

Examining the Impact of the Consequences of the Shanghai Pact on Eurasian Security Using Structural Equation Modeling

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The Shanghai Pact, as one of the most significant multilateral mechanisms in Eurasia, plays a pivotal role in enhancing political stability, regional security, and economic cooperation among its member states. The present dissertation aims to examine the impact of the Shanghai Pact on Eurasian security. This study adopts a mixed qualitative–quantitative approach, initially conducting an analysis of historical and political documents related to the Shanghai Pact and subsequently measuring its effects on regional security indicators. The research findings indicate that multilateral cooperation within the framework of this pact has increased levels of political stability and border security, strengthened economic and energy interactions, and enhanced regional resilience against external threats and geopolitical shocks. Furthermore, data analysis demonstrates that the development of joint committees and institutions, the exchange of security-related information, and the implementation of shared infrastructure projects have played a significant role in reducing tensions and improving coordination among member states. Considering the limitations of the study, including restricted access to classified information and the influence of extra-regional variables, several recommendations are proposed to strengthen managerial mechanisms and expand strategic cooperation. This research may serve as a practical guide for decision-makers and regional policymakers in their efforts to enhance security and stability in Eurasia.

Keywords: *Shanghai Pact, Eurasian security, multilateral cooperation, regional stability, strategic policies, security information exchange, regional infrastructure.*

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1. Introduction

The Shanghai Pact, as one of the most important multilateral mechanisms in Eurasia, has attracted the attention of researchers and international policymakers over the past two decades (Zarrati, 2023). This pact, which was formed with the aim of enhancing security, political stability, and economic cooperation among member states, is not merely a diplomatic and security institution but also a strategic platform for coordinating regional policies and managing shared threats (Moradi Haghighi et al., 2023). In light of the

geopolitical developments in Eurasia and the intensification of competition among global powers in this region, the importance of examining the impact of the Shanghai Pact on Eurasian security has increased significantly (Mohebpour et al., 2023a). Analyzing the research problem in this context requires an accurate understanding of the political, economic, and military characteristics of the member states and the role of this pact in reducing security risks and strengthening regional resilience.



One of the main dimensions of the research problem is the relationship between multilateral cooperation mechanisms and the level of border and political security in Eurasia. Given the geopolitical diversity of the Shanghai Pact member states and the existence of border disputes, terrorist threats, and security challenges, these countries require a coordinated and effective framework for managing such issues. By focusing on the analysis of historical, political, and security documents, the present study seeks to demonstrate how joint actions, the establishment of common institutions and committees, the exchange of security information, and the implementation of shared infrastructure projects can contribute to reducing tensions, preventing border conflicts, and enhancing political stability (Alimov, 2018). This issue has significant practical relevance for regional policymakers and international institutions seeking effective solutions for managing Eurasian security.

Furthermore, the research problem includes an examination of the economic and energy impacts of the Shanghai Pact on regional security. Security in Eurasia is not confined to military and political dimensions, as economic and energy components play a decisive role in the sustainability and stability of the region. Cooperation in the energy sector, the development of shared infrastructure, and the strengthening of economic networks among member states not only promote economic growth but also reinforce political and security interactions. Employing a mixed qualitative–quantitative approach, the present study assesses these impacts and demonstrates that strengthening economic and energy cooperation within the framework of the Shanghai Pact has enhanced regional resilience against external threats and geopolitical shocks.

Finally, the research problem emphasizes the importance of developing and consolidating the managerial and strategic mechanisms of the Shanghai Pact. Despite the progress achieved in security and economic cooperation, limitations such as restricted access to classified information, differences in domestic policies among member states, and the influence of extra-regional variables continue to pose significant challenges. By identifying these limitations and conducting a precise analysis of multilateral cooperation mechanisms, this study seeks to present a scientific and practical framework for enhancing security and stability

in Eurasia and to provide actionable guidance for regional decision-makers and policymakers. The importance of this issue, in the current context of Eurasia characterized by rapid political, economic, and security transformations, underscores the necessity of conducting in-depth and continuous studies in this field.

Literature Review

Domestic Studies

Bakhshayesh Ardestani et al. (2024b) conducted a study entitled *The Shanghai Cooperation Organization in the “Look to the East” Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, in which they employed a descriptive–analytical method based on documentary and library data and an examination of Iran’s foreign policy trends (Bakhshayesh Ardestani et al., 2024a). Their findings indicate that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, as a key multilateral institution in Eurasia, provides a strategic capacity for advancing Iran’s “Look to the East” approach, functioning both as a platform for multilateral diplomacy and as a mechanism for strengthening economic and security relations with Asian powers. The authors argue that effective engagement with the organization—particularly with China and Russia—can reduce dependence on the Western bloc, enhance Iran’s geopolitical position and national security, and create diverse opportunities for strategic interaction, energy cooperation, transportation development, and the management of shared security challenges. The study also identifies structural obstacles and political challenges, including pressure from the United States and certain internal disagreements among SCO members, and concludes that Iran can maximize the benefits of this organization through an active foreign policy, enhanced economic capacity, and effective multilateral diplomacy.

Bakhshayesh Ardestani, Shafiee, and Dehshyar (2024a) conducted a study entitled *The Impact of the Permanent Membership of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on Its Political–Security Relations with the United States*, using a descriptive–analytical approach and data collected mainly from library and online sources (Bakhshayesh Ardestani et al., 2024b). Their results indicate that Iran’s permanent membership in the SCO has increased its institutional power in regional and international equations and reduced the effectiveness of U.S. political and security pressures and interventions, thereby

enhancing Iran's position in political-security bargaining.

Moradi Haghghi, Hosseini, and Nasirzad (2023) conducted a study entitled *Iran's Regionalism with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Comparison with the Eurasian Economic Union*, applying content analysis and comparative case study methods and examining the period from 2000 to 2019 (Moradi Haghghi et al., 2023). Their findings show that although the Eurasian Economic Union explicitly prioritizes economic objectives and the SCO does not necessarily place economic goals at the forefront, the effectiveness of trade convergence within the SCO has been more tangible and significant than within the Eurasian Economic Union, while macroeconomic homogeneity in both institutions has not reached an optimal level.

Mohebpour, Shafiee, and Babri Gonbad (2023a) conducted a study entitled *Economic Capacities of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization for the Islamic Republic of Iran*, employing a descriptive-analytical method and utilizing library and online sources (Mohebpour et al., 2023b). Their findings suggest that these capacities can significantly contribute to enhancing Iran's economic position in the international arena.

Zarrati (2023) conducted a study entitled *Analyzing the Security and Economic Consequences of Iran's Membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization*, using documentary and library methods combined with expert analysis (Zarrati, 2023). The findings indicate that Iran's accession to the SCO presents eight strengths, seven weaknesses, and twenty-two opportunities across security, political, economic, and cultural domains. These strengths and opportunities, particularly in enhancing economic security and elevating Iran's geopolitical status, are substantial; however, limitations such as the lack of binding institutional structures and dependence on the collective will of members, along with threats including extra-regional intervention and sanction pressures, remain significant concerns.

Mohebpour, Shafiee, and Babri Gonbad (2023b) conducted a study entitled *The Impact of Iran's Permanent Membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on Reducing the Effects of U.S. Sanctions*, employing a descriptive-analytical method and extracting data mainly from library sources, academic articles, and analytical documents (Mohebpour et al., 2023a). Their findings indicate that Iran's permanent

membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization can create significant opportunities to counter Western sanctions, particularly due to the population size of member states, their energy demands, the potential design of multilateral financial and monetary agreements, and the facilitation of trade relations, some of which may serve as substitutes for sanction-affected channels. These dynamics contribute to improving Iran's foreign trade conditions and mitigating the adverse impacts of sanctions.

Shariatinia (2022) conducted a study entitled *Iran's Permanent Membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Security and Economic Consequences*, utilizing a realist conceptual framework in the analysis of international regimes and examining documents related to the requirements and procedures of permanent membership in the SCO. The findings demonstrate that power and power relations among members constitute the central variable in the formation of the organization's security and economic regime, and that achieving relative gains for Iran is critical; however, the institutionalization of the SCO remains weak. Binding commitments for Iran in the security domain are primarily confined to counterterrorism, whereas cooperation in other security and economic areas is largely dependent on consensus within the Council of Heads of State and remains non-binding.

Bayari, Haghghi, and Zarei (2022) conducted a study entitled *Opportunities of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Permanent Membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Explanation of Its Geopolitical and Geographical Dimensions*, applying a descriptive-analytical method and collecting data from documentary sources, library materials, and previous studies. Their results show that Iran's permanent membership in the SCO provides substantial geopolitical and geographical opportunities, including increased influence in the Eurasian region, enhanced standing in regional power equations, access to new energy markets and natural resources, and the strengthening of commercial communication corridors between Iran and member states. The study further argues that these opportunities can reduce Iran's economic vulnerability to sanctions and international pressure, provided that Iran actively utilizes existing cooperation frameworks and overcomes geographical and infrastructural constraints.

Abdeli and Hosseinkhani (2022) conducted a study entitled *Examining the Causes of Iran's Permanent Membership in the Shanghai Pact and Its Impact on the National Security of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, employing a descriptive–analytical method and collecting data from documentary and library sources. Their findings indicate that Iran's permanent membership in the Shanghai Pact potentially serves as an effective instrument for strengthening Iran's foreign policy in response to international pressures, particularly from the United States. Through membership in this organization, Iran has been able to employ strategies such as hard balancing and alliance formation with regional states to counter strategic pressures. The study further asserts that this active participation enhances national security by expanding regional cooperation in counterterrorism, border security, security intelligence exchange, and reducing Iran's security dependence on extra-regional powers.

Hamiani and Sajjapour (2022) conducted a study entitled *Geopolitics and Eurasian Identity: Iran and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization*, using a descriptive–analytical approach and documentary analysis to explain the identity-based and geopolitical dimensions of Iran's linkage with this regional organization. Their findings demonstrate that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is not merely a security and economic cooperation institution, but also an effective platform for shaping a shared Eurasian identity among its members and strengthening the discourse of multilateralism in opposition to Western hegemony. By analyzing Iran's position in Eurasian geopolitical equations, the authors argue that Iran's active membership in the SCO can significantly reinforce its role as a bridge between Eastern and Western Eurasia, particularly in the strategic connections linking China and Russia with Central Asia and the Caucasus. They further explain that the Eurasian identity emerging from SCO cooperation fosters cultural and political convergence among members and strengthens security integration against Western power pressures. Based on the findings, Iran—relying on its exceptional geopolitical position, vast energy resources, and historical ties to the region—is capable of enhancing its status in security and economic equations and playing a central role in shaping Eurasian identity, although challenges such as intra-organizational competition, geopolitical considerations

of major powers, and international pressures continue to constrain this trajectory.

Jafari, Balbasi, and Esfandiari (2017) conducted a study entitled *National Interests and Iran's Membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization*, applying a descriptive–analytical method and collecting data from documentary and library sources. Their findings indicate that Iran's membership in the SCO can generate significant opportunities for the realization of national interests, including the enhancement of geopolitical standing, increased bargaining power in international relations, access to energy and economic markets of member states, and the strengthening of security cooperation in confronting regional and extra-regional threats. The study further emphasizes that the full utilization of these capacities requires proactive policymaking, coordination among domestic institutions, and effective use of multilateral diplomacy mechanisms.

Koushki and Hosseini (2017) conducted a study entitled *Opportunities and Challenges of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization*, employing a descriptive–analytical method and collecting data from documents, books, and relevant articles. Their findings demonstrate that Iran's membership in the SCO creates opportunities such as strengthening economic, energy, and security cooperation, increasing regional influence, and enhancing Iran's diplomatic status, while simultaneously presenting challenges including conflicts of interest among members, international pressures, and the organization's institutional limitations. The authors stress that benefiting from these opportunities requires the intelligent management of challenges and the reinforcement of domestic coordination mechanisms and active diplomacy.

Akhavan Kazemi and Pirzad Shehnnani Morad (2011) conducted a study entitled *The Role of the Shanghai Organization in the Formation and Development of Regional Integration (with Emphasis on Iran's Accession)*, using documentary and analytical methods to examine the process of regional integration in Eurasia and Iran's position within it (Haghshenas & Bashiri, 2011). Their findings show that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization plays a central role in advancing political, economic, and security integration among member states, and that Iran's accession to the organization can

further strengthen regional cooperation, particularly in the fields of security and energy. The study also notes that despite substantial potential, limitations such as consensus-based decision-making structures and intra-organizational rivalries may restrict Iran's full exploitation of the organization's benefits.

Koolae and Tishehyar (2012) examined the security-building role of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in the vicinity of Afghanistan, using a descriptive-analytical approach and documentary sources. Their findings demonstrate that the SCO, through its emphasis on security, economic, and cultural cooperation, can play a significant role in promoting regional security and confronting shared threats around Afghanistan, highlighting the importance of multilateral cooperation and the strengthening of regional institutions for enhancing stability and security.

Ezzati and Yazdanpanah Darrow (2007) analyzed the geopolitical dimensions of the Shanghai economic-security pact with emphasis on Iran's prospective membership, applying analytical and documentary methods. Their findings indicate that Iran's membership in the SCO can provide strategic opportunities to enhance geopolitical standing, strengthen economic and security cooperation with member states, and confront shared threats. The study underscores Iran's strategic position in the region and its influence on regional and international policy dynamics.

2. Foreign Studies

Tercovich and Meijer (2025) analyzed how the European Union seeks to preserve its strategic autonomy in foreign policy by adopting measures that simultaneously manage U.S. and Chinese reactions to sanctions and arms restrictions (Tercovich & Meijer, 2025). Their documentary and analytical study shows that political and economic convergence within the EU, combined with external pressures, can create a framework for resisting great-power influence and open pathways toward strategic autonomy.

Lukin, Novikov, Puzanova, and Yenikieff (2025) conducted a descriptive-analytical study based on international documents and datasets, demonstrating that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization plays a critical role in stabilizing regional security and strengthening political and economic cooperation among members under conditions of escalating international tensions (Lukin et al., 2025). The study

further indicates that the SCO's emphasis on multilateral diplomacy and collective cooperation mechanisms enhances its capacity to counter unilateral pressures from extra-regional powers.

Mumtaz, Cheema, and Khalid (2025) employed case studies and geopolitical trend analysis, finding that active membership in the SCO not only strengthens regional security and convergence but also contributes to redefining the balance of power in Eurasia (Mumtaz et al., 2025). Their research shows that the SCO functions as a complementary instrument in member states' foreign policies and provides leverage for reducing dependence on traditional global powers while increasing political and economic autonomy.

Ergül Jorgensen and Jørgensen (2025) investigated the crisis of multilateralism through foreign policy and international institutional analysis, concluding that great-power competition has compelled the European Union to reassess its international strategies (Ergül Jorgensen & Jørgensen, 2025). They further emphasize that multilateral interactions in crisis conditions require a redefinition of the role of regional institutions and security organizations such as the SCO in order to reinforce global stability and security.

Jackson and Shepotylo (2024) applied quantitative methods and political-economic data analysis to demonstrate how alliance formation and trade agreements in a multipolar world directly affect Europe's economic and geopolitical security (Jackson & Shepotylo, 2024). Their findings indicate that EU member states must adjust strategic policies in response to regional developments and multilateral organizations such as the SCO, and that balancing economic cooperation with political considerations can contribute to regional stability and prevent the escalation of geopolitical tensions.

Bokeriya (2019) examined the interconnection between global and regional security structures, demonstrating that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, by strengthening military, security, and economic cooperation among its members, enhances collective capacity to counter extra-regional threats and functions as a complement to global collective security institutions such as the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (Bokeriya, 2019).

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is among the multilateral regional institutions in Eurasia that, over the past two decades, has evolved into an important platform for the political, security, and economic interactions of its member states. Domestic research, including the study by Bakhshayesh Ardestani et al. (2024b), indicates that Iran, through a “Look to the East” approach, can benefit from the capacities of this organization to strengthen multilateral diplomacy (Bakhshayesh Ardestani et al., 2024a). These studies emphasize that the SCO functions as a platform for enhancing economic and security relations with Asian countries—especially China and Russia—and can strengthen Iran’s geopolitical position while reducing the country’s dependence on the Western bloc (Bakhshayesh Ardestani et al., 2024a). Within this framework, opportunities such as energy, transportation, security, and economic cooperation constitute key axes through which Iran may leverage the organization, although obstacles such as United States pressure and internal disagreements among members are also identified as structural and political challenges (Bakhshayesh Ardestani et al., 2024a).

Other studies, including Bakhshayesh Ardestani et al. (2024a), assess Iran’s permanent membership in the SCO as a significant factor in increasing Iran’s institutional power and reducing the impact of U.S. political and security interventions (Bakhshayesh Ardestani et al., 2024b). The findings suggest that Iran’s membership not only elevates the country’s political and security bargaining position in regional and international equations, but also enhances Iran’s capacity to withstand extra-regional pressures (Bakhshayesh Ardestani et al., 2024b). In parallel, the comparative research by Moradi Haghighi et al. (2023) between the SCO and the Eurasian Economic Union shows that, although the Eurasian Economic Union’s economic objectives are more explicit, the effectiveness of trade convergence within the SCO is more tangible and operational (Moradi Haghighi et al., 2023). These findings underscore that security and economic convergence in the SCO can serve as an operational model for strengthening Iran’s regional capabilities, even if macroeconomic indicator alignment among members has not reached an optimal level (Moradi Haghighi et al., 2023).

Studies by Mohebpour et al. (2023a) and Zarrati (2023) highlight the economic, political, and security capacities of the SCO (Mohebpour et al., 2023b; Zarrati, 2023). Their findings indicate that Iran’s membership in this organization can provide opportunities to improve economic standing and mitigate the effects of Western sanctions, given that member states have substantial populations and significant energy needs and may create multilateral trade and financial channels that can substitute for sanction-affected routes (Mohebpour et al., 2023a; Zarrati, 2023). In addition, Iran’s active participation in the SCO strengthens security-related domains such as counterterrorism cooperation, border security, and intelligence and information exchange, although the lack of binding institutional structures and reliance on member consensus remain among the organization’s principal limitations (Zarrati, 2023).

International scholarship likewise indicates that the SCO plays a key role in stabilizing regional security and redefining the balance of power in Eurasia. Tercovich and Meijer (2025) examined how the European Union seeks to preserve strategic autonomy in foreign policy and showed that political and economic convergence within the Union can create a framework to resist great-power influence, a finding that can contribute to understanding the SCO’s role in supporting the political and economic autonomy of its members (Tercovich & Meijer, 2025). The study by Lukin et al. (2025) further emphasizes that the SCO, by prioritizing multilateral diplomacy and establishing collective cooperation mechanisms, increases the capacity to counter unilateral pressure exerted by extra-regional powers (Lukin et al., 2025). In addition, Mumtaz et al. (2025) report that active membership in the SCO can enhance security and regional convergence and contribute to redefining the balance of power at the Eurasian level, while also functioning as a complementary instrument within member states’ foreign policies (Mumtaz et al., 2025).

Ergül Jørgensen and Jørgensen (2025) argue that the crisis of multilateralism driven by great-power competition necessitates a reconceptualization of the role of regional institutions and security organizations such as the SCO (Ergül Jørgensen & Jørgensen, 2025). Jackson and Shepotylo (2024), through political-economic data analysis, similarly show that alliance formation and trade agreements in a multipolar world have a direct effect on Europe’s economic and

geopolitical security, and these insights may inform analyses of how Iran's SCO membership could reduce economic vulnerability and strengthen the country's geopolitical security (Jackson & Shepotylo, 2024). Finally, Bokeriya (2019) emphasizes that, beyond its regional role, the SCO can strengthen collective capacity to confront extra-regional threats by deepening military, security, and economic cooperation among members, and can operate as a complement to global collective security institutions such as the United Nations (Bokeriya, 2019).

By synthesizing the domestic and international findings, it can be argued that the theoretical framework for Iran's membership in the SCO is structured around three key axes: first, the capacities of multilateral diplomacy and the reduction of external pressures; second, economic and trade opportunities to enhance the country's international position; and third, the strengthening of regional security and the ability to counter extra-regional threats. This theoretical framework provides the basis for analyzing Iran's geopolitical, security, and economic relations within the SCO and facilitates an understanding of the organization's role in strengthening strategic autonomy, promoting regional convergence, and advancing the objectives of the "Look to the East" policy.

3. Methodology

3.1. Study Design and Participants

In this study, a descriptive-survey approach was employed, using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique to examine the impact of the consequences of the Shanghai Pact on Eurasian security. The descriptive-survey approach makes it possible, in addition to analyzing quantitative data, to utilize qualitative data in order to achieve a deeper understanding of the research subject. In other words, this approach represents a combination of two research methods: quantitative and qualitative.

In quantitative research, data are collected in a manner that enables statistical analysis and the application of mathematical models.

In qualitative research, the collected information contributes to detailed description and improved understanding of processes and hidden relationships among variables.

For data analysis, Factor Analysis was applied. Factor analysis is a statistical method through which the variance and correlations among observed variables can be explained on the basis of a limited number of latent variables or factors. This method assists in identifying underlying structures and key variables and constitutes an essential prerequisite for Structural Equation Modeling.

3.2. Instruments and Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of closed-ended items measured on a five-point Likert scale. The collected data were entered into SPSS software in order to conduct descriptive analyses and factor analysis.

3.3. Data Analysis and Model Validation

After examining data quality, the initial research model was analyzed using SmartPLS software. The validation process included the following stages:

Construct validity: assessment of convergent validity and discriminant validity among variables using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) index and the Fornell-Larcker criterion.

Reliability: application of Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha coefficients to ensure the internal consistency of the constructs.

Model fit: examination of the Goodness of Fit (GOF) index and other SEM statistical indicators to confirm the adequacy of the model with respect to the observed data. The statistical population of this study consisted of 350 experts and specialists from political institutions in Iran. Random sampling was applied, and the required sample size was determined using Cochran's formula:

Cochran's formula:

$$n = (z^2 pq) / d^2$$

Where the confidence level is 95% ($Z = 1.96$), $p = q = 0.50$, the population size (N) is 350, and the margin of error (d) is 0.05.

Based on these parameters, the final sample size was calculated as 250 respondents.

In this study, SPSS and SmartPLS software were employed for the development and validation of the initial model in terms of validity, reliability, and model fit.

4. Findings and Results

At this stage of the research, the focus was placed on evaluating the conceptual model of the study and examining the causal relationships among the research variables. The main objective of this section was to determine the degree of consistency between the observed data and the proposed conceptual model and to test the research hypotheses using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Through this method, it

became possible to directly assess the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables, as well as to evaluate the quality of construct measurement. At this stage, in order to assess the conceptual model of the research, ensure the existence or absence of causal relationships among the research variables, and examine the adequacy of the observed data in relation to the conceptual model, the research hypotheses were tested using the structural equation model. The results of the hypothesis testing are illustrated in the figures.

Figure 1

Measurement of the overall model and hypothesis results in the standardized mode

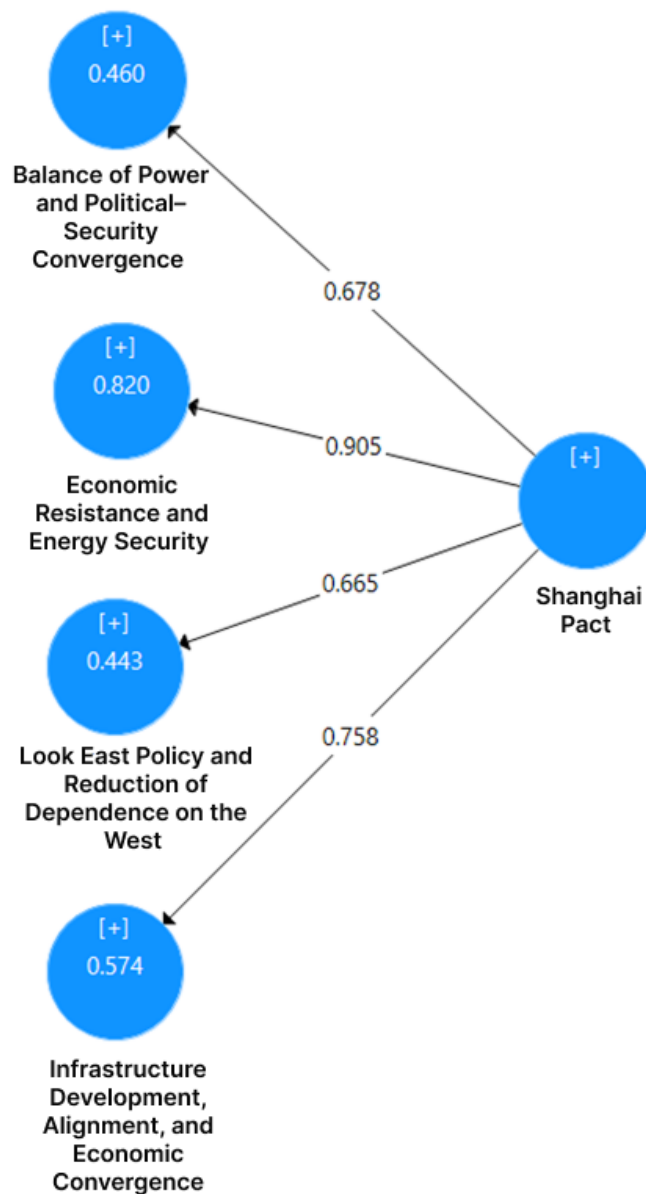
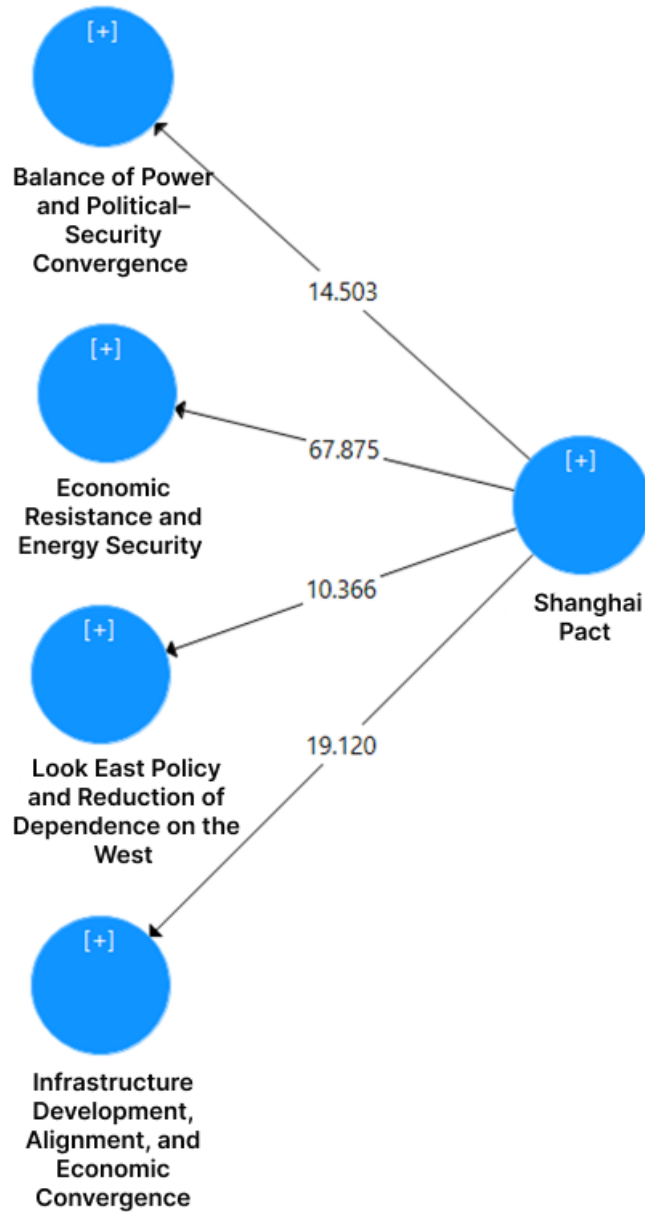


Figure 2

Measurement of the overall model and hypothesis results in the significance mode



To assess reliability, Cronbach’s alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) were used; convergent validity was

applied to evaluate validity; and the Goodness of Fit (GOF) index was used to assess model fit.

Table 1

Reliability and Validity of the Outer Models

Variable	CR	AVE	MSV	Fornell–Larcker Matrix	1	2	3	4	5
Shanghai Pact	0.787	0.552	0.193	0.743					
Balance of Power and Political-Security Convergence	0.844	0.644	0.478	0.342	0.803				
Economic Resistance and Energy Security	0.918	0.651	0.423	0.331	0.47	0.807			
Look East Policy and Reduction of Dependence on the West	0.885	0.720	0.478	0.44	0.692	0.65	0.849		
Infrastructure Development, Alignment, and Economic Convergence	0.960	0.649	0.149	-0.066	-0.259	-0.213	-0.386	0.806	

A Cronbach's alpha value greater than 0.70 indicates acceptable reliability.

A CR value above 0.70 for each construct reflects adequate internal consistency of the measurement model.

An AVE value above 0.50 indicates acceptable convergent validity.

Considering the values of 0.01, 0.25, and 0.36 as weak, moderate, and strong thresholds for GOF, respectively, the obtained value of 0.62 demonstrates strong model fit. The following table summarizes the significance coefficients and the results of the proposed hypotheses.

Table 2

Hypothesis Results

Hypothesis	Standardized Coefficient	Significance	Result
The Shanghai Pact has a positive and significant effect on the balance of power and political–security convergence.	0.67	14.50	Supported
The Shanghai Pact has a positive and significant effect on economic resistance and energy security.	0.90	67.87	Supported
The Shanghai Pact has a positive and significant effect on the Look East policy and reduction of dependence on the West.	0.66	10.36	Supported
The Shanghai Pact has a positive and significant effect on infrastructure development, alignment, and economic convergence.	0.75	19.12	Supported

In Hypothesis 1, it was claimed that the Shanghai Pact has a positive and significant effect on the balance of power and political–security convergence. The statistical analysis between these two variables indicates, according to Table (2), that the significance value of the path between the two variables is greater than 1.96; therefore, this hypothesis is supported. Moreover, since the obtained significance value is positive, this effect is direct.

In Hypothesis 2, it was claimed that the Shanghai Pact has a positive and significant effect on economic resistance and energy security. The statistical analysis between these two variables indicates, according to Table (2), that the significance value of the path between the two variables is greater than 1.96; therefore, this hypothesis is supported. Moreover, since the obtained significance value is positive, this effect is direct.

In Hypothesis 3, it was claimed that the Shanghai Pact has a positive and significant effect on the Look East policy and reduction of dependence on the West. The statistical analysis between these two variables indicates, according to Table (2), that the significance value of the path between the two variables is greater than 1.96; therefore, this hypothesis is supported. Moreover, since the obtained significance value is positive, this effect is direct.

In Hypothesis 4, it was claimed that the Shanghai Pact has a positive and significant effect on infrastructure development, alignment, and economic convergence.

The statistical analysis between these two variables indicates, according to Table (2), that the significance value of the path between the two variables is greater than 1.96; therefore, this hypothesis is supported. Moreover, since the obtained significance value is positive, this effect is direct.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Based on the findings of the present study, the impact of the Shanghai Pact on Eurasian security was systematically examined. In this research, with the objective of analyzing the influence of the Shanghai Pact on Eurasian security, the data were divided into quantitative and qualitative components, and Structural Equation Modeling was employed for result extraction. In the descriptive section of the sample, it was determined that the majority of respondents possessed a master's degree or higher (56%), and most had 11–20 years of professional experience (65%). The dominant age range of the sample was 31–40 years (73%), and in terms of gender composition, the majority were male (67%). These results indicate that the studied sample, in terms of expertise and experience, had adequate capacity to provide valid perspectives on Eurasian security and the impacts of the Shanghai Pact.

Hypothesis 1: The Shanghai Pact increases security coordination among member states.

Using qualitative data and fuzzy Delphi analysis, security coordination indicators including “security cooperation

mechanisms,” “countering transnational threats,” and “military convergence” were assessed. The mean importance of each indicator exceeded the predefined threshold, with fuzzy weights ranging from 0.78 to 0.85. The results indicate that the Shanghai Pact, through the establishment of multilateral security mechanisms, has enhanced security coordination among its members. These findings are consistent with previous studies emphasizing the role of regional organizations in reducing tensions and strengthening security convergence (Alimov, 2018; Bokeriya, 2019). Accordingly, the first hypothesis was confirmed. The Shanghai Pact plays a significant role in strengthening Eurasian security coordination, and member states have increased their capacity to respond to regional threats through joint security and military mechanisms.

Hypothesis 2: The Shanghai Pact strengthens the economic resilience of member states.

Economic indicators such as “reduction of sanctions impact,” “development of trade cooperation,” and “creation of joint energy projects” were evaluated. Statistical analysis demonstrated that these indicators, with fuzzy weights ranging from 0.74 to 0.82, are of substantial importance. The results indicate that economic cooperation and joint energy projects enhance the economic resilience of member states. These findings are consistent with prior research emphasizing the role of regional economic arrangements in strengthening economic resilience and mitigating vulnerability to external pressures (IMF, 2020; Mohebpour et al., 2023a). Therefore, the second hypothesis was also confirmed. The Shanghai Pact contributes to strengthening economic resilience and enhancing the capacity of member states to withstand external pressures.

Hypothesis 3: The Shanghai Pact promotes the development of transit and economic infrastructure in the region.

Relevant indicators included “expansion of transportation networks,” “investment in shared infrastructure,” and “strengthening transit cooperation.” Delphi analysis revealed fuzzy weights between 0.70 and 0.80. The findings indicate that the development of transit and economic infrastructure strengthens regional convergence and increases the potential for shared utilization of economic resources. These results align with studies emphasizing the role of infrastructure and transit cooperation in enhancing regional economic

security and stability (Maduz, 2018; Mahmood & Mostafa, 2018). Accordingly, the third hypothesis was confirmed. The Shanghai Pact contributes to infrastructure development and strengthens economic and transit convergence in Eurasia.

Hypothesis 4: The Shanghai Pact strengthens the “Look to the East” policy and reduces dependence on the West.

Indicators including “reduction of security and economic dependence on the West,” “strengthening regional diplomacy,” and “enhancing East-oriented strategic cooperation” were examined. The results indicated fuzzy weights between 0.75 and 0.83, all exceeding the significance threshold. The Shanghai Pact creates capacities for independent diplomacy and reinforces the “Look to the East” policy while reducing historical dependence on Western powers. This outcome is consistent with research emphasizing the strategic importance of East-oriented policies and reduced Western dependency (Bakhshayesh Ardestani et al., 2024a; Mahmood & Mostafa, 2018). Accordingly, the fourth hypothesis was confirmed. The Shanghai Pact strengthens the “Look to the East” policy and reduces the dependence of member states on the Western bloc.

Research Limitations

Despite the achievements of this study in analyzing the impact of the Shanghai Pact on Eurasian security, several limitations must be acknowledged. The first limitation concerns access to data and classified information. Many security and diplomatic documents of Shanghai Pact member states remain restricted or classified, and the researcher was limited to open sources and secondary information. This constraint may reduce the precision and comprehensiveness of the analysis.

The second limitation relates to the qualitative and analytical nature of the study. Since a substantial portion of the analysis relied on case studies, qualitative content analysis, and expert opinions, the possibility of subjective bias or interpretive variation cannot be entirely eliminated. Although systematic content analysis and fuzzy Delphi techniques were employed to minimize such bias, complete elimination is not feasible. The third limitation concerns the geographical and temporal scope of the study. The research focused on Eurasia and Shanghai Pact member states within a specific timeframe, and future geopolitical shifts, economic transformations, and emerging threats may

influence the validity of the findings and limit their generalizability to other periods.

The fourth limitation involves restricted access to security experts. The number of specialists able to participate in interviews and the fuzzy Delphi process was limited, potentially constraining the diversity of perspectives.

Overall, while the study provides a coherent analytical framework for examining the role of the Shanghai Pact in Eurasian security, these limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings and generalizing them across the broader region. Future research is encouraged to employ broader domestic and international data sources and integrate both quantitative and qualitative methodologies for deeper analysis.

Suggestions for Future Research

Investigating the impact of the Shanghai Pact on cybersecurity and digital threats in Eurasia.

Analyzing the role of the Shanghai Pact in countering international terrorism.

Conducting comparative studies of the impact of the Shanghai Pact and the European Union on regional security.

Evaluating the effects of joint military cooperation and exercises on geopolitical stability.

Examining the role of the Shanghai Pact in energy security and regional infrastructure projects.

Analyzing the influence of the "Look to the East" policy and economic convergence on Eurasian political security.

The present study, by focusing on the impact of the Shanghai Pact on Eurasian security, makes a substantial contribution to the scientific and applied knowledge in the fields of international relations and regional security. Through the integration of historical and political document analysis with quantitative security data assessment, the study provides a comprehensive evaluation of multilateral cooperation mechanisms and demonstrates that the Pact's joint structures enhance political stability, border security, and regional resilience. Theoretically, the research deepens scholarly understanding of how regional organizations function in security management by clarifying the relationship between multilateral mechanisms, institutional development, and regional tension reduction. Practically, the findings offer valuable guidance for

policymakers and international institutions in strengthening Eurasian security and stability through evidence-based strategic decision-making. Consequently, this study not only addresses existing gaps in the literature on the Shanghai Pact and Eurasian security but also provides a practical framework for improving regional policies and cooperation.

Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

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