China-Taiwan Conflict: Management and Resolution Modules

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# Abstract

In exploring China’s new approach to conflict deterrence and management, this paper evaluates Chinese foreign policy toward the flashpoint of the Taiwan Strait. Second, China's growing economic and political power has prioritized national reconciliation over ideological reconciliation. This approach can be called a "nationalist" foreign policy. Thirdly, China has become confident in its ability to coordinate with relevant powers regarding its various interests. This approach can be called "sharing international crises" with major powers. These factors clearly indicate the escalation of the conflict. In order to escape from such situation, this paper highlights all the possible solutions based on the models designed for conflict resolution. Theories of the conflict have also been used to identify the root causes of the issue to make the solutions more effective.

**Keywords:** China, Taiwan, Conflict, Conflict Management Modules, Conflict Resolution

# Introduction:

Taiwan has been ruled independently of China considering 1949, but Beijing views the Island as part of its Territory. Beijing has vowed to Eventually “unify” Taiwan with the Mainland, the usage of force if necessary. Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen, who is in favour of independence, has Rebuked Beijing’s efforts to Undermine democracy. Cross-strait Tensions have Escalated for the reason that the election of Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen in 2016.Beijing has ramped up political and army pressure on Taipei. Some analysts concern the United States and China should go to war over Taiwan. White House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s recent visit to the island in 2022 heightened tensions between the countries.

# Background:

China was ruled under Qing dynasty (1636-1912) ruler was very weak at that time that’s why Japanese invaded on China so the first Sino-Japanese war was started in (1894-1895) Japanese captured north and South Korea, China’s nearest areas. After that China has been scattered in different parts. In 1921 sun-yat-sen launched a party called Kuomintang with a goal of reunite China to make Republic of China. Sun-yat-sen died in 1925, his party has been divided into two parties nationalist party and Communist party. Communist party was leaded by Mao-Zedong on the other hand national party was leader by Chiag-kai-shek. (Tsai, 2022). Civil war was started in 1927 to 1949 between Communist party and nationalist party. Japan again attacked on China due to disunity and chaos in China. Japanese again attacked on China in 1931 occupied Chinese province Manchuria which was established as puppet state of Japan. Both parties of China United again in 1937 when Japan started 2nd Sino-Japan war. This war was lasted for 8 years and ended in 1945. America dropped the nuclear bomb on Japan in 1945 at the end of World War 2 then Japan declared free to Chinese States. After the end of Sino-Japanese war against civil war was started in China between nationalist and Communist party which war was lasted for 1946 to 1949. Mao Zedong followed the ideology of communism which was supported by Russia he declared independent in 1949 on the other side capitalist Chiag-kai-shek of Nationalist party made government in Taiwan it was supported by United States of America.

# Conflict:

Taiwan named as Republic of China (ROC) and mainland China named as people Republic of China (PROC). Mainland China claimed Taiwan is the part of China on the other side Taiwan also claim that China is the part of Taiwan.

The resolution, passed on 25 October 1971, recognized the People’s Republic of China (PRC) as “the only legitimate representative of China to the United Nations” at that time China accelerated her economic growth and removed “the representatives of (Republic of China) ROC who was recognized as founding member of United Nations in 1945 (Jen, 2011). According to the ‘one China policy” of mainland China (PRC) is to make economic and diplomatic relations with China other countries would not recognise Taiwan (ROC) as separate country. Taiwan’s legal status remains unclear.

# Causes:

Toward the finish of World War II in 1945, the organization of Taiwan was moved to the Republic of China (ROC) from the Empire of Japan however legitimate inquiries remain with respect to the language in the Treaty of San Francisco. In 1949 with the Chinese Civil War turning unequivocally for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) the Republic of China government drove by the Kuomintang (KMT) withdrew to Taiwan and laid out the temporary capital in Taipei while the CCP announced the People's Republic of China (PRC) government in Beijing. No cease-fire or truce has at any point been marked and banter go on concerning whether the nationwide conflict has legitimately finished.

Chen Shui-bian of the supportive of autonomy Democratic Progressive Party was chosen President of the ROC in 2000. In his debut discourse Chen Shui-bian swore to the Four Noes and One Without specifically encouraging to look for neither freedom nor unification as well as dismissing the idea of unique state-to-state relations communicated by his ancestor Lee Teng-hui as well as laying out the Three Mini-Links. Moreover, he sought after a strategy of normalizing monetary relations with the PRC. He communicated an eagerness to acknowledge the 1992 Consensus a precondition set by the PRC for exchange yet withdrew after reaction inside his own party.

On 22 March 2008, Ma Ying-jeou of the KMT won the official political decision in Taiwan. It likewise won a greater part in the Legislature.

On 30 January 2010, the Obama organization reported it planned to sell $6.4 billion worth of antimissile frameworks helicopters and other military equipment to Taiwan a normal move which was met with response from Beijing in counter, China cut off all military-to-military relations with Washington and cautioned that US-China participation on global issues could endure because of the deals (Eckert, 2010).

In 2018 The Diplomat revealed that the PRC conducts half breed fighting against the ROC.ROC political pioneers including President Tsai and Premier William Lai along with worldwide news sources have over and over blamed the PRC for getting out counterfeit word by means of virtual entertainment to make divisions in Taiwanese society impact electors and backing competitors more thoughtful to Beijing in front of the 2018 Taiwanese neighbourhood elections. Researchers have contended that the PRC government is permitting deception about the COVID-19 pandemic to stream into Taiwan.

In January 2020 Tsai Ing-wen contended that Taiwan previously was an autonomous nation called the "Republic of China (Taiwan) further contending that the central area Chinese specialists needed to perceive what is happening. Reuters reports that some place in 2020 the Taiwanese public turned further against central area China, because of aftermath from the Hong Kong fights and furthermore because of the PRC's proceeded with assurance to keep the ROC out of the World Health Organization notwithstanding the continuous COVID-19 pandemic.

On 10 June 2022, China's Defence Minister Wei Fenghe cautioned the United States that if anybody truly feels compelled to part Taiwan from China, the Chinese armed force will not hold back to begin a conflict regardless of the expense. Wei further said that the People's Liberation Army "would have no real option except to battle … and pound any endeavour of Taiwan freedom shielding public power and regional respectability.

# Consequences:

A crisis in the Taiwan Straits would have serious consequences for the Asian region, for the United States, and for China. As previous discussion suggested, all the

Asian states no matter what their private views about the China-Taiwan relationship

would prefer to avoid a military conflict that destroys regional economic integration and

forces them to take sides in a way that they would prefer not to. If a conflict does break

out, however, China’s Asian neighbours would expect that the United States would have

both the capacity and the wisdom to handle the problem well. In various Asian capitals,

and particularly among U.S. allies meaning South Korea, Japan, and Australia this

usually implies preventing a military conflict to begin with. If that is not possible,

however, and American military intervention is inevitable for whatever reason, the

fundamental preference of the allies would be that the United States intervenes quickly

and effectively to constrain the conflict with limited or no allied participation.

In this context, U.S. partners would no doubt be heavily conflicted themselves.

While they certainly do not wish to become involved, at least publicly, and they

absolutely do not want to be asked to participate in any U.S. military operations against

China, they also simultaneously and with some contradiction view the American

willingness to protect Taiwan as a test of larger U.S. commitment and credibility. (Tellis, 2005).

Although the precise circumstances that gave rise to American military operations would

clearly influence their judgment in the particulars, the fact remains that any American

request for active political-military assistance would put them in the most difficult

situation imaginable. For the allies involved, this would be the moment of truth. Because

U.S. forward presence has been the critical element in their own protection and because

the continued health of their bilateral alliances in the post-conflict period would be at

stake depending on their response, it is most likely that at least Japan and Australia would respond, however reluctantly, to an American demand for support in military operations

relating to Taiwan. Depending on the evolution of the conflict, it is not unreasonable

to presume that all sides could begin to evaluate the value of continued alliance

affiliations: the crucial variables that would determine the outcome here would be, first,

the prognosis for China’s own future growth in power, and, second, the ability of these

alliance relations to handle contingencies involving differences in commitment between

various partners.

For the United States, a conflict with China over Taiwan would have profound

consequences for the future of global geopolitics. For starters, such a clash would

decisively end the current debate within the United States about whether China is a

strategic partner or a strategic competitor in favour of the latter. Depending on how the

conflict evolved or was terminated, it would also accelerate ongoing military

modernization within the United States, modernization that would now be focused on

increasing extant U.S. power projection advantages vis-à-vis China, developing robust

escalation domination capabilities at the nuclear level, and extending current U.S.

operational advantages to new warfighting areas such as space and information warfare.

At the political level, a Sino-US conflict over Taiwan would spur the United States to

refurbish its alliance structures in the Asia-Pacific to involve more Asian states as

partners against China; even when formal partnerships are not at issue, the United States

would be strengthened in its conviction that more independent centre of power ought to

be encouraged on China’s periphery as a means of constraining the latter’s growth. The

impact of military and political competition would inevitably have effects in the

economic realm as well: an even greater tightening of China’s access to critical civilian,

dual-use, and military technologies would be likely and, depending on the attitudes of

various European and regional partners, a steady constriction of general trade itself would

not be implausible. All in all, a U.S.-China conflict over Taiwan that inaugurated a new

cold war in Asia would have profound implications for both the future of Sino-American

relations and the future world order.

The consequence of such a concatenation of developments would be felt most

importantly in China itself. Any war that ends up replacing the current trend of growing

economic interdependence between the United States and China, and China and Asia, with high entropy security competition would be disastrous for Beijing’s objective of

peaceful ascendancy. It would undermine the pacific regional environment that China

would need for continued economic growth and, by implication, its rise in power. A

deteriorating regional environment would force China to increase even more dramatically

its military spending and the acquisition of advanced military capabilities. Such

developments would exacerbate region-wide security dilemmas and force China’s major

regional competitors Japan, India, and perhaps even Russia to pursue hard-edged

balancing policies that, while leaving all worse off as a result, would have their greatest

impact on China’s ability to continue the export-led growth strategy that hitherto has

been responsible for its superior economic performance. An acute security competition

with the United States that ends up denying China access to the world’s most lucrative

market would put paid to Beijing’s dream of rapid economic growth and would require it

to shift to painful alternate strategies that could increase internal dislocations, social

unrest, and ultimately domestic political crises. Most fundamentally, however, a conflict

that inaugurated a deteriorating regional environment that undercuts China’s goal of

returning to greatness through the peaceful accumulation of comprehensive national

power would be a pivotal event in the broad sweep of history: it would interrupt the

ongoing shift of power from Europe to Asia and could force a bitter postponement of the

day when China became a true great power in the international system.

If these disasters ensue from a conflict over Taiwan however unwanted by all

Sides the fundamental question of whether Taiwan is worth fighting for ought to occupy

China’s attention before it is too late.

# Chinese Interests & Theories of Conflict:

China and Taiwan conflict has its roots in 20th century and China's claim of Taiwan an integral part of it remains constant. On this basis China's main interest is the reunification of Taiwan but Taiwan wants opposite if it. Some of Chinese interests over Taiwan are as follows:

* China claims it has historical and cultural ties with Taiwan that empowers her claim of One China Policy.
* Taiwan's growing economy has increased China's interests in it. According to a report, Taiwan's gross domestic product (GDP) has rose to nearly $790 billion in 2021. While its GDP per capita is $33004 which is three times higher than the China.
* Most importantly, Taiwan's revenue generation electronic industry and China's dependence on imports of electronics like semiconductors, chips for computers etc is another major interests of China. Taiwan's Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation (TSMC) has market share of approximately 56%. (Hennins, 2022). Companies like Sony and Apple use its products. On the other side, China wants to be independent in this particular area.
* Geographical location of Taiwan is another major factor that pushes China to execute its One China Policy. It gives China an opportunity to establish its bases into Pacific Ocean that would ultimately extend its military access to the Pacific region.
* Controlling Taiwan would also help China in crushing geographical security plan of United States called as \***Island Chain Strategy,** that says
* If China would be able to gain control over Taiwan, it would get access to the Asia's major trade routes.
* According to a political analyst Mr. Ryan China's control over Taiwan would give her an edge over security advantages. (Maguire, 2022). He further explained it as follows:

**"Particularly in a maritime sense but for a range of the reason, Taiwan being possessed by China would be a military catastrophe in Western Pacific region."**

## Taiwan's Concerns:

Following is some of the Taiwan's concerns or interests behind this conflict:

* Taiwan is a democratic state that elects its leaders own its own and enjoy democratic rights contrary to the China's autocratic rule. Therefore, if China gets successful in gaining control over it, their democratic norms would be washed away.
* Taiwan follows Capitalist ideology opposite of China that runs over socialist ideology.
* Public of the Taiwan does neither wants independence nor reunification but the maintenance of its status quo. According to a survey, 6% Taiwanese supported mergence in China, 6.8% supported independence while 84.9% asked for keeping status quo unchanged.
* It is an industrialist as well as an export driven state. If it gets unified into China, it has to share its resources that may impact living standards in a negative manner.
* Taiwan's case is almost similar to the United States whose public wants their institutions to be independent but only difference they do not want it to spread across China.

# Theories over Interests:

There are several theories can be applied on this conflict however following theories of conflict are more suitable on the basis of this research.

## Structural Theory:

Structural theory talks about the structures of the society that cause conflict, similar case in Taiwan-China conflict where Taiwan's major concern over reunification policy of China is that it may change its structure of society based on democratic values into autocratic one.

## Economist Theory:

Economic theory talks about the economic undercurrents of creation of conflict and relations between scarcity and politics. Similarly, China wants to increase its economic power by gaining control over Taiwan's growing economy especially electronic industry to eliminate its scarcity in terms of reducing its reliance on imports of electronic products includes chips etc.

## Realist Theory:

Realist theory explains that man is selfish by nature, so the states are which only cares for their interests and go to every extent in order to attain these interests. China's selfishness or objective of gaining control over trade routes through Taiwan that would enhance her influence in the region but also globally.

## Frustration-Aggression Theory:

Frustration-aggression theory explains that when a men has been stopped to achieve its goals or anyone creates hurdle in his way of achieving his objects, an emotion of frustration and aggression develops in it. In Taiwan-China case United States security and military and economic support to Taiwan against China has made China more aggressive towards this issue. The Nancy Palosi's visit to Taiwan and 22 Chinese jets incursion in Taiwan's Air defence zone is an example of it.

# Solutions with Model applications

## Confrontational Model:

China-Taiwan Conflict can be resolved through Confrontational Model. To Define the Confrontational Model, it is a conflict resolution model that divides the conflict into sub-issues. These sub-issues are then discussed, debated or acknowledged by both conflictual parties. This model demands compromise by both participants for confrontation so that these sub-issues can be resolved and settled through peaceful means and proper management.

China highly undermines any third-party intervention in China-Taiwan conflict. Beijing states that there is only “one China” and that Taiwan is part of it. It views the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) that is the Taiwan as the only legitimate government of China, an approach it calls the “One China principle” and seeks Taiwan’s eventual unification with the mainland China.

The US analysts main concern is that China’s growing military capabilities and assertive, likewise deterioration in cross-strait relations, could spark a conflict. Such a conflict has the potential to lead to US-China confrontation because China has warned many times US to not develop the relations with Taiwan directly rather it should deal with Taiwan through China because there is only one China.

China and Taiwan both depends on each other so the China’s using force to take over Taiwan would also ultimately effects on China and it would also create a bad global image of China as well as pose a persistent security tension in the pacific region. The one option of possible solution of this conflict is that China and Taiwan should resolve it by confrontational model. (wang, 2017). Divide the whole issue into sub-issues then acknowledge those issues by peaceful discussions and debates so that there is no intervention of the US or any other country.

## Khun and Poole Model:

The other model for the China-Taiwan conflict resolution is Khun and Poole’ model. This model divides the conflict management into two sub-groups. Distributive Conflict Management Model (DCMM) and Integrative Conflict Management Model (ICMM).

Distributive Model states that the outcomes would be manageable and not highly harmful for one party and beneficial for other party. Positive outcomes are divided by both parties to reduce tensions. Even the situations seem like win-lose but the gap between win and lose is not harmful and huge. Integrative Model states that both the conflictual parties come to compromise through integrating their interests and needs. Compromise is the centric point. This model use conflict as integrative force of party’s interests, needs, values nor as force of disintegration.

China and Taiwan can resolve their conflict through this model by distributing the positive outcomes after negotiating their values, needs and interests with each other. In 2019, China’s president Xi Jin Ping proposed long-standing proposal for Taiwan that it can be incorporated into the mainland under the formula of “**One country, Two systems”** (Lloyed, 2021). Furthermore, China and Taiwan both are spending their much revenue on arms or on defence. Tsai and Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) of Taiwan have prioritized increasing defence spendings with a record budget of nearly $17 billion for 2022, Chinese spending is still estimated to be around 22 times Taiwan’s. Tsai government plan to spend extra $8.6 billion on defence over the next five years.

This arms race will continue to increase if they do not reach at an agreement. Both China and Taiwan can only resolve the conflict by assuring each other that they will not participate in arms race and Taiwan to assure China that it will not get further arms support from the US. In addition to apply this model, they can divide the positive outcomes such as China not to be aggressive towards Taiwan, not doing cyber-attacks on Taiwan’s government agencies which is claimed by them and not restricting tourism in Taiwan etc. Likewise, Taiwan should think about “One country, two systems” formula because compromise is the centric point of this model. Otherwise, consequences will be highly devastating not just for them but for whole world.

## Lopez Model of Studies:

Lopez model of studies has three characteristics. Reasons and results of violent conflict which occur on the level, the way to handling, managing, resolving or transforming the dispute on each level and the development of norms, values and traditions to create peace.

By applying this model on China Taiwan conflict, it can be resolved or managed. The studies of this model include the causes and consequences of the conflict which we already have discussed above. Secondly, it demands the methods for reducing the violent conflict and this part has also been discussed in above models. Further solutions to manage the conflict can be that China needs to follow the policy of peaceful co-existence. A democratic and small Taiwan can co-exist with large Communist China because Taiwan is not the hurdle or threat to China. The lasting unification of Taiwan with China can be done by mutual consent and reconciliation but China’s use of force is objectionable. China should deploy its soft power rather than hard power to achieve its goal of unification.

Third and final characteristic of this model is the development of values, norms, traditions and institutions of peace. This involves the international law and organizations, non-offensive defence and global co-operation. People’s Republic of China (China) has adopted legislation threatening to invade Republic of China (Taiwan) if it later declares independence. Threats of force are prohibited by the UN Charter Article 2(4) and equivalent customary international law. On the one hand, prohibition probably does not apply to non-state entities such as Republic of China. On the other hand, ICJ stated in the Nuclear Weapons opinion that “if the use of force itself in a given case is illegal the threat to use such force will likewise be illegal”. The best way to resolve this apparent paradox is to say that the ICJ’s Nuclear Weapons principle’ must be nuanced. (Nguyen, 2022). Although official Cross-Strait negotiations remain deadlocked but on individual level, young Chinese and Taiwanese people have been attempting to overcome this impasse through interactive conflict resolution (ICR). (Lee, 2020). The developments concerning human rights also illustrate one further strategy available to Taiwan to pursue greater engagement with international organizations and these international organizations should play their supportive role in managing the conflict between Taiwan and China.

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