

p-ISSN : 2708-2121 | e-ISSN : 2708-3616

DOI(Journal): 10.31703/gsssr

DOI(Volume): 10.31703/gsssr/.2024(IX)

DOI(Issue): 10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX.III)



GSSSR

GLOBAL STRATEGIC & SECURITY STUDIES REVIEW

VOL. IX, ISSUE III, SUMMER (SEPTEMBER-2024)



Double-blind Peer-review Research Journal

www.gsssrjournal.com

© Global Strategic & Security Studies Review

Article Title

Pak-France Relations During 21st Century: Strategic Alliances and Bilateral Cooperation

Global Strategic & Security Studies Review

p-ISSN: 2708-2121 e-ISSN: 2708-3616

DOI(journal): 10.31703/gsssr

Volume: IX (2024)

DOI (volume): 10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX)

Issue: III Summer (September 2024)

DOI(Issue): 10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-III)

Home Page

www.gsssrjournal.com

Volume: IX (2024)

<https://www.gsssrjournal.com/Current-issues>

Issue: III-Summer (March-2024)

<https://www.gsssrjournal.com/Current-issues/9/3/2024>

Scope

<https://www.gsssrjournal.com/about-us/scope>

Submission

<https://humaglobe.com/index.php/gsssr/submissions>

Google Scholar



Visit Us



Abstract

This research aims to critically analyse the bilateral relations between France and Pakistan during the 21st century. It emphasizes political, economic, social, cultural and military relationships between the two countries. Its purposes are to demonstrate the political ideologies and foreign policy objectives that influence Pakistan-France relations, to examine the nature of economic ties between Pakistan and France, to analyse the patterns of trade and investment that changed over time, to evaluate the Pakistan-France collaboration on military and security matters, and other key areas of cooperation, and to elucidate Pakistan-France political relations, the influence of pressure groups (political and religious) on their relationship, and to imposing allegations on France as a result of religious disparity in Pakistan. This study concludes that Pakistan and France are having high time collaborations in various sectors with a particular focus on working together in the fields of nuclear technology, defence cooperation, and resolving global security issues.

Keywords: Pak-France Relations, Political Ideologies, Security Matters, Economic Regulations, Foreign Policy

Authors:

Muhammad Ali Raza Tariq: M.Phil Scholar, Department of International Relations, Government College University, Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

Ghulam Mustafa: Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Government College University, Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

Muhammad Shabbir: (Corresponding Author)
Associate Professor, Department of Sociology,
Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Punjab,
Pakistan.
Email: shabbirch@bzu.edu.pk

Pages: 40-52

DOI: 10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-III).04

DOI link: [https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gsssr.2024\(IX-III\).04](https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-III).04)

Article link: <http://www.gsssrjournal.com/article/A-b-c>

Full-text Link: <https://gsssrjournal.com/fulltext/>

Pdf link: <https://www.gsssrjournal.com/jadmin/Auther/31rv1olA2.pdf>

Citing this Article

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|---|------|--------|--------------------------------|-------|-----|
| 04 | Pak-France Relations During 21st Century: Strategic Alliances and Bilateral Cooperation | | | | | | |
| | Author | Muhammad Ali Raza Tariq Ghulam Mustafa Muhammad Shabbir | | DOI | 10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-III).04 | | |
| Pages | 40-52 | Year | 2024 | Volume | IX | Issue | III |
| Referencing & Citing Styles | Tariq, M. A. R., Mustafa, G., & Shabbir, M. (2024). Pak-France Relations During 21st Century: Strategic Alliances and Bilateral Cooperation. <i>Global Strategic & Security Studies Review</i> , IX(III), 40-52. https://doi.org/10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-III).04 | | | | | | |
| | Tariq, Muhammad Ali Raza, Ghulam Mustafa, and Muhammad Shabbir. 2024. "Pak-France Relations During 21st Century: Strategic Alliances and Bilateral Cooperation." <i>Global Strategic & Security Studies Review</i> IX (III):40-52. doi: 10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-III).04. | | | | | | |
| | TARIQ, M. A. R., MUSTAFA, G. & SHABBIR, M. 2024. Pak-France Relations During 21st Century: Strategic Alliances and Bilateral Cooperation. <i>Global Strategic & Security Studies Review</i> , IX, 40-52. | | | | | | |
| | Tariq, Muhammad Ali Raza, Ghulam Mustafa, and Muhammad Shabbir. 2024. 'Pak-France Relations During 21st Century: Strategic Alliances and Bilateral Cooperation', <i>Global Strategic & Security Studies Review</i> , IX: 40-52. | | | | | | |
| | Tariq, Muhammad Ali Raza, Ghulam Mustafa, and Muhammad Shabbir. "Pak-France Relations During 21st Century: Strategic Alliances and Bilateral Cooperation." <i>Global Strategic & Security Studies Review</i> IX.III (2024): 40-52. Print. | | | | | | |
| | Tariq, Muhammad Ali Raza, Mustafa, Ghulam, and Shabbir, Muhammad (2024), 'Pak-France Relations During 21st Century: Strategic Alliances and Bilateral Cooperation', <i>Global Strategic & Security Studies Review</i> , IX (III), 40-52. | | | | | | |
| | Tariq, Muhammad Ali Raza, Ghulam Mustafa, and Muhammad Shabbir. "Pak-France Relations During 21st Century: Strategic Alliances and Bilateral Cooperation." <i>Global Strategic & Security Studies Review</i> IX, no. III (2024): 40-52. https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-III).04 . | | | | | | |



Global Strategic & Security Studies Review

www.gsssrjournal.com

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gsssr>



Pages: 40-52

URL: [https://doi.org/10.31703/gsssr.2024\(IX-III\).04](https://doi.org/10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-III).04)

Doi: 10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-III).04



Cite Us



Title

Pak-France Relations During 21st Century: Strategic Alliances and Bilateral Cooperation

Contents

- [Introduction](#)
- [Statement of the Problem](#)
- [Research Questions](#)
- [Literature Review](#)
- [Reviews of Relevant Studies](#)
- [Economic Agreements and Cooperation](#)
- [Political Relations](#)
- [Educational and Cultural Initiatives](#)
- [Strategic and Security Collaborations](#)
- [National Objectives and Interests](#)
- [Conclusion](#)
- [References](#)

Abstract

This research aims to critically analyse the bilateral relations between France and Pakistan during the 21st century. It emphasizes political, economic, social, cultural and military relationships between the two countries. Its purposes are to demonstrate the political ideologies and foreign policy objectives that influence Pakistan-France relations, to examine the nature of economic ties between Pakistan and France, to analyse the patterns of trade and investment that changed over time, to evaluate the Pakistan-France collaboration on military and security matters, and other key areas of cooperation, and to elucidate Pakistan-France political relations, the influence of pressure groups (political and religious) on their relationship, and to imposing allegations on France as a result of religious disparity in Pakistan. This study concludes that Pakistan and France are having high time collaborations in various sectors with a particular focus on working together in the fields of nuclear technology, defence cooperation, and resolving global security issues.

Authors:

Muhammad Ali Raza Tariq: M.Phil Scholar, Department of International Relations, Government College University, Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

Ghulam Mustafa: Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Government College University, Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

Muhammad Shabbir: (Corresponding Author) Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Punjab, Pakistan.
Email: shabbirch@bzu.edu.pk

Keywords: [Pak-France Relations](#), [Political Ideologies](#), [Security Matters](#), [Economic Regulations](#), [Foreign Policy](#)

Introduction

Pakistan came into being on August 14, 1947, while France became the first non-Muslim country "to recognize Pakistan on December 02, 1947". In the same year, the Cold War was started and the geographical importance of Pakistan became significant for France. France and Pakistan established mutual diplomatic relations on July 31,

1951. The primary goal of Pak-France relations was to enhance their bilateral ties through a legal framework in the domains of security, foreign policy, and economy. In 1970, France and Pakistan signed a 'technical cooperation agreement'. This agreement proved to be a milestone in the foreign policy of both countries because it resulted in the improvement of bilateral relations in the education,



science, technical cooperation, taxation, and finance sectors. Though there were good relations before 1970 between both countries, neither a signed agreement nor an established organization was established to work on. There were only policy frameworks in which both countries engaged many times and saw many ups and downs in terms of agreement on the same policy. In 2023, French Diplomat Mr. Alexis Chahtahtinsky agreed on Bastille Day, that "there have been ups and downs in our relations" (Pakistan Observer, 2023). At a glance, the French government's moderate stance on Kashmir was against the foreign policy of Pakistan. But at the same time, it demanded Pakistan's support in their favor on the issues of Algeria, Indochina, Morocco, Tunisia, and the Suez Canal crisis.

Initially, both countries kept silent on the bilateral visits until 1961 when the Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto visited France in the hope of reconciling the bilateral relationships. However, he was restrained from meeting with the French President and the Prime Minister because of the fact that Pakistan had recognized the Algerian Republic earlier in 1961. However, France did not breach its relationship with Pakistan and welcomed President Ayub Khan in the following year. "President Ayub Khan participated in the 11th Conference of Commonwealth held at Marlborough House, London, from September 10 – 19, 1962. He visited France to meet the French President Charles de Gaulle on September 16, 1962" (Naseem, 2011). This short visit ended only as a result of exchanging admirations and suggestions over the common market and Great Britain's inclusion into it.

This research on Pak-France relations surrounds multiple issues such as the Pakistani and French governments' stance on international issues, the importance of the geopolitical location of Pakistan for France, French concern about the existence of terrorism and militant groups in Pakistan, French stance on Pakistan's friendly relations with China, Pakistan's agitation on French support to Indian perspective on Kashmir and Pakistan's distress on the French prejudice against Islam which has fueled tensions between the two nations. Consequently, the relationship between Pakistan and France in the 21st century has been marked with the aid of a vast and enduring history of diplomatic relations and collaboration. The official visits between Pakistan

and France have experienced significant progress in recent years across a couple of domains, along with exchange, defense cooperation, cultural exchanges, and security. Both international states have superior their financial collaboration by augmenting alternatives and investments, resulting in mutual benefits. In addition, Pakistan and France have reinforced their defense cooperation via the implementation of joint army pieces of training and technological transfers. Moreover, cultural exchanges have been vital in improving reciprocal comprehension and fostering interpersonal bonds. The mutual educational programs for the students and teachers have facilitated educational collaboration and the dissemination of expertise between the two countries. In the 21st century, the relationship between Pakistan and France has evolved into a complicated and collectively tremendous alliance, which has contributed to the advancement and prosperity of both international states. The economic relations between Pakistan and France have thrived, alongside their military and cultural collaborations. The exchange volume between the two nations has experienced a substantial surge in recent years, followed by means of a rise in mutual investments and company collaborations. French agencies have exhibited an increasing inclination toward Pakistan's market, namely in domain names consisting of energy, infrastructure, and telecommunications. The deepening financial partnership between Pakistan and France has further consolidated the bonds between the two countries. This has been apparent through the upward push in trade volumes and the ratification of many alternate agreements, which have streamlined organization strategies and diminished change barriers. Moreover, the cultural interchange between the two countries has thrived, with increasing French traffic visiting Pakistan and vice versa. This has now not only facilitated a deeper comprehension and admiration of every culture but has also greater the tourism zone in each international area.

Statement of the Problem

Pak-France Relations during the 21st Century are relatively important for comprehending the interactions between Pakistan and France in recent 21st years. Through a rigorous analysis of those relationships, it illuminates the various political, economic, and cultural factors that have inspired

their populations. This study analyses the historical backdrop of the connection between Pakistan and France and explores the widespread activities. It also examines the outcomes of political relations, along with France's position on Pakistan's nuclear application, in addition to financial partnerships, which include trade pacts and investments. In addition, the study examines cultural relations and the impact of public diplomacy on forming perceptions between Pakistan and France.

Research Questions

The following are the research questions of the study.

- How do political ideologies and foreign policy objectives influence Pakistan-France relations?
- What is the nature of economic ties between Pakistan and France, and how have trade and investment patterns changed over time?

Literature Review

This literature review on Pak-France Relations during the 21st Century presents a review of the diplomatic exchanges between the two nations by examining existing scholarly literature.

Reviews of Relevant Studies

This study "New Developments in Pakistan-France Cooperation" by Kizilay (2023), examined the changing dynamics of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and France, providing insights into recent progress and obstacles in their partnership. This study examined the historical backdrop of Pakistan-France ties, emphasizing significant events and obstacles. The analysis covered the political, economic, and cultural aspects, providing a thorough comprehension of the bilateral relationship. In addition, the analysis of Pakistan's wider foreign policy established the foundation for comprehending the complexities of the country's interactions with different nations, offering valuable insights that can be applied to the Pakistan-France relationship (Kizilay, 2023). There is little research on the current developments in economic alliances, cultural exchanges, and collaborative businesses between Pakistan and France. By closing this disparity, one can improve knowledge of Pakistan's complicated foreign policy and the impact of

geopolitics. Recent bilateral agreements and cooperative efforts should be the main emphasis of the next studies.

The article, "The Political Inclusion of Pakistanis in British and French Municipalities: A Comparison of Oldham, Villiers le-Bel and Creil" by Awan (2022), probed the political integration of the Pakistani diasporas in Great Britain and France. In both countries, a decrease in voter turnout has brought attention to the issues of political participation and representation of minorities in mainstream political institutions. The comparison between France and Britain provides a valuable context for understanding these debates. Pakistani individuals in France are considerably less prominent in French politics, even at the local level. For example, the British Pakistani population is significantly larger than the Pakistani population in France. This difference is also influenced by the unique political situations in each country. This perspective is exemplified by the examination of Oldham, a city in Britain, as well as two suburban cities in France, namely Villiers-Le-Bel and Creil (Awan, 2022). There is a research gap that suggests more research should be done in the field of migration of Pakistani people to Western European countries.

"France and Pakistan: Story of an Unwritten Alliance" by Dar (2013) claimed that Franco-Pakistan strategically formed partnerships to ensure their security and effectively utilized communism as a means to attain their national goals throughout the Cold War. The amicable relations between France and Pakistan in the 1960s and subsequent years indicated the possibility of enhanced collaboration. The objective of the study was to investigate the notion of informal alliances in the context of international politics, with a specific emphasis on the historical alliances in Europe. The analysis of the study data indicated that both countries implemented comparable strategies, either through detente or nuclear deterrence, as a diplomatic instrument (Dar, 2013). There are research gaps in the study that the amicability observed in the Pak-France relationship throughout the 1970s does not provide adequate pieces of evidence of their bilateral relationships and mutual coordination in various disciplines and fields of interest.

The book "Pakistan's Foreign Policy 1947-2009," by Sattar (2010), asserts that Pakistan's foreign policy has been characterized by a dynamic interplay of

diplomatic tactics, strategic alliances, and geopolitical considerations since its establishment in 1947. Global recognition, economic stability, and security shaped Pakistan's foreign policy following the partition. First diplomatic contacts with France set the foundation for further ties. World power changed during the 1960s, and Pakistan had to rethink its strategy. Pakistan's foreign policy decisions were shaped by the Cold War; problems with France followed from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Both nations sought to reinterpret their diplomatic policies in the 1990s. Common issues about world terrorism and economic cooperation become vital components in their foreign policy dynamics in the twenty-first century (Sattar, 2010). This article has a research gap which lacks details about the impact of political instability on bilateral relations.

The article "Foreign Policy of France in the Contemporary World" by Masset (1991) stated France's dedication to multilateralism, strategic autonomy, and historical influence on world affairs that shape its foreign policy in the modern era. France is a founding member of the European Union and a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council which is very important for global governance, international diplomacy, and conflict resolution. Reflecting its balanced attitude to world affairs, the country's foreign policy stresses close connections with both Western allies and developing economies. Aiming to develop political and economic relations while advancing democratic values and human rights, France has regularly sought alliances with nations in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. One prominent instance of this is France's relationship with Pakistan, where the trade relationship is still underdeveloped despite Pakistan's 1947 independence acknowledged and high-level visits from French politicians. France is the twelfth trading partner Pakistan while being the fourth-largest exporter in the world, therefore indicating a notable disparity in their bilateral trade activity (Masset, 1991). Although this study offers an understanding of France's overall foreign policy approaches, there is a research gap as it lacks a study on the particular political and economic ties between France and developing nations like Pakistan.

Economic Agreements and Cooperation

The bilateral relations demonstrate how economic

relationships and free trade agreements (FTAs) between nations like France and Pakistan can promote reciprocal economic progress and collaboration. FTAs frequently lower tariffs and quotas, facilitating the movement of products and services between the two nations. This implies that there are obstacles for Pakistani goods to access the French market and vice versa for both France and Pakistan. Some of the examples of trade barriers are tariffs, quotas, and non-tariff trade. FTAs and partnerships facilitate commerce by lowering these obstacles. Foreign direct investment (FDI) may rise which would promote economic growth by allowing France to invest in Pakistan. Closer collaboration between the nations is required by free trade agreements (FTAs) and economic partnerships, and this can improve political and diplomatic relations as well. In conclusion, the passage highlights how Pakistan and France can greatly improve their economic relationship through free trade agreements and partnerships. These measures have facilitated trade, attracted investments, and capitalized on each nation's advantages, all of which will promote closer cooperation and mutual economic growth (Mazhar, 2022). Hence, through trade, France and Pakistan can both focus on their strongest industries and exchange commodities for one another, increasing total productivity and economic welfare. France has kept a consistent and flawless investment in Pakistan. France has been committed to investing large sums of money in several important Pakistani sectors. In June 2023, Pakistan benefited financially from France by €180 million (Agence Francaise De Development, 2023).

Pakistan and France signed an agreement 'Roadmap for Bilateral Cooperation' in 2023 in the disciplines of mutual interests to cooperate in the defense, counter-terrorism, security, education, culture, tourism, development, science and technology, economic and political sectors (Radio Pakistan, 2023). Furthermore, the discussions at these conferences have led to the planning of particular trade events and the exchange of corporate delegations, which are crucial to sustaining the growing trend of bilateral trade. France invested in Pakistan in the development sector. French Development Authority approved a €130 million loan for a bus project in Peshawar, KPK province, which is now in Pakistan. This project intends to solve the urban transportation problem and enhance the public transportation system thereby

guaranteeing higher public safety and efficiency (Ahmed, [2019](#)). In addition, France also invested in the tourism sector. For instance, France signed a financial agreement of €22 million for the renovation of Lahore Fort in 2022. It aimed to preserve the cultural, historical, and tourist places. This economic goal of tourism development generated employment opportunities (Business Recorder, [2022](#)).

The French growth agency PROPARCO has invested \$20 million in the wind farm project in the Sindh province of Pakistan. This investment seeks to support the production of renewable energy and advance the local economy. The investment would help the region's renewable energy development and is in line with PROPARCO's climate change mitigation plan. A realistic approach means that in their interactions, Pakistan and France focus practically on areas where cooperation yields actual benefits for both countries. For example, the French Development Agency-Proparco investment in Pakistan lists significant investments made by France in Pakistan for economic cooperation, particularly in the energy sector (Proparco Groupe AFD, [2020](#)). Known by the name TOTAL PARCO, French companies like TOTAL SA have advanced energy security and infrastructure in Pakistan. In return, Pakistan benefits from international investment, technical transfer, and job development. Economically speaking, both countries benefit from trade agreements that make it easier for commodities and services to move between them, therefore strengthening their own economies. The bilateral trade between France and Pakistan mostly centers on Pakistan's relative export volume to France with respect to France's exports to Pakistan. "France is Pakistan's 13th export destination in terms of value while Pakistan is its 67th export destination" (Mazhar, [2022](#)). Among the top ten countries Pakistan usually exports its commodities to France. In 2018 Pakistan's exports to France came to over \$447 million. With an export volume of just \$132 million, it exceeds the total trade volume of Pakistan and Russia, which stood at a meager \$320 million in 2017 (Ruslan, [2020](#)).

Political Relations

From 2001 to 2023, the political dynamics between Pakistan and France show complex and varied diplomatic participation driven by global events,

shifting alliances, and rising goals of both nations. Both countries effectively controlled a difficult global environment marked by the war on terror, regional conflicts, and changing global power balances throughout this period. Pakistan and France developed a diplomatic relationship during this time that, from the perspective of world international relations, was significant even if it was not always a top focus in any nation's foreign policy. Pakistan has to create a thorough and strategic policy including long-term and medium-term goals if it is to improve its cooperation with France in several spheres. These tactics will help Pakistan to improve its relations in the spheres of politics, diplomacy, economy, and culture. Pakistan's all-encompassing plan should include soft power use to foster a positive global view. Among the political leaders in France, several elements including terrorism, bloodshed, and strained relations with Western countries have helped to shape Pakistan's negative view. A sad event happened in 2003 whereby French engineers were killed, leading to strained relations between France and Pakistan. For these reasons, the French people regard Pakistan as always associated with the Taliban (Achakzai, [2021](#)).

The post-9/11 global order greatly shaped Pakistan's foreign policy, particularly with regard to its relations with Western nations such as France. Following the September 2001 attacks on the United States, Pakistan became a major player in the global war against terrorism, tightly coordinating itself with the United States and its European allies. It is a fact, that "Pakistan is the second largest refugee-hosting country in the world after Turkey" (Saleem, Ali, & Hussain, [2022](#)). Pakistan hosted 3.5 million Afghan refugees. The U.S. started a strike on Afghanistan and Pakistan had to support being its ally. This cooperation affected Pakistan's relations with France two times. "Pakistan remerged as an important partner for the US in the War on Terror" (Khan, et al., [2023](#)).

France's foreign policy toward Pakistan was mostly shaped by its wider European and NATO responsibilities. Along with other European countries, France raised concerns about the stability of South Asia, the rise in extremism, and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. France emphasized its support of Pakistan's efforts in fighting terrorism. France's whole foreign policy approach included the advancement of democratic

values as well as security cooperation. A turning point in Western nations' view of Pakistan's engagement in regional security was the 2008 Mumbai attacks, particularly for France. Because militant groups (like Lashkar-e-Taiba and its links to al-Qaeda) based in Pakistan participated in the attacks, Western capitals put further pressure on Islamabad. Though France keeps diplomatic ties with Pakistan, it has become increasingly active in pushing Pakistan to act forcefully against terrorist organizations. Pakistan-France relations were strained during this time, and Islamabad regularly had to defend itself against claims of supporting or hiding radical groups. France's foreign policy towards terrorism becomes significant for Pakistan when it equally condemns "terrorist attacks that targeted religious processions in several Pakistani provinces, killing more than 50 people and leaving dozens injured" (France Diplomacy, 2023). Still, France kept its diplomatic ties with Pakistan, realizing how important the nation was for preserving regional peace.

Beginning in 2016, France started taking a more nuanced strategy toward Pakistan, closely controlling its strategic interests in South Asia while tackling world concerns including terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and regional instability. Following Emmanuel Macron's election as President in 2017, French foreign policy's multilateralism and global governance became once more important. As part of its larger strategy to interact with emerging nations and address world problems, France aimed to improve its ties with numerous Asian nations including Pakistan under Macron's presidency. Wider geopolitical changes affected Pakistan-France relations constantly change in the 2010s. The departure of NATO troops from Afghanistan and the accompanying focus on regional measures to address the Afghan conflict created fresh challenges and opportunities for Pakistan-France relations. Aiming to reframe its engagement with South Asia by giving issues like counterterrorism, regional stability, and non-proliferation top priority, France and other Western nations sought France keep their engagement with Pakistan over this era, largely addressing particular areas of mutual interest like nuclear security and the fight against extremism. For instance, "India has forged well-knitted strategic, science and technology partnership arrangements with different developed countries, including US, UK, France, Germany and Russia". Moreover, the

mutual contract between Indian government officials and French Dassault Aviation "for the purchase of Rafael fighter aircraft, fifth generation fighter aircraft, 250-300 stealth fighters, Sukhoi-30 MKI combat aircraft, and T-90 tanks", had raised tensions between Pakistan and France over the French policy for South Asia stability (Rana, 2018).

Educational and Cultural Initiatives

The Franco-Pakistani cultural, scientific, academic, and technical cooperation is a long-standing relationship governed by two agreements signed in Islamabad in 1970. The Service for Cooperation and Cultural Affairs (SCAC) of the French Embassy in Pakistan implements this cooperation (Alam, 2015). Cultural cooperation involves the promotion and support of French cultural and creative industries in Pakistan. The department brings together French and Pakistani experts in graphic and visual arts, organizing exhibitions and inviting experts and researchers to participate in festivals of Pakistani literature and art in Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi. The department also contributes to the debate of ideas by co-organizing meetings and conferences with various Pakistani institutions. Scientific and academic cooperation aims to reinforce the high-level exchange of researchers and students between France and Pakistan, aiming to intensify long-term institutional cooperation between French and Pakistani higher education and research institutions. To achieve this objective, several mechanisms are made available to students and researchers through calls for proposals distributed widely. The scholarship program funded by the French Embassy in Pakistan is managed by the Cooperation and Cultural Affairs department, focused on master's studies in France at the master's level in environmental sciences and human and social sciences. The decision to award a scholarship and its duration rests with the Department of Cooperation and Cultural Affairs, based on the nature of the project and the training chosen by the candidate for a scholarship. The Hubert Curien P ridot partnership is a Franco-Pakistani research program initiated in 2015 by the Department of Cooperation and Cultural Affairs. The Cooperation and Cultural Affairs Department supports the Pakistani government, particularly its institute of administration, the National School of Public Policy (NSPP), by mobilizing French experts for the continuing education of senior Pakistani civil

servants at the NSPP's National Management College. The department also supports the Pakistani administration by financing or co-financing visits of Pakistani officials in France, where they exchange their experience and expertise with their French counterparts. The humanitarian correspondent of the Cooperation and Cultural Affairs Department is the privileged interlocutor of French NGOs wishing to promote their humanitarian activities in Pakistan. They can provide practical and strategic advice, put French NGOs in contact with main humanitarian players and donors in Pakistan, and provide occasional support for humanitarian actions. Each year, the French Embassy in Pakistan contributes to the financing of humanitarian projects in Pakistan (Tunio, 2017).

Mutual tolerance and cultural understanding are two areas in which the organizations greatly assist the peoples of both nations. France is a secular country, and part of that commitment is to keep religion strictly out of public life (Pebay, 2017). This frequently leads to laws that censor religious expression, especially outward manifestations of religion like burqas and hijabs as well as religious assemblies in public places. The fact that Pakistan is an Islamic republic highlights how Islamic values are included in its social structure and system of government. This is frequently seen in its legal system and social mores, which give Islamic principles first priority. For instance, there have been demonstrations and even diplomatic condemnations in Pakistan following the publication of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) by the French magazine Charlie Hebdo. Such occurrences aggravate feelings and make the atmosphere difficult for bilateral interactions. Reducing the impact of religious differences might help to strengthen the bilateral relations. Encouragement of interfaith communication through "a communitarian sense of belonging" is the mitigating measure (Roy, 2007).

As part of their French and Urdu language courses, Pakistan can give language learning students the chance to spend a few days seeing France or Pakistan. This lets students tour other sites of interest and really engage in the original culture and language. Pakistan could use electronic, print, and social media channels to spread these projects so that not only would people be involved in them but also a positive picture of Pakistan would

be presented. We have to improve relations with France right now, hence we have to aggressively search for and apply fresh paths of interaction to reach this aim. To properly interact with the French people and government officials, Pakistan should send highly competent and elegant envoys to France who have great policy and communication skills. A French Think Tank claims that Pakistani politicians who just have skills relevant to their home communities cause more damage when they are sent to France. Pakistan should hence avoid designating people such as Ackhazai as official spokesmen (Achakzai, 2021). Both countries can start student exchange programs to help to eliminate the mutual mistrust. In this sense, the HEC scholarship program showed benefits.

Strategic and Security Collaborations

In the bilateral collaboration, the French Development Agency (AFD) helped Pakistan in many spheres. In order to support the educational policies of the Pakistani government and increase France's impact in several spheres, including governance, culture, archaeology, social sciences, and language, France provides aid to Pakistan Through scholarships for Masters, doctorate, and post-doctoral studies, France and Pakistan cooperate in the intellectual sphere. Since 1967, France has been one of Pakistan's main defense partners, especially in enhancing the Navy and Pakistan Air Force (PAF) capabilities. One of the earliest agreements that announced the beginning of a long-lasting military relationship was the sale of submarine technology and Mirage jets (Ruslan, 2020). Over the years, the PAF has purchased a large number of aircraft from France; by the 2000s, it was the largest customer of the nation's aerospace industry. This applies to fighter jets as well as reconnaissance aircraft; a significant agreement from 1996 provided for the acquisition of forty reconnaissance aircraft (Syed & Hamid, 2021). Commentaries from many parties have been encouraging about Pakistan and France's ongoing defense cooperation. Respondents have stressed the need for these military relationships, which have evolved from simple transactions to complex, mutually advantageous alliances. The strategic alignment during the Cold War, which was mostly aimed against the rise of communism, made these long-lasting military alliances feasible. The respondents also underlined the significance of

these alliances in maintaining regional security and advancing long-term military goals (Rashid, [2021](#)). As demonstrated by the 2009 shift in emphasis to enhancing nuclear safety and security through French cooperation, this partnership is also evolving. Assuring Pakistan's nuclear program grows secure, French authorities have indicated their readiness to interact with others inside international agreements (Azad & Dewey, [2023](#)). The strategic calculations and complexity of the bilateral military ties are further highlighted by the 2011 halt of significant military equipment sales to Pakistan, which was done to soothe Indian security concerns. On a visit to India, the French defense minister made this decision while stressing the cautious balance France maintains in its defense relations in South Asia. Pakistan and France began a significant partnership in the sphere of nuclear energy in 2009. This cooperation was established under the France-Pakistan nuclear accord with the goals of enhancing nuclear safety and facilitating Pakistan's access to civilian nuclear technologies.

Due to the difficult relations between France and Pakistan, France has now refused to sanction the Mirage jet upgrade. , "In 2011, France stopped all sales of heavy military equipment to Pakistan to assuage Indian concerns as French companies found remarkable success in winning key defense contracts in India compared to economically struggling Pakistan" (Rashid, [2021](#)). Another plausible explanation is that Imran Khan, Pakistan's prime minister, has attacked Emmanuel Macron, the president of France, for supporting the usage of satirical material aimed at religion. This is meant to stop Pakistan from learning anything about the Rafale aircraft, which India uses alone. In international forums, France and Pakistan have participated actively in addressing both regional and global challenges. The bilateral meetings highlight how crucial both countries view collective action, as discussions on UN Peacekeeping and other international venues demonstrate (Ravel, [2020](#)).

Sharing of strategic or intelligence information is another example. The counterterrorism and other security activities depend heavily on intelligence sharing. Exchanges of vital information on threats, terrorist acts, and regional security dynamics are involved. Through intelligence cooperation, both nations may better counter threats, stop terrorist attacks, and take proactive steps to protect their

own and others' national and regional security. The Taliban and ISIS are two terrorist organizations that are very much a menace to Pakistan and Afghanistan (Anjum & Sgro, [2017](#)).

National Objectives and Interests

Pakistan has had to deal with major threats from terrorist organizations like the Taliban and other extreme groups inside its borders. By means of intelligence sharing, training, and support in anti-terrorism operations, collaboration with countries like France can enable Pakistan to enhance its counterterrorism capabilities (Syed & Hamid, [2021](#)). For example, Pakistan and France have worked together on defense over time. As mentioned earlier, French military support has been delivered to Pakistan, most notably in the form of fighter fighters (Mirage aircraft) and submarines. Together military exercises and training programs helped Pakistan upgrade and strengthen its armed forces. Another interest of Pakistan is its economic growth, which can be aided by trade, investment, and technology transfer. For instance, French companies operating in Pakistan, such as Carrefour (retail), encourage economic growth and job creation (Kizilay, [2023](#)). Moreover, proving its strong national interests, the French government has strategic interests in South Asia, particularly in maintaining stability to prevent conflicts that could endanger international security. One of the major players in the area, Pakistan, requires stability to prevent violent and extremist spillovers that could affect other countries and possibly Europe. For example, France seeks to strengthen its business relationships with Pakistan and other South Asian countries. More bilateral commerce, which includes importing textiles and agricultural products from Pakistan and exporting French products and services (aerospace, luxury goods, pharmaceuticals) to Pakistan, can benefit both economies. Improving its bilateral ties with Pakistan will enable France to exert more influence over South Asia.

Areas where Pakistan and France can work together are terrorism, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and peacekeeping operations. Pakistan, for instance, contributes to UN peacekeeping missions at the same time that France is concerned about international security (Mazhar, [2022](#)). Climate change is a further example of mutual interests. The worldwide problem of climate change

demands international cooperation. Leading climate policy country of France, such as the Paris Agreement, can collaborate with Pakistan to address environmental issues. Together, these nations can gain from climate resilience, sustainable development, and renewable energy projects. The national interests of France and Pakistan have influenced their bilateral relationship. Whereas France wants to maintain regional peace, strengthen economic ties, and expand its influence in South Asia, Pakistan wants help with counterterrorism, military cooperation, and economic development. In tackling worldwide concerns like climate change and international security, both nations also have similar aims. Pakistan is the French military hardware buyer. Pakistan, for example, has gotten military hardware from France, such as Agosta class submarines (Syed & Hamid, 2021). France sold Pakistan Agosta-90B class submarines in the 1990s. Under this arrangement, Pakistan might purchase submarines and exchange expertise while also eventually producing its own submarines domestically. This considerably enhanced the naval capacity of Pakistan and strengthened the defense relations between France and Pakistan. This sale is important for several reasons. The first explanation is cooperation in strategy and defense. Giving Pakistan state-of-the-art military equipment strengthens their bilateral ties and positions France as a vital defense partner. With relation to its neighbor and enemy, India, in particular, this alliance ensures Pakistan has the means to protect its maritime interests and maintain the balance of power in the region. Another justification is offered by economic interests. For example, France benefits economically from these military agreements, which also support its defense industry (Mazhar, 2022).

Conclusion

Pakistan and France have comparable strategic relations, mutual benefits, and a commonplace choice in preserving nearby strength balance. Their predominant recognition is on financial cooperation, security, and counterterrorism given that those regions enhance their function internationally and guard their pastimes. France has made big investments in the area of Pakistan, which has brought about economic cooperation and other advantages including job creation, technological transfer, and foreign investment. Economically speaking, trade agreements that facilitate the easy

go with the flow of commodities and services help both countries, consequently boosting their economies. France has strategic interests in South Asia, specifically in keeping the balance to stop the emergence of violence and extremism that might affect Europe and its neighbors. Improving bilateral ties with Pakistan has enabled France to increase its impact at some point in South Asia by means of diplomatic relations, cultural exchanges, and strategic alliances which can permit France to grow to be greater deeply involved in local issues. The mutual goals of both countries are related to worldwide safety and consist of efforts at peacekeeping, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and struggling with terrorism. Cooperating efforts in renewable energy, sustainable improvement, and climate resilience can advantage each nation. A strong partnership based totally on commonplace country-wide interests and electricity dynamics characterizes the connection between France and Pakistan. Whereas France is focusing on preserving local peace, strengthening economic ties, and increasing its impact on South Asia, Pakistan is requesting help in counterterrorism, military cooperation, and financial progress.

As Pakistan gained its independence in 1947, France unexpectedly recounted it and in 1948 they established reliable diplomatic ties. France and Pakistan needed to negotiate difficult geopolitical terrain throughout the Cold War. France followed a self-sufficient foreign policy that regularly looked for careful stability between America and the United States. After Sep 11, Pakistan and France grew closer, operating collectively carefully on military operations towards terrorist groups, imparting counterterrorism training, and sharing intelligence. This cooperation has strengthened their diplomatic and together trusting ties. Being United Nations members, France and Pakistan are dedicated to maintaining international security, tackling climate change, and taking part in peacekeeping operations. Working collectively in establishments like the World Trade Organization, IMF, and World Bank has impacted their bilateral relations. Both international states have actively participated in peacekeeping operations of the UN and have advanced a collaborative and reverent attitude in the direction of retaining global peace and safety. Their cooperation in global talks approximately weather exchange has been greatly facilitated through the

Paris Agreement. National identities and cultural values have a massive impact on bilateral relations. Though troubles may arise from France's secularism and Pakistan's Islamic identity, diplomatic talks and educational debates are normally how these disputes are resolved. Mutual respect and tolerance have evolved through the cultural and educational interactions among French and Pakistani establishments, which have also helped to bridge the gaps delivered about by distinctive country-wide identities. The relations of France with Pakistan are laid low with the lifestyles of religious differences and injustices there. Interfaith communication cross-cultural encounters, and educational programs can assist in lessening these differences. Because those activities sell expertise and admiration between individuals, bilateral ties are strengthened. While Pakistan's determination to its Islamic identity gives the incorporation of Islamic values into its social shape and government top precedence, France's devotion to secularism often results in rules that ban spiritual expression. The diplomatic relationships between France and Pakistan should be vigorously promoted by way of both countries as a way to lessen the effects of

religious differences and the guidelines that are observed in those relations. This could reduce hostility and negative emotions and help to construct relationships that are high-quality for both parties. Different methods exist to lessen the effect of spiritual differences on bilateral relations. Fostering know-how between religious leaders and those from each nation can help to remove prejudices. Furthermore, supporting reducing stereotypes and selling mutual recognition are cultural interactions. Putting into exercise educational initiatives and promoting curriculum information can help young humans from each country apprehend and cost cultural and religious differences extra effortlessly. Improving knowledge between the parties and admiration for traditions fortifies ties among them. Through diversifying its export portfolio, Pakistan is making an attempt to correct its trade imbalance with France. This includes marketing unusual exports which include leather-based items, textiles, and agricultural items. Pakistan and France have superior jointly thanks in big component to the advent of unfastened alternate agreements and ties. Economic Bilateral investment agreements.

References

- Achakzai, J. (2021). Our foreign office and Pak-French ties. *Daily Times*.
<https://dailytimes.com.pk/756137/our-foreign-office-and-pak-french-ties/>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Agence Française de Développement. (2023). *Pakistan: France provides €180 million soft loan for the National Transmission & Despatch Company (NTDC) projects*.
<https://www.afd.fr/en/actualites/communiqu%C3%A9-de-presse/pakistan-france-provides-soft-loan-national-transmission-despatch-company-ntdc-projects>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Ahmed, A. (2019). France gives €130m loan for Peshawar bus project. *DAWN*.
<https://www.dawn.com/news/1459245>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Alam, M. (2015, April 12). A mission in Makran. *The Express Tribune*.
<https://tribune.com.pk/story/866479/a-mission-in-makran>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Anjum, M. I., & Sgro, P. M. (2017). A brief history of Pakistan's economic development. *Real-World Economics Review*, 80, 171-178.
<https://www.paecon.net/PAEReview/issue80/AnjumSgro80.pdf>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Awan, S. (2022). The Political Inclusion of Pakistanis in British and French municipalities: A comparison of Oldham, Villiers le-Bel and Creil. *Observatoire De La Société Britannique*, 29, 111-133.
<https://doi.org/10.4000/osb.5869>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Azad, T. M., & Dewey, K. (2023). Assessing the security of Pakistan's nuclear weapon programme. *Defense and Security Analysis*, 39(2), 123-145.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14751798.2023.2178069>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Business Recorder. (2022). Pakistan, France sign €22m financing agreement for Lahore Fort renovation. *Business Recorder*.
<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40185027>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Dar, H. (2013). France and Pakistan: Story of an unwritten alliance. *Pakistan Vision*, 14(2), 51-75.
https://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/studies/PDF-FILES/Artical-3_v14_n02_13.pdf
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- France Diplomacy. (2023). *Pakistan*.
<https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/pakistan/>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Khan, M. F., Khan, M. A., Muhammad Ibrar, Hanif, B., Javaid, M. Q., & Marri, S. A. (2023). Shifting Sands: Pakistan's Strategic Culture Amidst Regional and Global Flux. *Russian Law Journal*, 11(12S), 436-452.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Kizilay, S. (2023). New developments in Pakistan-France cooperation. Turkey: Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies. <https://www.ankasam.org/anka-analizler/new-developments-in-pakistan-france-cooperation/?lang=en>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Masset, J. P. (1991). Foreign Policy of France in the Contemporary World. *Pakistan Horizon*, 44(4), 11-21.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41393920>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Mazhar, M. (2022). *Country report on France*. Islamabad: Ministry of Commerce; Government of Pakistan.
<https://tdap.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2.3-Country-Reort-on-France.pdf>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Naseem, K. (2011). *Course of an entente cordiale: Pakistan-France relations 1947-2000*.
<http://pr.hec.gov.pk/jspui/bitstream/123456789/9073/1/Dr.%20Khalid%20Naseem%20PhD%20Thesis.pdf>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Pakistan Observer. (2023). Relations with Pakistan growing day by day. *Pakistan Observer*.
<https://pakobserver.net/relations-with-pakistan-growing-day-by-day-says-french-cg/>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Pebay, L. (2017). France, post-secularism and Islam. *E-International Relations*. <https://www.e-ir.info/2017/06/12/france-post-secularism-and-islam/>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Proparco Groupe AFD. (2020). *Flyer Proparco in Pakistan*.

- <https://www.proparco.fr/en/ressources/flyer-proparco-pakistan>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Radio Pakistan. (2023). Pakistan, France agree to improve partnership in diverse fields. *Radio Pakistan*. <https://www.radio.gov.pk/10-02-2023/pak-france-agree-roadmap-for-bilateral-cooperation>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Rana, N. A. (2018). Challenges to Strategic Stability in South Asia: an analysis. *Strategic Studies*, 38(2), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.53532/ss.038.03.00147>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Rashid, F. (2021). *Pakistan's defense and strategic relations with major powers*. <https://csspr.uol.edu.pk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Pakistans-Defense-and-Strategic-Relations-2-1.pdf>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Ravel, L. (2020). *France-Pakistan Business Council of MEDEF International*. https://www.medefinternational.fr/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/PAK_2020_Conseil_V4_ENG.pdf
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Roy, O. (2007). Secularism confronts Islam. *Open Democracy*. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/34938/>
- [Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Ruslan, P. (2020). *Pakistan-French relations in the 21st century*. *Eastern Analytics*, 2, 137–142. <https://doi.org/10.31696/2227-5568-2020-02-137-142>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Saleem, K., Ali, I., & Hussain, Z. (2022). Strategic and Security Challenges to Pakistan 2001-2020. *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology*, 19(4), 555-569. <https://archives.palarch.nl/index.php/jae/article/view/11496>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Sattar, A. (2010). *Pakistan's Foreign Policy, 1947-2009: A Concise History*. (2, Ed.) Oxford University Press.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Syed, A., & Hamid, C. (2021). France-Pakistan antagonistic relations and role of public diplomacy. *Global Foreign Policies Review*, IV(IV), 43–51. [https://doi.org/10.31703/gfpr.2021\(iv-iv\).05](https://doi.org/10.31703/gfpr.2021(iv-iv).05)
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Tunio, H. (2017). Chanhru Daro — Industrial hub of the ancient world. *The Express Tribune*. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1336217/treasure-trove-antiquity-chanhu-daro-industrial-hub-ancient-world>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)