

## Abstract

There has been a gradual shift in the American strategic priorities since the end of the cold war. With the rise of China as a world power Indo-Pacific has found a central role in it. Thus for the past two decades, the US has been adamant to maintain its presence in the region. China has been growing economically ever since it opened its door to the world market and global institutions. China's ever-expanding power is an anathema to some in Western circles. They predict China's hegemonic intentions and trajectory based on China's continuous military build-up in the South China Sea and various other actions. This perception has predominantly shaped the US Indo-Pacific Strategy from 2005 to 2020—which is the scope of this dissertation. The strategy varied in this period under the US administrations of President George Bush, President Barack Obama, President Donald Trump, and presently that of President Joe Biden. However, the goal of the strategy has remained the same. That is to establish and maintain US military presence broadly in the Asia-Pacific and specifically in the Indo-Pacific region, and to create and strengthen the alliances with a view to counter China. The US-China moves in Indo-Pacific have not only become a major concern for the countries of the region but also for the global politics of today. Presently a variety of interpretations of the developing situation and the prospects of peace and conflict in the region exist. For example the two major variations of Structural Realism i.e. Defensive and Offensive Realism predict a different future for the region. The former suggests a peacefully rising China, and the latter suggests an aggressive and revisionist China. Amidst this uncertainty, Pakistan's Foreign Policy is caught up in a diplomatic dilemma as the regional competition between two giants have on one hand created new opportunities to be exploited while on the other hand have given rise to challenges for it to cope with. This research studies in terms of the above mentioned theories the US-China competition with a focus on the opportunities and challenges which it is creating for Pakistan's Foreign Policy.