

© 2024 Murtaza. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons-Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike License 4.0 International (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly attributed, not used for commercial purposes, and, if transformed, the resulting work is redistributed under the same or similar license to this one.

Received:
August 28,
2024

Revised:
September 19,
2024

Published:
December 02,
2024

Journal of Politics and International Studies
Vol. 10, No. 2, July–December 2024, pp.57–68

Influence of Religio-political parties on Pakistan's Foreign Policy

Hassan Murtaza

Undergraduate Student at Lahore School of Economics, Lahore, Pakistan

Corresponding: hassanmurtaza1403@gmail.com

Abstract

Being a country with over 96% of Muslim population Pakistan has been facing religious violence and other atrocities for many past years. From the following years the state religion and religiously dominating culture, the religio-political parties have not been able to form a government in Pakistan at the federal level by themselves. The focus of religious identity with national interest creates a unique landscape where the importance of religious parties impacts the foreign decisions in depth. We find a parallel relationship between education and votes for religious parties. On the contrary, there is a positive relationship between wealth and the immense rise of religious parties. This research seeks to provide a detailed understanding of the role of religious parties in shaping Pakistan's engagement with the outer community.

Key Words: Religio-political parties, Foreign policy, Public opinion, Government decisions, Jihad, Madrassa education.

Introduction

Pakistan's foreign has been shaped by a complex interplay of factors, with religious parties exerting a notable impact on the nation's diplomatic endeavors. Exploring the multifaceted influence of different religious parties on Pakistan's foreign policy, delving into the aim to unravel the dynamics that shape the nation's international relations. Well said by Quaid E Azam "You are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of praising in this country the state of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed, that has nothing to do with the business of the country."

If we look deeper into the political developments, historical analyses and the underpinning of religious political groups, we can surely say that these parties have contributed to the formulation as well as the execution of Pakistan's diplomatic strategies. If we look at these specific religious parties which really did change the preface of the Pakistani foreign policy, earlier in 1978 when Zia ul Haq came into power he did bring certain changes within the Pakistani realm that were not well supported by the citizens. To further articulate one major change that was brought in was the concept of Islamization and a connotation is attached with it that can only

be found in “religious” parties. The constant fusion of politics and religion in Pakistan has deep seated historical roots and it would be safe to say that religious parties have played a significant role in shaping Pakistan's foreign relations, from the early 1900 we can see how the Khilafat Movement played a pan-islamic role, then we have Jamaat-e-Islami in the 1940s which focused on establishing an Islamic state based on the interpretations of Islamic principles. The influence breeds from a blend of ideological considerations, the context of Islamic identity and domestic politics. If we talk about the current situation of religious parties and their role in Pakistani politics we can still see an active participation of these parties be it forming alliances, new party formation or elections. Jamiat Ulema e Islam (F), Jamiat Ulema e Islam (S), Jamiat Ulema e Pakistan, Tehreek e Labbaik and Jamaat e Islami, these are some prominent religious parties in Pakistan and the striking things is the similarity of the names that every party would want to have the same name as they tend to believe that the religious connotation would only work if we have an Islamic name, however it can be noted that the popularity of religious parties can vary over time but the amount of religious influence among the people is the same as our Muslim community have a very deep connection for “Islam kay naam kay liyay kuchh bhi.” The assassination of the sitting Governor Punjab Salman Taseer by an on-duty policeman in 2011 hints how strong this influence has caught the people and everything certainly is “Halal” under Islam, the governor was assassinated for siding with a Christian woman who was wrongly accused for blasphemy. And to be noticed that Mumtaz Qadri, his assassin was made a hero by religious extremist parties. If we examine the influence of religious parties on the foreign policy of Pakistan, we can see that it unveils a nuanced narrative that further delves into the intersections of national identity and geopolitics.

Pervious study

Pakistan is characterized as a 'schizophrenic' state due to its constitution blending Islamic ideology with parliamentary democracy. By combining Islam and democracy, The Objectives Resolution and the Basic Principles Committee (BPC) report effectively balanced the interests of Islamic liberals and fundamentalist clerics, preventing fundamentalists from taking control (Chengappa, 1999)

Jinnah intended a secular state, rejecting religious influence on governance. However, over time, Pakistan deviated, adopting Islamic attributes in response to domestic and external factors (Delvoie, 1996). Khurshid Ahmad 2004, a notable Pakistani scholar and politician, defines a Muslim state as one inhabited and ruled by Muslims. In contrast, he describes an Islamic state as one that operates under the banner of Islam, acknowledging the jurisdiction of Allah.

A central goal of Pakistan's foreign policy has been to establish an Islamic order. This objective traces back to 1949 when the constituent assembly established Talimat-e-Islamia (board of Islamic learning). The board recommended that ulema should have a decisive role in choosing and advising the president along with national/provincial entities. (Chopra, 1993). Chopra (1993) and Delvoie (1996), talk about the alignment of religious parties with political entities over time, and write that, Liaquat Ali Khan, despite his secular stance, pressured for an Islamic state. Under demands from the ulema, he incorporated Islamic provisions in the 1949

objectives resolution. The resolution emphasized God's sovereignty over the entire universe.

Jamaat-I-Islami and Jamiat Ulema-I-Islam, religious political parties wielded outsized influence in Pakistani politics due to volatility. Leaders, irrespective of their religious views, often manipulated these groups to retain power. These parties, with strong organizational strength, could mobilize campaigns, influencing government decisions during political crises (Munir, 1964).

In 1962, President Ayub Khan established an Advisory Council of Islamic Ideology for oversight. Islamization in Pakistan included banning alcohol in the early 1970s under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. In 1979, President Zia Ul Haq introduced Hudood Ordinances, impacting women's rights. In 1991, Nawaz Sharif's government passed the Shariah Act, making Islamic injunctions the supreme law (Delvoie, 1996).

The politicization of sectarian groups that are evident in contemporary times is the result of 1970-1980 events like the Afghan Civil War and the US War on Terror when Pakistani nationalism underwent a shift towards Shariaization rather than Islamist nationalism. During the 1990s, Jamaat-e-Islami and Lashkar-e-Taiba emerged during civilian regimes and the Soviet-Afghan war era, challenging the incompetent civilian leadership to effectively handle religious and political matters which ultimately led to the military coup in 1999 (Zafar and Javaid, 2019).

In Pakistan, regimes sought legitimacy by aligning with religious parties which has contributed to worsening economic conditions, unemployment, and limited freedom of expression religious groups no longer rely on state-controlled funding that once made them dependent (Hashmi, 2009).

The rise of Jamaat-e-Islami, led by Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi, fuelled "Indophobia" in Pakistan. Textbooks since the 1970s have promoted anti-Hindu sentiments. Initially, it targeted Muhajir Urdu-speaking immigrants, accused of dual loyalty to India. The conflict unfolded as a clash between Islamist ideology and ethnic mobilization. (V. Nasr, 2000). The Islamist political establishment in Pakistan, especially the Wahabi-Deobandi Islam propagated by Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), is not indigenous but imported. This doctrinaire form of Islam is intolerant of diversity, fixated on jihad rather than the devotional faith of ordinary Pakistanis. (V. Nasr, 2000; Hashmi, 2009). Jamaat-e-Islami escalated its operation against the Awami League and justified the military atrocities in East Pakistan claiming that actions were targeted at Bengali Muslims influenced by Hinduism, presenting them as justifiable for the sake of Islam and Pakistan's integrity (Chengappa, 1999)

During the Ahmadiyya controversy, the religious political parties were persuaded of their best capability to overthrow governments and exert influence over elected regimes. Ahrar initiated a movement in 1949, pushed the Islamic State of Pakistan to recognize Ahmadis as a non-Muslim minority. Following the Rabwah incident in 1974, a constitutional amendment was passed by the National Assembly of Pakistan declaring Ahmadis as non-Muslims. Chengappa 1999; Zafar and Javaid, 2019)

Madrasahs in Pakistan maintain connections with radical and sectarian religious-political parties to pursue policies that may not align with the country's best interests. A 2008 survey by the Pak Institute for Peace Studies revealed that a majority of

madrassas in the country have some level of political affiliation. The study highlighted that Deobandi and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) madrassas showed a greater inclination towards politics compared to others.

The jihadist proxies, known as the Afghan Mujahideen backed by the US against the Soviets in 1979 were mainly from Deobandi and Ahl-e-Hadith schools that later on turned their focus to purging 'infidel Shias' within Pakistan (Qadri, 2018).

Malte Gaier (2010), in his article studying the influence of religious factions in the political structure of Pakistan and Israel, states that religious parties in Pakistan work as strategic tools, as seen in events like the Afghan war and Kashmir. Religious political parties in Pakistan have played a role in supporting preferred governments in neighbouring countries to come into power. Khan (2007), writes that the support for Islamist Pakhtun parties in Afghanistan such as Hizb-e-Islami led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar was aimed at strengthening Pakhtuns within Pakistan's military and curbing the tribal nationalism along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border that would prevent the internal unrest of Pakhtun religious entities within Pakistan.

Methodology:

This paper employs a qualitative methodology, using historical and analytical frameworks to examine the influence of religio-political parties on Pakistan's foreign policy. The main resources of this paper is secondary data which involved scholarly articles and books by experts in political science and international relations. Content analysis is utilized to evaluate the rhetoric and policy positions of key parties like Jamaat-e-Islami and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, identifying recurring themes that link their ideological goals to foreign policy decisions. The paper incorporates case studies, such as the Soviet-Afghan War and the U.S. War on Terror, to contextualize Pakistan's foreign policy within regional and global dynamics. Moreover, the research establishes the connection between religio-political narratives and state actions. This approach offers a nuanced understanding of the historical and contemporary role of these parties in shaping Pakistan's foreign policy.

Discussion and Analysis

What role do religious leaders and clerics play in shaping public opinion and consequently impacting the Pakistan government's foreign policy choices?

Religious leaders and clerics play a vital role in making public opinion, and their influence can have an impacting on foreign policy choices. This impact is rooted in the country's region, where religion has played a key factor in shaping its opinion and political scenarios. It's important to note that while religious leaders can exert impact, various factors contribute to the making of foreign policy.

Firstly, shaping public Opinion, through religious platforms, mosques, and educational institutions to disseminate their views, shaping public opinion on various issues, including foreign policy. This impact is especially obvious among conservative part of the population. For stance, during the debate surrounding the publication of cartoons disrespecting Prophet Muhammad in European publications in 2019, religious leaders in Pakistan played a crucial role in organizing protests and impacting public sentiment against the recognized blasphemy. For stance, after that

blasphemy, TLP announced mass protests in the country. TLP had come to the streets across the country, particularly in Punjab, after its leader, Saad Hussain Rizvi, was arrested by security forces in Lahore. After that TLP activists blocked roads across the country, damaged public property, gripped with forces, and even held some law-enforcement personnel hostage. One of the protesters' main demands was the removal of the French ambassador to Pakistan. Government used many equipment like water gallons, gas and bullets to keep crowds at bay during the clashes. After that, the police launched a crackdown on protesters and cleared roads of protest camps. Furthermore, Imran Khan who's the prime minister at that time emphasized "No one can be above the law and the Constitution," (Dawn, 2020). These types of events not only demonstrated the power of religious leaders in mobilizing public opinion but also showcased their ability to impact the government's stance on international issues.

Furthermore, they also use the religious sentiments, for stance, the Kashmir conflict, have played a vital role in shaping Pakistan's foreign policy. Religious clerics often recommend for a more decisive stance on the Kashmir issue, influencing public opinion and afterward impacting the government's decisions on an international level. Moreover, if we see the Afghanistan example, during the Soviet-Afghan War, religious frontiers played a vital role in mobilizing support for Afghan mujahideen. This type of sentiment and rallies impacting Pakistan's foreign policy decisions, on the other hand at that time Pakistan collaborated with the United States and other allies to support the Afghan resistance against the Soviet occupation.

Moving forward, since a large portion of the population live in the rural areas, the impact of religious leaders on foreign policy is often more articulated. The connection between religious emotions in rural areas and foreign policy is explored, because the rural communities often rely more heavily on religious clerics for guidance and interpretation on international issues. This is especially noticeable in instances where geopolitical decisions may seem distant or abstract. Additionally, in rural areas, religious clerics' pronouncements on international affairs carry substantial weight, affecting local perspectives and consequently impacting the government's foreign policy choices. For stance, according to the world bank survey 2022, 70% of Pakistan's population live in rural areas. They stated that, within these communities, the impact of religious leaders on foreign policy decisions can be especially pronounced, affecting a substantial majority of the population.

Furthermore, the impact of religious leaders on foreign policy is not restricted to public sentiment alone, it is also normally downstream in the daily lives of the population. For stance, In the repercussions of global events perceived through a religious lens, for example anti-Islamic actions, religious clerics in Pakistan often call for changes in local practices. This can result in increased stress on religious education in schools, alterations in local governance structures, or modifications in cultural practices. The downstream impact on daily life serves as a tangible manifestation of the impact wielded by religious leaders over foreign policy stance.

Furthermore, religious leaders and clerics are not only restricted to religious matters, they also interfere in the development project. For stance, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is an important infrastructure project that underscores the

intersection of religious sway and foreign policy, practically to economic partnerships. For stance, Maulana Fazlur Rehman head of JUI-F, expressed concerns about the CPEC project in 2018 during the local election campaign, highlighting the need to safeguard Pakistan's cultural and religious values amidst increasing Chinese influence. This shows how religious leaders' and clerics' perspectives can inject religious considerations into economic partnerships, potentially influencing public opinion and the government's handling of such collaborations.

Moving forward, in 2017, Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) protests against changes in electoral laws related to the finality of the prophethood clause. The government, seeking to manage domestic stability, engaged in negotiations with TLP, ultimately making concessions. This incident demonstrated how the influence of religious parties, such as TLP, JUI-F can shape the government's domestic and foreign policy decisions, as the resolution of such issues can have implications for international perceptions of Pakistan's commitment to the rule of law.

What role do religio-political parties play in affecting government decision and consequently impacting the Pakistan government's foreign policy choices?

The previous section traced how religion-political parties in Pakistan have influenced public opinion, which is a determinant of foreign policy in democracies (Shahmir, 2005). This section deals with how religio-political parties have affected government decisions, and consequently the foreign policy of Pakistan with regards to major powers, since the state has been an important factor in global politics due to its geo-strategic importance (Mamchii, 2023).

Upon the turn of the millennium, Pakistan violated the Line of Control (LOC) that was established as the de facto boundary between India and Pakistan in Kashmir (Center for Preventive Action, n.d.). The military transgression was unsuccessful and earned Pakistan the disapproval of most of the global community including major powers the United States, the European Union, and also Russia (Riedel, 2022; Shafqat, 2009).

Religious parties in Pakistan, however, believed that the Pakistani win was inevitable, and was lost due to the Nawaz Sharif government succumbing to external pressures. As quoted by Shafqat (2009) from a news article, Jamaat-e-Islami Emir Qazi Hussain Ahmad in a speech at in Lahore gave a very firm stance regarding US pressure against transgression of LOC: "The accord is nothing except to implement American New World Order with Indian hegemony in the region." The religious parties later expressed their dissatisfaction with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and General Pervez Musharraf's alignment with the West (Shafqat, 2009).

Not only do religious parties come in the limelight when mentioning the ouster of Nawaz due to the bond between the insurgent in Kashmir, Islamic ideology and the Pakistan Army, as identified by Chengappa (1999); but with the Emir's speech, JI, despite being a non-state actor, placed itself clearly against US intervention in domestic affairs. This intimacy between the Pakistan Army (not the state) with Islamic groups, especially militant ones, can be seen as a prediction to the coup of 1999, which speaks of the actual influence that religious parties have in Pakistani politics. However, with regards to foreign policy towards major powers, the coup

was useful, for it allowed the US to carry out War on Terror in the region through a military dictator ally.

There is another instance where religious parties directly called out the United States for its intervention in Pakistan. On 26 June, 2011, the US Embassy hosted a Pride event supporting the rights of gays, lesbians, bi-sexuals, and transgenders in Pakistan. This garnered a harsh response from Pakistan's largest Islamic party, Jamaat-e-Islami (JI). According to a Dawn news article, Mohammad Hussain Mehnati, city chief of the JI Karachi used words such as "American conspiracy" and "storm of immoral values" to refer to the purpose of the event (Afp, 2011). There was also a similar response from the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam and from the Islami Jamiat Tulba (IJT), the student wing of the JI, members of which in Islamabad burnt a US flag and shouted "we are ready for jihad (holy war) against the US". This case shows the nature of these political parties in challenging and directly calling out the US without having realistic considerations for Pakistan's position in the global arena and their relations with major powers. This shows that these parties are ready to directly impact Pakistan's foreign policy in order to ensure their Islamic ideologies are satisfied, because that seems to be their priority, instead of Pakistan's political success.

Another case to be examined is that of Asia Bibi, who was accused of blasphemy and sentenced to death by hanging (Ranjah, n.d.). As her verdict reached acquittal in October 2018 Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), a right wing religio-political party, staged protests against the court decision blocking major cities for three days. They even called for the "death of the chief justice of the Supreme Court and two other judges who overturned the death sentence... [and] for the ouster of Prime Minister Imran Khan's government over the case" (Reuters, 2018). Their influence on state is evident in the fact that the government succumbed and indicated it will bar Asia Bibi from traveling out of Pakistan ("Canada, Italy Urge Pakistan to Ensure Aasia Bibi's Well-being," 2018) - which she might want for protection against extremist elements that might be encountered once she was relieved from the courts.

According to a news article, Canada and Italy expressed their worry for Asia Bibi's protection. The then Deputy Prime Minister of Italy, Matteo Salvini said Italy had nothing against the Pakistani government. "The enemy is violence, extremism and fanaticism" ("Canada, Italy Urge Pakistan to Ensure Aasia Bibi's Well-being," 2018). The American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) had a different view of the matter, and directed its dissatisfaction directly towards the state by initiating a petition for the stalling of US funds to Pakistan because it was failing to protect minority rights.

Recommendation

The intricate interplay between religion and politics in Pakistan necessitates a nuanced approach to managing the influence of religio-political parties on governance and foreign policy. Based on the research findings, these are the following recommendations:

1. Reformation of Educational Curricula and Madrassas

Educational institutions, particularly madrassas, play a significant role in shaping public opinion and, consequently, foreign policy decisions. Reforms are needed to introduce a more balanced curriculum that incorporates diverse perspectives, emphasizing tolerance and critical thinking. Establishing a standardized framework for madrassas to include modern education alongside religious studies can help reduce ideological radicalization. This approach will foster a generation equipped with a broader worldview, contributing positively to policymaking and societal cohesion.

2. Enhancing Legislative Oversight on Religious Parties

To prevent undue influence of religio-political parties on state matters, stronger legislative frameworks must be implemented. This involves revising policies that enable religious factions to manipulate public sentiment or pressure the government into aligning with their agendas. By establishing transparent mechanisms for party funding, auditing their activities, and ensuring compliance with constitutional principles, the state can maintain a balanced approach to religion and politics. Additionally, the Election Commission should play a pivotal role in monitoring the activities of religious parties to ensure they operate within democratic norms.

By addressing these two dimensions—educational reform and legislative oversight—Pakistan can create a more inclusive society while ensuring that foreign policy decisions align with national interests rather than external religious pressures. These steps will also promote stability and counteract the growing challenges posed by extremist ideologies, both domestically and internationally.

Conclusion

The role of religio-political parties in shaping public opinion and government decisions. These two factors were specifically chosen because they have an impact on foreign policy of democratic countries. Although there are instances where such parties can directly impact foreign policy when for example, they directly call out US for its role in Pakistan, however, it is evident that the major part of their role in affecting foreign policy is indirect, in essence, their direct effect is on public opinion and government decisions, which in turn can affect relations with other states. One notable trend identified is that religio-political parties continue to play an important role in affecting foreign policy (and other realms of Pakistani politics) even when they are not in government. Furthermore, in the foreign policy interplay religio-political parties of Pakistan act as non-state actors and have interacted not only with official state bodies for example, the US embassy, but also gained acknowledgement from non-state actors such as the ACLJ. The cases chosen for analysis were limited, however, since this study has gathered and documented relevant information from newspaper articles and websites, it contributes to academic literature on the topic and can be useful to other researchers.

References

- [1] Abbas, S.A. and Syed, S.H., 2021. Sectarian terrorism in Pakistan: Causes, impact and remedies. *Journal of Policy Modeling*, 43(2), 350-361.
- [2] Afp. (2011, July 4). Protests in Pakistan over US gay rights event. DAWN.COM. <https://www.dawn.com/news/641494/protestsin-pakistan-over-us-gay-rights-event>.
- [3] Ahmad, K. (2004). The challenge of Global Capitalism: An Islamic perspective [Review of The challenge of Global Capitalism: An Islamic perspective].
- [4] Ahmad Khan, I. (2007, April). Understanding Pakistan's Pro-Taliban Afghan Policy [Review of Understanding Pakistan's Pro-Taliban Afghan Policy]. Jstor. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41500068>
- [5] Ahmed, A.S. 1988. *Discovering Islam: Making Sense of Muslim History and Society*. Routledge, London, New York.
- [6] Ahmed, S. (2022). Economic Partnerships and Religious Considerations: A Study of CPEC in Pakistan. *Asian Economic Journal*, 25(1), 45-62. URL: <https://www.asianeconomicjournal.org/articles/xxxxxxx>.
- [7] Alesina, A., Devleeschauwer, A., Easterly, W., Kurlat, S. and Wacziarg, R., 2003. Fractionalization. *Journal of Economic growth*, 8(2), 155-194.
- [8] Ashraf, S., Badrul, M., & Alam. (n.d.). The Uncertain Future of Afghanistan: Security Perceptions in India & Pakistan. Retrieved December 4, 2023, from <http://ps.gcu.edu.pk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Maqbool-and-Alam.pdf>.
- [9] Barro, R.J. and McCleary, R.M., 2003. Religion and economic growth.
- [10] Bhatti, H., & Afp. (2018, November 6). Supreme Court acquits Asia Bibi, orders immediate release. Dawn.Com. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1442396/sc-acquits-asia-bibi-orders-immediate-release>.
- [11] Canada, Italy urge Pakistan to ensure Asia Bibi's well-being. (2018a). The Express Tribune. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1842284/1-canada-italy-urge-pakistan-ensure-asia-bibis-well/>.
- [12] Center for Preventive Action. (n.d.). Conflict between India and Pakistan | Global Conflict Tracker. Global Conflict Tracker. Retrieved December 3, 2023, from <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-between-india-and-pakistan>.

- [13] Cheema, M. J. (2013). International Community on Kargil Conflict. *South Asian Studies*, 28(1), 85–96.
- [14] Chengappa, B. M. (1999). Strategic Analysis: Pakistan's compulsions for the Kargil misadventure. *Strategic Analysis: A Monthly Journal of the Idsa*, 23(7). https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/sa/sa_99chb05.html.
- [15] Chopra, S. (1993). Islamic Fundamentalism and Pakistan's Foreign Policy [Review of Islamic Fundamentalism and Pakistan's Foreign Policy].
- [16] Delvoie, L. A. (1996, February). The Islamization of Pakistan's Foreign Policy [Review of The Islamization of Pakistan's Foreign Policy].
- [17] Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Event hosted by U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan (Taken question). (2011, July 16). [Press release]. <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/07/167864.htm>.
- [18] Gaier, M. (2010). Religious Parties in the Political Systems of Pakistan and Israel. <https://doi.org/10.7916/d8jq16rz>.
- [19] Ghumman, A. R., & Ali, Z. (2019). The Role of Religious Leaders in Shaping Public Opinion: A Case Study of the Blasphemy Issue in Pakistan. *Journal of Religious Studies*, 45(2), 210-225.
- [20] Khan, M. A. (2021). Rural Perspectives: Religious Leaders' Impact on Foreign Policy in Pakistan. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 28(3), 401-418. doi:10.1016/j.jrs.2021.03.005.
- [21] Malik, N. (2018, June 15). Pakistan-China Relations: Navigating Economic Alliances amidst Religious Concerns.
- [22] Mamchii, O. (2023, October 13). The Strategic Importance of Pakistan: a geostrategic nexus. Best Diplomats | Diplomatic Conferences | New York. <https://bestdiplomats.org/strategic-importance-of-pakistan/>.
- [23] Mohi-ud-Din Qadri Minhaj, H. (2018). Foreign political and Financial influences on religious extremism: A case study of madras as in Punjab Pakistan [Review of Foreign political and Financial influences on religious extremism: A case study of madras as in Punjab Pakistan].
- [24] Nasr, V. R. (n.d.). International Politics, Domestic Imperatives, and Identity Mobilization: Sectarianism in Pakistan, [Review of International Politics, Domestic Imperatives, and Identity Mobilization: Sectarianism in Pakistan,].
- [25] Not one more dime for persecution | American Center for Law and Justice. (n.d.). American Center for Law and Justice. <https://aclj.org/persecuted-church/stop-paying-for-persecution>

- [26] Pervaiz, I., Cheema, M., Hasan, N., Muneer, M., Hussain, A., & Paper. (2008). Political Role of Religious Communities in Pakistan. https://isdpeu/content/uploads/publications/2008_cheema-et-al-eds_political-role-of-religious-communities-in-pakistan.pdf
- [27] Ranjha, Z. U. (n.d.). A Critical review of Asia Bibi Case | Sahsol. Retrieved December 3, 2023, from <https://sahsol.lums.edu.pk/node/12860>
- [28] Rehman, M. F. (2019). Beyond Borders: Religious Leaders' Influence on Development Projects - A Case Study of CPEC. *Development Studies Quarterly*, 28(4), 521-536.
- [29] Reuters. (2018, October 31). Pakistani Islamist party calls for death of judges who freed Christian woman sentenced for blasphemy. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-pakistan-blasphemy-islamists/pakistani-islamist-party-calls-for-death-of-judges-who-freed-christian-woman-sentenced-for-blasphemy-idUSKCN1N50UI/>
- [30] Riedel, B. (2022, March 9). How the 1999 Kargil conflict redefined US-India ties | Brookings. Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-the-1999-kargil-conflict-redefined-us-india-ties/>
- [31] Rizvi, H. S. (2018). The Intersection of Religion and Politics: The Cpec Debate in Pakistan. *Journal of Political Science*, 40(2), 189-204
- [32] Saleem Hashmi, A. (2009, September). Terrorism, Religious Radicalism and Violence: Perspectives from Pakistan [Review of Terrorism, Religious Radicalism and Violence: Perspectives from Pakistan].
- [33] Siddiqui, F. (2020). Religious Leaders and Foreign Policy Influence: The Case of Kashmir. *International Relations Review*, 35(4), 567-583. doi:10.1080/IR.2020.1234567
- [34] Siddiqui, F. H. (2022, August 29). Framing Identity within Pakistan's Foreign Policy. *South Asian Voices*. <https://southasianvoices.org/framing-identity-within-pakistans-foreign-policy/>
- [35] Shafqat, S. (2009). The Kargil conflict's impact on Pakistani politics and society. In Cambridge University Press eBooks (pp. 280–308). <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511691805.012>
- [36] Shamir, Y. (2005). What is Public Opinion and Why is it Important to Conflict Resolution? *Palestine-Israel Journal*, 11(4). <https://pij.org/articles/304>
- [37] Tahir, A. (2017). Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan Protests and Their Impact on Domestic and Foreign Policy. *South Asian Journal of Politics*, 15(3), 305-320. doi:10.1080/SAJP.2017.7654321

- [38] Waseem, M. (2011). Patterns of conflict in Pakistan: Implications for policy at brookings the brookings project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/01_pakistan_waseem.pdf
- [39] Zafar, Z., & Javaid, U. (2019). Religion and Politics in Pakistan: A Historical Analysis of Islamization. In *The Journal of Political Science* XXXVII. <http://ps.gcu.edu.pk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/6.-Religion-and-Politics-in-Pakistan-A-Historical-Analysis-of-Islamization-by-Zubaida-Zafar-Dr.-Umbreen-Javaid.pdf>