Pant, 2011).

New Delhi is very careful on sending the arm force to Afghanistan. The fact that India believe that a stable, strong & democratic Afghanistan will in future cooperate as a friend of India and would not use it soil against India. As recently India has limited its function in military exercises particularly the training of Afghan army personnel. The policy of India had been for long to keep zero chance for military presences in Afghanistan. In 2005 only India deployed 200 troops to Kabul because of the attack of Taliban which killed one Indian diplomat. India is also caution about providing arms to Afghanistan directly, the reason is clear that it may provoke Pakistan and the Taliban which will promote and plan attack on Indian interest in Afghanistan. For Instance in 2011 Kabul government signed a deal with Russia that Afghanistan will buy their weapons from them and the payment of these weapons will be made by India but these weapons will be mostly not lethal (Harsh V. Pant, 2011).

The aim of India's foreign policy towards Afghanistan is to carefully do assessment of its domestic, regional and global interests. The concerns which it faces are the large number of Pakistan influence in the country which New Delhi wants to encounter it to reduce the influence and presence of Pakistan. It is one of the main security concerns of India to eliminate the Pakistani growing influence. The second and foremost import concern for New Delhi is to prevent anti India environment in Afghanistan, India's aims is to prevent the soil of Afghanistan from being used as proxy land of Pakistani supported group to make and design terror attacks on India interest or on India soil. There have been many examples in the past where there was attack on in diplomatic missions in Afghanistan. The third security concern for India is raising power of the Taliban. The Indian foreign policy makers and thinkers have the fair that once the NATO and American forces withdraw, the Taliban will capture most part of Afghanistan. This action will make India efforts to the diminishing level because Taliban are mainly supporting anti India agenda and groups, and all of the sudden the land of Afghanistan will become save heaven and the Indian Interest will no longer be save in the country. (Nirupam Sen, Angel Rabasa.,2009,).

There are many areas in which India had provided its assistance and involvement but the one which Delhi has concern more is the anti-India extremist in Kashmir. Indian government had send some 500 military personnel to give security to Indian aid workers and embassy personnel in their area or compounds. Their job is not to do any offensive action but rather it is defensive to save their Interest. Delhi government had provided the military training to the Afghan National Army, which had given them the upper hand in the great military involvement. But the concern for India is once the US withdrawn they will stop giving aid to Afghanistan and because of which the Afghan National Army which military spending is over 5 million US dollar will also end. Slow but steady the Afghan National Army which is much influence by India and protect Indian interest will be dissolved and anti-India activates will increase. The involvement in Kashmir region will increase which will heavily damage India interest there. India had engaged in much military security partnership with Afghanistan which had notice much Pakistan opposition. This is other area where India is concerned about and the Pakistani proxies in Afghanistan had targeted them.

In some cases, India regards Afghanistan as its domestic issue, such as they are concern about the influence of Pakistan intelligence in this country, as the Pakistani Intelligence (ISI) train and equip terrorists in Afghanistan and use them as a tool against India, especially in the case of Jammu and Kashmir. India's main target is to become regional mediator; therefore, they try to reduce the Pakistan role as a rival in the region (Price 2013, p 4).

7. Conclusion

India will remain as a strategic partner to Afghanistan. The following two-important factors are the important elements of the Indian rational foreign policy towards Afghanistan: India will keep its friendly relations

with the Afghan people and government to limit the influence of Pakistan and Pakistani related proxy extremist's groups which are a security threat of the Indian national security. Secondly India aim is to access to Afghanistan natural resource and well as to get access to the natural resource of Central Asia.

India supported the Russian invasion of Afghanistan and built economic relations with the communist government in Afghanistan. India was mediating and was involved during the Afghan civil war in the 90s and later on supported the Northern Alliance in the fight against the Taliban.

Indian interests can be divided to three main categories: economic, security and regional desire. India and Pakistan both have security concerns in Afghanistan. By showing a soft image by India in Afghanistan to achieve her interests and prevent Pakistani influence.

India believes that the withdrawal of US and NATO forces will give the Taliban more political and military power and that Pakistan will threaten India's interests through Afghanistan. India in every possible way will support the Government of Afghanistan to ensure the future of its interests and to ensure that there is no threat to India's interests through Afghanistan. Delhi was against the Taliban presence in Afghanistan, calling them proxy fighters of Pakistan. On the other hand, the presence of the Taliban in Afghanistan threatens India's strategic economic interests, and an obstacle to India which prevents the latter from entering the economic markets of Central Asian countries.

India and Pakistan have very different goals in Afghanistan. With the support of Kabul, India is trying to expand Afghanistan's role in the region's political and economic affairs. With the strengthening of Afghanistan, India will further expand its national interests and security in the region. Strengthening the stability of Afghanistan means countering terrorism in the region and opening the corridor of India's economic interactions with Central Asia through Afghanistan. On the other hand, India's efforts to free Afghan politicians from the grip of Islamabad will lead to greater integration between India and Afghanistan. In contrast, Pakistan pursues a different goal in Afghanistan. Pakistan seeks a weak, Islamabad-dependent Afghanistan. An incapacitated Afghanistan could easily become Pakistan's "strategic depth." Pakistan believes Afghanistan will remain important as long as India is considered a military threat. This, at all costs, draws Pakistan's attention to expand the scope for its intervention in Afghanistan; because just like India, Pakistan's national interests and national security in the region are completely dependent on the situation in Afghanistan and the role of India and Pakistan in it.

To achieve its strategic goals, Pakistan is focusing on the following efforts: first, limiting and even blocking the export of Indian goods to Afghanistan and expanding economic interactions between the two countries; Second, blocking the expansion of the Central Asian gas pipeline to South Asia, which will provide India with the most opportunities to use the gas resources of Central Asia; Third, strengthening relations with China and paving the way for it in South Asia through Pakistan; Fourth,

strengthening counter-terrorism programs to target Indian resources and missions in Afghanistan and the region; And fifth, support for global terrorist groups in the region that could threaten the resources and interests of India and Afghanistan.

The Indian government has expressed concern that with the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, she is concerned about the activities of extremist groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Muhammad inside Afghanistan. These groups are operating in the Kashmir region against the Indian military. Despite tensions between India and Pakistan, Kabul has always insisted that India has no anti-Pakistani activities from Afghanistan and that India's presence in Afghanistan should not be an excuse to justify Pakistan's support for the Taliban.

It can be seen that India is now in a better position in terms of having a democratic government and military power. For this reason, it can put pressure on Pakistan at the global level and align with a number of other states. Because India has shown that it has made the best use of soft power, it has also emerged as a democratic power among the countries of South Asia. Afghanistan, on the other hand, is in a direct battleground against terrorism and its regional backers and is in dire need of India's support in global diplomacy and military assistance. Therefore, it is thought that the tensions and the arrangement of relations between Afghanistan and India and Pakistan cannot be changed for a relatively long time. Unless regional economic integration has a profound effect on the militaristic approach and political and historical tensions of these countries and transforms the security and political structures of these states.

Economic part of this study focused on India's aid and support and discussed some remarkable construction projects. Afghanistan has come out of a long civil war in a great need of international aid and support. India became one of the biggest regional supporters of the new government in Afghanistan in terms of economic support. According to India foreign policy, economic growth and stability can provide security and political stability in Afghanistan. Therefore, India supported major construction and re construction projects (TAPI, Chabahar port, Salma Dam, and Parliament) in Afghanistan and at the same time large amounts of humanitarian aid was supplied to Afghanistan. Since 2001 India invested more than 1.2 billion and became the 5th largest donor for Afghanistan's construction.

To expand the trade relations of India to central Asia, Russia and to Europe via Afghanistan and Iran, India's engagement with Iran developed in the last years. India aims to develop the two north-south infrastructure corridors by which India facilitates its good exports to other parts of the world namely to Central Asia and Afghanistan. Accessing the energy resources and increasing its economic influence are the strategic long terms interests of India.

India realized that with the absence of a close relationship with Iran it is not possible to make access to Afghanistan and then to Central Asia. Indian policy makers obtained to have a foothold in Iran and by investing in Chabahar port India could manage to take an important step for their economic agenda for Afghanistan and Central Asia.

After nearly two decades the situation in Afghanistan is still fearsome in terms of security and economic development. With the presence of US and NATO forces the risk is still high that Afghanistan will be a "failed state". After a long war in the country it seems impossible to defeat the Taliban and find a solution for the ongoing conflict in the country. The question is still remaining if the Taliban and US agreement in Doha will end with the withdrawal of the US troops from Afghanistan what will be the role of the regional players such as India, Iran, China and Russia.

Indian foreign policy towards Afghanistan is based on to limit Islamabad's influence in Afghanistan and in terms of the geo-political India investing in order to moderate the South Asia region and put Pakistan in the strategic-blacked state. From the view of geo-political location Afghanistan is in the core of Indian foreign policy in the South Asia region. The Afghan India relations from 1950 (Friendship Treaty) and then in 2011 by Strategic Partnership Agreement remind each other of mutual based interests.

There is no doubt that India by it is soft power influenced the Afghan people and the government. India is taking advantage of such influence to put Pakistan in a strategic pressure. India is against the Taliban to take the power back in Kabul and therefore, supporting the Afghan government by it is economic, military and capacity building aid and programs. The Afghan peace talks with Taliban puts India in a state of worry for their national security concerns and to saucier its investment in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan is still not a post-war country and destabilized Afghanistan will affect the security of the region namely India. The idea of "Global Jihad" is a red light for India's internal security therefore, security is among the one of major reasons for Indian policy makers. Despite the presence of US and NATO forces in Afghanistan for almost two decades they could not be able to bring security in this country.

India's presence in Afghanistan has two main dominations. Firstly to address its own internal security concerns and second, helps to build a stable regional security in the Southern Asia region. Although presence of US discouraged the military presence of India in Afghanistan but still New Delhi made some actions to keep stabilize their internal security. Indo-Tibetan Border Police is part of this process which has been sent to Afghanistan in order to protect personal employees and cooperation of intelligence gathering between NDS and RAW against ISI. In some cases, India regards Afghanistan as its domestic issue, such as they are concerned about the influence of Pakistan intelligence in this country, as the Pakistani Intelligence (ISI) train and equip terrorists in Afghanistan and use them as a tool against India, especially in the case of Jammu and Kashmir.

Suggestions for future research:

As I mentioned Afghan-Indo relations are not simple bilateral relations and it needs to amylase different aspects and variables. I suggest for future researchers in order to provide a deep and comprehensive surface to well understanding of Afghan-Indo relations, they focus on India-Pak, Afghanistan-Pak relations. Iran is also one of the main players in the region and has an active role in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and as explained in this

thesis they even support the Taliban against the US; therefore, it is important to do study on Afghan-Iran relations based on Afghan-Indo relations. Central Asia countries are the main target of India for economic supplement and in order to have a clear image of Afghan-Indo relations it is important that Afghan-Central Asia countries relations should be analyzed, because friendly ties among Central Asia countries and Kabul will provide a good platform for India-Central Asia relations.

Limitations of the Study:

To analyze the foreign policy of a country needs comprehensive research. In this thesis I tried to focus on different perspectives of Indian foreign policy towards Afghanistan, and faced with number of limitations that listed below:

1. Indian foreign policy towards Afghanistan is not simple bilateral relations. We need to analyze several factors such as India's relations with Pakistan, Iran, Central Asia countries, US, Russia and other regional and international actors.
2. We used Qualitative case study and Semi-structured interviews. Due to security concerns in Afghanistan we couldn't travel easily to conduct interviews with both Afghan and Indian officials.
3. Economic relations between Afghanistan and India is one of the main parts that we focused on in this research. There are only a few updated studies which focus on the economic relations of two countries. Generally, we faced a lack of printed books in Afghanistan which were written in the English language.

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