

PERSISTENT INSTABILITY ALONG THE PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN BORDER: EXPLAINING REGIONAL SECURITY SPILLOVER THROUGH AN INTEGRATED ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT

The Pakistan-Afghanistan border is a strategically sensitive region that has been a source of tension despite multiple military operations, ceasefires, and diplomatic efforts. The deterioration of Pakistan's security environment following the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan in 2021, marked by renewed militant activity, illustrates the region's continuing vulnerability to instability. The perspective on the sources of tension along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border has been dominated by state-centric and securitized approaches while regional processes and non-state actors' role in the protracted violence have received limited theoretical and empirical attention. This paper examines the causes of persistent insecurities along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border and analyze why previous attempts to stabilize the area have yielded limited results. A qualitative study was conducted utilizing a documentary analysis method. Reports, policy briefs, official documents, and relevant academic literature were reviewed to produce the present investigation's final results. An integrated conceptual framework was applied consisting of Securitization Theory, Borderlands Theory, and Spillover Theory to explain the interaction between securitized state responses, fragmented border governance, and regional spillover. The research findings suggest that the causes of insecurity are multifaceted and complex. The findings indicate that insecurity is driven by multiple interrelated factors rather than a single cause. Weak border governance, the transnational movement of terrorist groups, and regional instability originating in Afghanistan interact to sustain persistent tensions along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Despite Pakistan's efforts to strengthen border defenses and counterterrorism activities, the military actions, cease-fire agreements, and diplomatic interventions only serve to mitigate the symptoms of the conflict rather than its underlying causes. The study concludes that both the Securitization Theory and the Borderlands Theory are useful in understanding the phenomenon, but the Spillover Theory provides a more complete understanding of the situation at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. By integrating Securitization Theory, Borderlands Theory, and Spillover Theory into a single analytical framework, this study offers a more comprehensive explanation of persistent insecurity along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border and contributes to the literature on border governance, regional security, and conflict spillover.

Key Words: Pakistan-Afghanistan Border, Regional Security Spillover, Borderlands Theory, Securitization Theory, Cross-Border Militancy.

INTRODUCTION:

The security situation in South Asia has been closely related to the events taking place in Afghanistan, which have negative consequences for Pakistan, one of the countries neighboring Afghanistan. Armed conflicts, political instability, and military interventions that have repeatedly occurred in Afghanistan lead to insecurity in Pakistan and affect its internal and external policies (Lake & Morgan, 1997; Salehyan, 2007). The current situation with the withdrawal of US and NATO troops from Afghanistan in mid-August 2021 and the Taliban's return to power has once again changed the security situation in the region. In addition to the internal challenges for Afghanistan, the new situation poses additional risks to regional security, including risks of terrorism, migration, and border security (UNSC, 2022). For Pakistan, which borders Afghanistan and has a high degree of interaction with it, it is crucial to take into account the impact of these events on regional security and related challenges.

The phenomenon of regional spillover is especially evident in the case of the Pakistan-Afghanistan frontier. For one, the region has been a hotbed of unrest that has been difficult to contain within the borders of either state. The 2,600 km Durand Line serves as the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, crossing "varying and difficult terrain" and "semi-autonomous tribal areas" (Popescu, 2012). This has contributed to regional instability throughout the years, as ethnic and cultural ties between the two countries continued to provide channels for legitimate or otherwise authorized contact (Newman, 2006). As such, it can be argued that the unsettled situation in Afghanistan has spilled over into Pakistan through multiple factors, including but not limited to militant movements, unofficial trade, and migration.

It must be noted that since 2021, Pakistan has experienced a surge in security threats, particularly in the country's northwest. In particular, both Pakistani security officials and outside analysts have noted an increase in violence and attacks, including those conducted by Pakistani Taliban, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), with some citing cross-border infiltration

from neighboring Afghanistan (Pakistan Ministry of Interior, 2023; UNAMA, 2023). International monitoring reports indicate that the porous nature of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border and the continued presence of militant groups in parts of Afghanistan create opportunities for cross-border militant activity despite commitments by the Afghan authorities to prevent the use of their territory against neighbouring states (United Nations Security Council, 2023). Altogether, these considerations have contributed to Pakistan viewing the regional security environment as a matter of its national security concerns, rather than solely domestic affairs.

Border management is, therefore, one of the key areas where the repercussions of the spillover tend to be expressed. It is evident in the actions taken by Pakistan to manage the influx of people in connection to improved security and territorial integrity in connection to the region and its political future (Government of Pakistan, 2022). The situation in the border area is complex, with several clashes and diplomatic confrontations occurring despite increased oversight, which to a degree, demonstrates the inability of two states to fully control their interaction and the associated security challenges. Overall, both countries continue to experience the spillover effect, which is further determining their foreign policy positions and reactions to related international events (Salehyan & Gleditsch, 2006).

In addition to border security, the situation in Pakistan is also complicated by the management of population inflows and the social, political, and economic consequences associated with them. It is important to note that ever since the war started, Pakistan was hosting a large contingent of Afghan refugees, who placed a significant strain on the country's resources and administrative domain (UNHCR, 2023). Even more so, as the situation started stabilizing and the new government was elected, concerns about refugees became one of the key political issues. Thus, it can be asserted that similar to border security challenges, Afghan population inflows constitute a spillover effect that influences the regional context beyond security-related matters (Salehyan & Gleditsch, 2006).

From an academic researcher's perspective, the case of Pakistan and Afghanistan is of great interest due to the presence of numerous theories about conflict diffusion and spill-over. The majority of literature on the relationship between armed confrontations and regional spill-over processes is primarily focused on developing general conceptualizations of the interplay between conflicts and their impact on neighboring states (Lake & Morgan, 1997). However, most of these theories are based on quantitative regional data and do not sufficiently account for the differences in border governance and spill-over management practices. Therefore, there is a need for additional research exploring the processes of spill-over management at micro levels, as well as assessing the ways international security challenges impact state policies. This is especially true for regions characterized by inadequate governance and the presence of militant organizations actively engaging in destabilizing activities.

The current study aims to assess the impact of the security situation in Afghanistan after the takeover of the country by the Taliban in 2021 on Pakistan's stability. In addition, the research will be centered around exploring the spill-over processes affecting the border regions of the two countries and Pakistan's response to these challenges. By choosing this topic, the researcher will be able to contribute to a better understanding of the contemporary security dynamics in the region. The study will provide additional qualitative data on the challenges of national security and international relations, as well as address the response strategies of an authoritarian regime in the context of complex geopolitical circumstances. It is important to note that the current research will not be attempting to indicate the degree to which state policies are influencing the situation or suggest any normative improvements to the existing situation. Instead, the analysis of security trends will be conducted within the framework of regional dynamics and spill-over management practices, taking into account the limitations and specificities of state policies.

Literature Review:

The nature of the security issue in international relations has been transformed by Securitization Theory which depoliticized the concept. The theory views security as a social construction process that makes an issue type subject to political actions that go beyond traditional policy approaches. Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde (1998) argue that issues are securitized based on the success of their proposition that they are inherently serious and life-threatening issues requiring measures outside the realm of politics. Waever (1995) takes a similar position by stating that the security issue is a speech act that deploys political rhetoric to legitimize actions taken in dealing with a perceived threat by portraying it as an exceptional form of politics. In the context of regional conflicts, the speech act has been used to justify state actions and justification of attacks on neighboring states as self-defense measures to protect sovereignty and territorial integrity (Balzacq, 2011). As a result, the Securitization Theory has been used to interpret the securitization and desecuritization processes of Pakistan - Afghanistan conflicts over borders where states use military actions to demonstrate their seriousness and intent to protect their territories (Waever, 1995).

However, Securitization Theory has been criticized because it depoliticizes the security issue while emphasizing the securitizing speech act without understanding the relationship between the subject and the audience in the context of threat perception and responses (McSweeney, 1996). It fails to consider the structural politics of the foreign policy environment or the nature of the subject matter securitized. In the case of Pakistan - Afghanistan, the issue of border insecurity is complicated by the fact that it is the periphery in international relations between major powers. The region consists of multiple jurisdictions that interact with each other through networks that facilitate the free movement of individuals and other elements such as weapons. As a result, the Pakistan - Afghanistan border issue cannot be dealt with as a territorial security matter but through a comprehensive approach that considers all relevant jurisdictions and political units involved.

The Borderlands Theory views borders as regions, not lines and states that a comprehensive understanding of the situation requires focusing on political and social processes in the border areas where multiple authorities operate simultaneously and freely (Martinez, 1994; Donnan & Wilson, 1999; Wilson & Donnan, 2012). These elements have characterized the Pakistan – Afghanistan border creating a region of overlapping jurisdiction since the early 20th century.

Complementing the discussed views, the literature on regional security spillover provides an explanation of how conflict can cross borders and impact other states. According to Salehyan and Gleditsch (2006), civil wars often have spillover effects because of the recruitment of combatants, safe havens, and refugee flows, whereas Buhaug and Gleditsch (2008) demonstrate that neighboring states are particularly vulnerable to instability. In doing so, the reviewed articles and books suggest that the situation in a particular country is not an isolated event but a regional occurrence that cannot be controlled if states share open borders and have limited administrative capacities. Overall, Securitization Theory, Borderlands Theory, and Spillover Theory can be used to understand how the insecurity in the Pakistan-Afghanistan borderlands was created and sustained.

Although the discussed theories are quite effective in isolation, they have been underexploited in terms of synergistic use to understand political processes in the Pakistan-Afghanistan borderlands. Securitization theory aims to explain how political actors securitize particular issues by presenting them as security threats (Buzan et al., 1998; Waever, 1995). At the same time, Borderlands Theory highlights the importance of the political and economic particularities of borders and border areas (Wilson & Donnan, 2012). In turn, the literature on spill-over effects highlights how violence may have external spill over effects on other countries and regions (Salehyan, 2007; Salehyan & Gleditsch, 2006). At this juncture, it may be noted that the Borderlands Theory, Securitization Theory, and Spillover Theory literature is highly diverse and touches upon a

gamut of issues related to political violence and security in the Pakistan-Afghanistan borderlands region. However, the existing research does not sufficiently explain how the interaction between political, structural, and transnational factors can contribute to instability in the region.

This limitation is especially evident in the case of the Pakistan-Afghanistan region. The available literature highlights the conflict zone along the Durand Line as a region where multiple insurgent groups, warlords, and terrorist organizations utilize the relief and the lack of control from either nation to gain ground and launch attacks from (Rashid, 2010; Wilson & Donnan, 2012). After the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan, the research and analyses conducted by experts started to focus on the activities of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) and how the new government's policies affect the security situation along the border (United Nations Security Council, 2023; & International Crisis Group, 2022). The reviewed literature contributes greatly to the comprehension of the situation in Pakistan and Afghanistan by providing evidence and facts about the militants' operations. However, it does not thoroughly explain the processes that make the unstable situation in Pakistan and Afghanistan permanent. Most of the reviewed articles and books analyze the security situation from one perspective, prioritizing either the theoretical aspect of securitization, the peculiarities of the border region, or the characteristics of the insurgent groups.

The current research aims to fill the identified gap and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan by utilizing Securitization Theory, Borderlands Theory, and Spillover Theory. The study will try to show how the securitization of the Pakistan-Afghanistan area and its lack of control lead to insurgencies based on non-state military groups. Besides describing how violence breaks out at the border, this study will give greater insight into processes that continue to contribute to instability long after intensive military operations, cease-fire agreements, and diplomatic meetings.

Methodology:

The present study aims to use qualitative research design to study the enduring tensions across Pakistan-Afghanistan border despite the ceasefire agreements and diplomatic measures. Qualitative research design is suitable for this study as it aims to identify the underlying political, institutional and security factors which are responsible for the conflict rather than quantify the situation. The current research will employ qualitative methods to explore and understand the phenomenon of Pakistan-Afghanistan tension on the border through its influencing variables, such as governance, militant activities, and state security responses (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Rather than testing hypotheses, this study employs Securitization Theory, Borderlands Theory, and Spillover Theory as conceptual frameworks to interpret the empirical findings. The current study will apply qualitative-descriptive research design to analyze the documentations. This research design is considered an appropriate method for conducting research on conflicts, especially when working with both primary and secondary data in situations where contacting respondents may be difficult or impossible (Bowen, 2009). The study will involve the use of various documentary resources, including speeches and statements by Pakistani and Afghan government officials, reports by international organizations and research institutes, relevant books, journals, articles, and newspapers. First, the current study will use speeches, policy directives, and statements by the Pakistani and Afghan government officials from 2023 to 2025 to examine the perspectives on tensions, issues, and incidents, as well as Pakistan-Afghanistan ceasefire agreements. Second, there is an abundance of resources published by research institutes, including EUAA, PIPS, ACLED, and others. Such literature is beneficial for the current research since it helps understand the issue from an evidence-based perspective. In addition, the current study will use newspaper articles and reports to review significant developments and events on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Lastly, the current research will use relevant books and journal articles to

support the study's theoretical background and review pertinent literature. The documents described above will be analyzed using a qualitative-descriptive method. This approach involves selecting samples with deliberate intent, which is particularly appropriate for this study since the research question does not assume uniformity across the documents, such as similar trends in Pakistan-Afghanistan ceasefire agreements (Patton, 2015). Accordingly, the current study will apply purposive sampling to identify the documents integrating relevant topics, including cross-border militancy, border security, Pakistan-Afghanistan conflict, Pakistan-Afghanistan relations, and Pakistan-Afghanistan ceasefire agreements. Additionally, the documents reviewed will have been published verifiable evidence, and credible sources. Furthermore, the documents to be analyzed will have been published between 2023 and 2025 to ensure up-to-date information. Patton (2015) suggests that triangulation, or the use of multiple documentary sources, enhances the credibility of qualitative research findings; therefore, multiple documentary sources will be used for the current study.

After the collection, thematic analysis was performed on the identified documents. The analysis was based on the thematic analysis method introduced by Braun and Clarke in 2006. The documents were read closely to elicit patterns or themes related to cross-border violence, militants, ceasefire, governance, and security. The identified themes were sorted and organized based on conceptual similarities including governance fragmentation, militants, securitized responses, and transnational security threats. With an emphasis on conceptualization, the themes were interpreted using existing theoretical models while maintaining flexibility, thus combining deductive and inductive approaches (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The new ideas, therefore, informed the theoretical underpinnings of the study while addressing emerging patterns. Securitization theory, borderlands theory, and spillover theory were used to interpret the identified themes. Securitization theory was primarily used to explain the response of states

towards transnational violence, whereas borderlands theory was used to explain the governance fragmentation and associated militants' proliferation. On the other hand, spillover theory was used to interpret the effect of cross-border violence on domestic security. The three theories were used to generate in-depth understandings of the relationships between the key themes. The analysis was done using iterative phases of close examination of the documents while constantly comparing the initial findings with subsequent results to maintain analytical accuracy and thematic consistency (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

There are various strengths of the study, including the use of multiple sources of evidence to establish the research findings. This strength reduced the risks of bias and increased the precision of findings and conclusions. The collected documents were analysed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes across the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Lastly, the use of published documents reduced ethical challenges associated with collecting primary data. The study had several shortcomings, including the use of secondary data. Such a limitation might have compromised the accuracy of findings due to the possibility of biases while preparing the documents. Another limitation was the absence of alternative explanations for themes peculiar to some sources. However, the limitation was addressed by critically evaluating the themes and findings before concluding the study (Bowen, 2009).

Several ethical issues were considered in the study. The analysis and selection of documents were done while avoiding any subjective biases that may affect the objectivity of the findings. Only verifiable evidence was used to establish the study's findings and conclusions, thus avoiding misrepresentation or falsification of results. Lastly, the study considered confidentiality and privacy by only using publicly available documents to address the ethical issues affecting research in political sciences (Israel & Hay, 2006).

Empirical Analysis and Discussion:

The discussion revolves around four aspects of the topic. The first two deal with the manifestations of violence in the region and the factors that contribute to instability along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. The other two aspects explore the mechanisms of military actions, cease-fires, and diplomacy that have been implemented to address the issue. The discussion's final part connects the findings to the framework presented in this paper, explaining how the securitized state practices, segmented border governance, and spill-over effects promote instability along the state's borders. By analyzing these aspects, the study will be able to interpret individual cases and better understand the mechanisms that cause persistent insecurity on both sides of the border.

The documentary evidence suggests an increase in cross border violence in Pakistan and Afghanistan on the edge of 2024 - 2025. The reports from Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), and EU Agency for Asylum (EUAA) suggest that the security situation has deteriorated in the area. According to the EUAA report (2025), Pakistan witnessed 25 cross-border attacks in 2024. Besides, there was a significant rise in the number of border clashes from 39 to 81. It implies that the clashes occurred in such locations as Kurram, Chaman, and Torkham on the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Due to the persistent cross-border shooting, the closure of border gates was temporarily enforced (Reuters, 2025). Altogether, the security situation along the border has worsened since hostilities continue to impede normal crossings.

The textual sources further demonstrate that non-state armed groups are the major actors in this situation. UN monitoring reports show that Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) stepped up attacks on Pakistani security despite intensified efforts to combat terrorism, while Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) maintained a presence of approximately 2000 fighters in Afghanistan and neighboring countries (UN Security Council, 2023; EUAA, 2025). The documentary sources also show that they took advantage of the lack of control, poor oversight, and difficult terrain to continue their attacks on Pakistani territory.

Thus, militants' violence was not an anomaly but a normal part of the situation along the border between the two countries. Another common theme found in the documentary sources is the cross-border nature of the violence. The attack on security installations and civilians that occurred in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan regions in 2024-25 was not an isolated event (PIPS, 2024; EUAA, 2025). Violence of this kind has repeatedly crossed the border from Pakistan back into Afghanistan. At the same time, military operations, raids, and even temporary ceasefires have had only a short-term pacifying effect on the situation (EUAA, 2025; Reuters, 2025). Despite attempts by both governments to stop Pakistani groups from staging attacks on Afghan positions, such incidents continued to occur. In general, it is possible to conclude that militancy along the border continued to be a problem despite intensive security measures.

While the presented evidence confirms the fact of ongoing violence on the borders between Pakistan and Afghanistan, it also underscores that the situation is impacted by circumstances giving way to militants' free movement. Throughout the documents, the issue of disorganization, lack of control, challenging geography, and the absence of coordination mechanisms contribute to the understanding of why Pakistan and Afghanistan struggle to bring instability under control. Despite significant efforts and increased levels of military presence along the state borders, militants remained persistent in their attempts to enter the region. The results of the research show that the persistence of instability is determined not only by the organizational capacity of non-state military groups. It was also made possible by the permeability of state borders and the lack of control over them. At the same time, these factors could explain why local conflicts broke out in Pakistan from time to time and why various military operations conducted to combat militancy only temporarily reduced instability. It is essential to note that none of the operations permanently eliminated the causes of militancy from several areas bordering Afghanistan, while only temporarily lowering it.

The documentary evidence shows that even an agreement between the two countries to cease fire did not eliminate the sources of instability along the border area. Although both sides managed to lower tensions, they failed to address the issue of militant attacks, which resumed, leading to renewed offensives and political clashes on both sides. Therefore, one can conclude that the sources of instability can be found on both sides of the border, and each new ceasefire and diplomatic incident only addressed the symptoms of the problem, not the cause, leading to renewed tensions. Thus, the evidence presented allows one to assert that border instability was caused by a combination of factors that together led to violence being repeatedly perpetuated in the areas. Documentary evidence suggests that while there have been a few instances where the level of violence has been reduced through military operations, ceasefire agreements and diplomatic initiatives, they have not prevented renewed attacks and the overall cycle of destabilization along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border (EUAA, 2025; Reuters, 2025). Attacks have been followed by military retaliation, cross-border shelling and political confrontations. The documentary evidence suggests that cease-fire agreements and diplomatic maneuvers aimed at calming the situation on the border have proven largely ineffective. In addition, Pakistan's military operations could not yield fruitful results due to Afghanistan's disinterest and lack of control over the movement. That is why, despite military operations by Pakistan, ceasefire agreements and diplomatic efforts, the border remains insecure. Militant groups are still active in both countries. Furthermore, government institutions in Afghanistan remain fragmented and unable to effectively manage the overall security situation despite the ceasefire agreements and Pakistan's military operations. Hence, the modest impact of these efforts suggests they have been mostly crisis management rather than solutions to long-term border insecurity.

This trend suggests a more general limitation of the effectiveness of purely military containment or ad hoc diplomatic responses. It suggests more generally that one has to think in terms of broader geopolitical approaches that go beyond

immediate military and diplomatic responses and address underlying governance challenges, in order to roll back the capacity of regional militant actors to intervene at will. Put differently, the cases discussed above suggest that patterns of prolonged insecurity are more often determined by the absence of fundamental improvements in governance and related institutional capacities, rather than by the inadequacy of individual military or diplomatic measures. The results of the study indicate that there is not one particular theoretical framework which can explain the presence of insecurity on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Instead, it appears to stem from the interplay between various factors, including state securitized response to it, a lack of effective control measures, and regional violence spillover. As such, the analysis which utilizes the theoretical synthesis presented in this study appears to yield better insights into the situation than any one framework taken in isolation.

Securitization Theory helps understand how international relations recognized persistent cross-border attacks as existential threats necessitating exceptional measures (Buzan et al., 1998; Waever, 1995). In that sense, the documentary evidence presented in support of the case reveals that militant violence was met with military operations, reinforced border security, and increased rhetoric about insecurity. Nonetheless, such measures failed to affect the underlying causes militant violence. Meanwhile, Borderlands Theory provides a useful explanation of how the absence of complete governance, the lack of uniform authority, and the insufficient organization contribute to persistent cross-border tensions (Wilson & Donnan, 2012). Indeed, the evidence demonstrated that military operations, political pressure, and increased presence of security forces have minimally impacted the situation on the border. In turn, the theory helps explain how militants used the underdeveloped governance system to expand their influence. Nonetheless, Borderlands Theory does not sufficiently explain how cross-border tensions became transformed from a local issue into a geopolitical security concern.

Compared to the above mentioned two theories, Spillover Theory appears to explain the results

better. Not only because spillover violence occurred, but also because the evidence showed that insecurity existed because of ongoing clashes between militants, lack of effective governance, and the continuous reactions of the governments. Taken together, Borderlands Theory and Spillover Theory explain how fragmented governance facilitates cross-border militant mobility, allowing insecurity to spread beyond territorial boundaries as a regional security process rather than a series of isolated incidents (Salehyan, 2007; Salehyan & Gleditsch, 2006). In this regard, the research has contributed to the existing knowledge by providing empirical data that Spillover Theory can be applied not only to cross-border violence but also to Borderlands Theory and Securitization Theory, connecting the concepts of them. Therefore, it can be concluded that the instability in Pakistan's and Afghanistan's borders is caused by prolonged uncertainty driven by the complex interaction of regional and global processes, including multiple military interventions, cease-fire agreements, and interactions between states.

Conclusion:

The research in question was conducted to discover the factors that have determined the instability along Pakistan-Afghanistan borders despite the ceasefires and attempts to establish diplomatic peace between the two states. The article proves that the tension along the borders is not just a result of intermittent militant actions and episodes of violence, which is made clear by analyzing the qualitative data applied to Securitization theory, Borderlands theory, and Spillover theory. The authors conclude that border destabilization should be interpreted through the lens of multiple factors such as the absence of control of the borders by the state, trans-border militant activity, and securitized response to violence, which takes place under the concept of confrontation of geopolitical borderlands. Despite the fact that assaults and attacks conducted by various non-state militant groups are only a part of the larger conflict, they still appear to be an underlying cause of persistent violence along borders. The research presented in the article provides two

main arguments that contribute to a better understanding of Pakistan-Afghanistan relations and border tensions. Firstly, the study highlights the complexity of the situation around Pakistan-Afghanistan borders, demonstrating how multiple theoretical approaches can be applied to understand the issue from multiple perspectives. In spite of the fact that Securitization Theory and Borderlands Theory help explain either Pakistan's or Afghanistan's perspectives on the conflict, separately, they do not provide a comprehensive insight into the situation.

Therefore, the researchers utilize Spillover Theory to highlight the way borderlands instability triggers subsequent developments in Pakistan, which in turn lead to ongoing tension and violence. The article presents interesting results that can guide policymakers. The results suggest that the attempts to stabilize the area through war, temporary ceasefires, or isolated diplomatic initiatives will fail because of the necessity to involve the relevant institutions that tackle the issue from different angles and resolve the problem comprehensively. In other words, the policies should acknowledge the multi-layered nature of instability and address it from several angles, instead of simply focusing on a particular set of actors and their actions. The findings highlight the interdependence between different aspects of instability. The current research has various limitations, as it uses only qualitative sources. Therefore, the analysis cannot go beyond discussing the actions of different actors; ideally, the study would include field studies or rely on more primary sources. Additionally, the article could be improved by evaluating similar phenomena in different regions or analyzing how the security practices of one country affect neighboring states. Such research would be useful to the topic, as it would shed more light on the link between governance, militant activities, and unsolved regional insecurities. To sum up, the article talks about how the Pakistan-Afghanistan border instability should be thought of. The study contributes to the academic knowledge of border conflicts by specifying the general tension-generating role of the actors and by demonstrating the issue with more accuracy. The

findings imply that the policymakers should perceive the phenomenon as a multi-layered process, initiated by multiple regional actors, rather than focus on the military aspects of instability.

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