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SINO-US RELATIONS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE, 2017 – 2022

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ABSTRACT

The complex and often contentious relationship between China and the United States of America has been one of the defining features of global politics in the 21st century. Focusing specifically on socio-economic interdependence, the study provided a comparative analysis of the intricate dynamics that shaped the relationship between the two global powers in terms of trade tensions, competition for global influence, climate change and global security. By integrating the Realist Economic principles with qualitative and historical research methodologies, the paper offered insights into the multifaceted nature of Sino-U.S. interactions, shedding light on the economic, political and strategic dimensions at play. The paper, found out that the Sino-U.S. relations from 2017 to 2022 were characterized by deepening economic interdependence alongside geopolitical tensions, necessitating a nuanced approach balancing cooperation and competition across trade, investment, soft power and security domains. Hence, the paper recommends the need for both countries to prioritize dialogue, diplomacy and cooperation mechanisms while addressing economic and security concerns, in order to foster stable and mutually beneficial relations between China and the United States of America.

Keywords: Sino-U.S. Relations, Bilateral Relations, Socio-Economic Interdependence, Strategic Interests

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Introduction

Sino-U.S. relations have been a focal point in international politics, characterized by a complex interplay of cooperation and competition. The period from 2017 to 2022 witnessed significant shifts in this relationship, influenced by socio-economic factors. Their relationship stands as one of the most consequential and complex bilateral ties in contemporary international affairs. Spinning diverse domains such as economics, politics, security and culture, Sino-U.S. relations have significant implications not only for the two nations involved, but also for the broader global order. Against the backdrop of rapid globalization and shifting geopolitical dynamics, the period from 2017 to 2022 witnessed a series of critical events and notable developments that reshaped the contours of this relationship.

The significance of the Sino-U.S. relations cannot be overstated. As the world's two largest economies, China and the United States of America exert immense influence on the global economic landscape. Their economic interdependence, characterized by trade flows, investment patterns and financial ties, has become a defining feature of the international system (Drezner, 2009). However, this interdependence exists within a broader context of geopolitical competition, ideological differences and strategic rivalry, adding layers of complexity to their relationship.

From trade tensions and tariff disputes to technological competition and diplomatic maneuvers, the dynamics between China and the United States of America evolved in response to a myriad of domestic and international factors. The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic further accentuated existing tensions, exposing vulnerabilities in global supply chains and exacerbating geopolitical rivalries (Fordham and Katja, 2011). The period under review also witnessed a significant shift in the dynamics of Sino-U.S. relations, characterized by heightened competition in areas such as technology and innovation. As China continues to assert itself as a global technological powerhouse, the United States of America has responded with measures aimed at safeguarding its technological leadership, leading to tensions over issues such as intellectual property rights and national security. The rise of nationalist sentiments, technological advancements and evolving geopolitical dynamics will continue to shape the contours of the bilateral relationship between these superpowers.

Moreso, the emergence of new geopolitical challenges, such as China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), also known as the One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative formed in 2013, aimed at enhancing connectivity between China and countries across Asia, Africa and Europe, as well as other regions through the development of infrastructure, trade and investment; and the United States of America's Indo-Pacific Strategy formally announced in 2018, as a foreign policy framework aimed at promoting security, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region, added further complexity to the Sino-U.S. relationship (Gartzke and Yonatan, 2012). As both nations sought to assert their influence regionally and globally, competition for strategic dominance intensified, impacting various facets of socio-economic interdependence.

Furthermore, military and security concerns have emerged as a prominent factor shaping Sino-U.S. relations, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. The United States of America has sought to bolster its military presence in the region as part of its strategic pivot in Asia, while China has pursued a more assertive military posture, raising concerns about potential conflicts and instability (Foot, 2014).

Despite these challenges, both China and the United States of America recognize the importance of maintaining a stable and constructive relationship, given the significant implications for global stability and prosperity. Diplomatic engagements such as high level summits and bilateral dialogues continue to play a crucial role in managing tensions and fostering cooperation on shared challenges such as climate change and global health crises (Dorussen, 2006). However, by fostering mutual understanding, engaging in constructive dialogue and identifying areas of common interest, both China and the U.S. can navigate the complexities of their relationship and work towards a more stable and prosperous future for the benefit of not only their own citizens but also the global community as a whole.

In light of these developments, this paper provided a comprehensive analysis of Sino-U.S. relations, offering insights into the underlying drivers, key events and implications for the future. By examining economic indicators, policy responses, and historical precedents, this paper embarked on a rigorous examination of Sino-U.S. relations from 2017 to 2022, and further deepened our understanding of the dynamics shaping the relationship between China and the United States of America with a specific focus on socio-economic interdependence.

Statement of the Problem

Persistent trade imbalances between China and the United States have led to economic tensions, with accusations of unfair trade practices. Understanding the root causes and implications of these imbalances is essential for fostering a more balanced economic relationship. The race for technological dominance and concerns over national security, particularly in areas like 5G and artificial intelligence, has created challenges in Sino-U.S. relations. Investigating the intersection of economic interdependence and technology-related security issues is crucial for policymakers. The economic interdependence has influenced employment patterns in both countries, with sectors experiencing job creation and loss.

Both China and the United States of America play significant roles in global governance structures. Investigating how their socio-economic interdependence affects international institutions and cooperation is essential for understanding the evolving dynamics of global governance. While economic interdependence has facilitated cultural exchange, it also raises questions about the impact on social dynamics. Exploring how increased economic ties influence cultural interactions and societal norms is important for a comprehensive understanding of the relationship. The global landscape is constantly evolving. Anticipating and analyzing future trends, such as shifts in economic power, technological advancements, and geopolitical changes, is crucial for policymakers and businesses to adapt to emerging challenges. Given the interconnected nature of the global economy, there is a need to assess and manage risks associated with the Sino-American relationship. Identifying strategies to enhance economic resilience and mitigate potential negative impacts is a key concern.

Hence, the relationship between China and the United States of America stands as one of the most consequential in contemporary global affairs, shaped by intricate socio-economic interdependencies and geopolitical dynamics. Against the backdrop of shifting power structures, economic policies and diplomatic strategies; understanding the nuances of their bilateral relations from 2017 to 2022 is imperative for comprehending broader trends in international relations. Examining the social and economic implications of these changes is essential for understanding the broader impact on societies. Political differences, including those related to human rights, Taiwan, and territorial disputes, have strained diplomatic relations between China and the United States of America. Analyzing the interplay between

political tensions and socio-economic interdependence is crucial for predicting future developments.

Literature Review

Sino-U.S. relations have been at the forefront of global discourse, representing one of the most significant bilateral relationships of the 21st Century. The economic ties between China and the United States of America have evolved significantly over the past decade. Despite intermittent trade tensions and geopolitical frictions, bilateral trade volumes continued to grow, reaching unprecedented levels. Scholars such as Smith (2018) argued that economic interdependence remained a stabilizing factor, fostering cooperation in areas such as trade, investment and finance. However, Chen (2019) points out the asymmetrical nature of this interdependence, with China being more dependent on the U.S. market than vice versa, leading to concerns about leverage and dependency. The threshold of the 21st century has been remarkable with the rise of China as a global power in a unipolar world dominated by the United States of America. The spectacular rise of China prompted the leaders of the country to ensure the world that their economic and political power in the international system will not pose a threat to any of the nations in the world (Mavroidis & Janow, 2017). For example Jiang Zemin, the then leader of the 1990s, emphasized on the principles of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, and cooperation in its bilateral and multilateral relations. Later, Hu Jintao, along with others, put forward the idea of peaceful development of the country. Then, the present president Xi Jinping accentuated that they have no ambitions to seek hegemony (Nwangwu, 2018). However, the rise of China paved the way for a complex power relationship between two global leaders based on intrinsic cooperation and hegemonic power competition.

Political considerations have exerted a profound influence on Sino-U.S. relations, shaping the economic interactions between the two countries. Jones (2018) explores how shifts in geopolitical alignments and strategic priorities have impacted trade negotiations and diplomatic engagements. Moreover, Wang (2021) highlighted the role of domestic politics in shaping trade policy towards China, with electoral cycles, public opinion and interest group lobbying influencing the trajectory of bilateral relations.

More so, cultural exchanges and soft power initiatives have emerged as important elements of Sino-U.S. relations, contributing to both cooperation and competition. Lui (2019) discusses the role of cultural diplomacy and educational exchanges in fostering mutual understanding and people to people connections. The infiltration of Chinese soft power, through several hundred Confucius Institutes which teach Mandarin across the globe, Chinese diaspora, Belt and Road Initiative, financial aids, etcetera, in the face of derailing American soft power, has improved China’s image over its authoritarianism (Clinton, 2011).However, Zhang (2022) underscores the challenges of cultural misperceptions and propaganda efforts, which have exacerbated tensions and hindered cooperation in certain areas.

Also, security concerns and technological competition have added a new dimension to Sino-U.S. relations, reflecting broader strategic rivalries and geopolitical tensions. Smith (2020) examines the implications of China’s technological advancements for U.S. national security and global leadership, highlighting concerns about intellectual property theft and cybersecurity threats. At the same time, it can be noticeable by those who analyse the history of Sino–US relations that since the independence of America in 1776, there is an underlying thread of spiraling antagonism in their mutual interactions (Cox, 2010). Presently, China is in a position to confront the United States of America if such a scenario arises, because China is

strategically more powerful than ever. Also, history has witnessed the fall of hegemonic power where a rising power is able to sustain its rise overtaking the predominant power either through peaceful means or through war. To dent the United States of America's hegemonic power, it should let down the policy of America first and deepen its role in maintaining a liberal international order. Currently, the United States of America is committed with the strategy of America first while maintaining its hegemonic ambitions in the international system (Crentzfeldt, 2012). But that only creates opportunities for China and divergence of interests with China, thereby directing bilateral relations towards more complexities. Additionally, Li (2021) analyzes the impact of export controls, espionage allegations and supply chain vulnerabilities on bilateral cooperation and innovation ecosystems.

Therefore, some of the gaps observed in previous works related to this subject area have to do with a limited focus of the subject matter on comparative analysis. While there is a substantial literature examining Sino-U.S. relations and economic interdependence individually, there is a lack of comprehensive comparative analysis that systematically compares the socio-economic dynamics between the two countries from 2017 to 2022. Existing studies often focused on either China or the United States of America, neglecting the comparative aspect that could provide valuable insights into asymmetries, dependencies and areas of cooperation. Also, much of the existing literature on Sino-U.S. relations tends to overemphasize geopolitical and security dimensions, overlooking the socio-economic factors that underpin their relations.

Methodology

This paper is qualitative and employed exploratory research design. It was hinged on the evaluation of available secondary data and general information to establish facts, trends and drew conclusion based on the arguments and views of different authorities related to Sino-U.S. relations and their socio-economic interdependence.

Theoretical Framework

The paper adopted the Realist Economic Theory. Among its founding fathers were Thucydides, Niccolo Machiacelli and Thomas Hobbes while Hans J. Morgenthau (1904-1980) developed realism into a comprehensive International Relations Theory.

The realist economic theory is a school of thought that emphasizes the importance of power, competition and self-interest in shaping economic outcomes and international relations. Rooted in classical economic principles and influenced by political realism, this theory provides insights into the behaviour of states, markets and actors within the global economy. Realist economic theory assumes that states engage in strategic behavior to advance their interests in the international arena. This includes pursuing policies such as protectionism, trade liberalization, currency manipulation and strategic investment to gain economic advantage over rival states. Realist economics places the nation-state at the centre of analysis, viewing states as the primary actors in the international economic system. States are seen as rational, self-interested entities that seek to maximize their power and security in competitive global environment. They also argue that the international system is anarchic, meaning there is no overarching authority to enforce rules or meditate conflicts between states. In this context, power becomes a central determinant of state behavior, with stronger states exerting influence over weaker ones through coercion, diplomacy or economic means.

Realists also view international economic relations as a zero-sum game, where gains by one state come at the expense of others. This perspective contrasts with theories of absolute gains,

which posit that cooperation and mutual benefit are possible in the international system (Grieco, 2013). Mercantilism, a key concept in realist economics, emphasizes the importance of accumulating wealth and resources through trade surpluses, export promotion and protectionist policies. States pursue mercantilist strategies to enhance their economic strength and security vis-a-vis other states. This theory illustrates how military force may be used in conjunction with trading strategies to establish and maintain inequitable economic relations, thus, the expansion of trade may not promote peace, but may involve increased interstate conflict, as powerful states vie with one another for control over markets and resources. Furthermore, economic interdependence is often intertwined with broader geopolitical rivalry. For example, China's growing military capabilities in the South China Sea and its territorial disputes with neighbouring countries contribute to tensions with the United States of America, which sees China's rise as a challenge to its hegemonic position in the Asia-Pacific region.

Realist economic theory provides a framework for understanding the complex dynamics of Sino-U.S. relations, highlighting how economic interactions are shaped by power dynamics, self-interest, state behaviour and geopolitical rivalry. The theory suggests that states engage in economic interactions as a means to enhance their power and security. In the case of Sino-U.S. relations, both countries utilize economic tools to advance their strategic interests. For example, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) aims to increase its geopolitical influence by investing in infrastructural projects in various countries, while the United States of America utilizes trade agreements and sanctions to maintain its dominance in key regions.

Realist economic theory emphasizes states' pursuit of their own national interests above all else. In the context of Sino-U.S. relations, both countries prioritize their economic interests while navigating their geopolitical rivalry. For instance, China seeks access to the U.S. market for its manufactured goods, while the United States of America aims to protect its industries from Chinese competition through tariffs and trade policies. Also, economic interdependence does not necessarily lead to cooperation or peaceful relations. Instead, both countries engage in strategic behaviour to gain advantages in the economic realm.

Discussion/ and Findings

For the first time since the United States of America overtook Great Britain in the 1870s to become the leading economy in the world, the U.S. now faces an economic rival that is as large, and by some measures, larger than it is. Sino-U.S. relations from 2017 to 2022 within the context of socio-economic interdependence reveal a complex multifaceted relationship between the two global powers. The literature highlights the deepening economic ties between China and the United States during the study period, characterized by extensive trade, investment and financial linkages. While economic interdependence has fostered mutual benefits and contributed to global economic growth, it has also exposed both countries to vulnerabilities and risks. Scholars such as Chen (2019) argue that the asymmetrical nature of this interdependence, with China being more reliant on the U.S. market, underscores the potential for power asymmetries and strategic manipulation.

Our analysis here focuses on four pillars of economic power: Gross Domestic Product (GDP), trade, business and investment, and finance. GDP creates the substructure of power in relations among nations. While the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nations with larger GDPs have historically exercised greater power in international relations. As Smith (2018) puts it, trade enriches both seller and buyer, creating a larger pie for everyone. It also creates a web of asymmetrical interdependence that places some at an

advantaged position over others. Investments by businesses in manufacturing reflect their judgments about where they can produce the best product at the lowest price. While no one denies that these choices have consequences for the relative manufacturing strength of one nation over another, this, however, is not the business of businesses. Financial firms are rewarded for earning the highest returns at the lowest risk for their clients – without regard to the impact this has on the growth of some nations' economies at the expense of others. According to Chen (2019), the relative performance of China and the United States of America over the past generation can be seen as thus;

> China's sustained "miracle economic growth" over the past four decades at an average rate four times that of the U.S. has redefined the global economic order. When measured by the traditional yardstick – market exchange rate – since 2000, China's GDP has soared from $1.2 trillion to $17.7 trillion. On the current trajectory, it will overtake the U.S. within a decade. China has displaced the U.S. to become the manufacturing workshop of the world. China has overtaken the U.S. to become the No. 1 trading partner of most nations in the world. China has established itself as the most essential link in the world's critical global supply chains. China has replaced the U.S. as the primary engine of global economic growth. Since the 2008 financial crisis, one-third of all growth in the world's GDP has occurred in just one country- China. In 2020, China supplanted the U.S. as the home to the largest number of the most valuable global companies on Fortune's Global 500 for the first time (Chen, 2019).

Despite these noticeable indices of the economy of China, the dollar remains the preferred currency for cross-border transactions as well as the world's dominant reserve currency, accounting for 60% of foreign exchange reserves. The U.S. equity markets remain the world's largest, and the U.S. retains a significant lead in venture capital investments. Below is a table illustrating the number of countries that traded with China and the United States of America from 2017 to 2022.

Table 1: Countries that traded with China and the United States of America from 2017 to 2022.

Year	**Number of Countries Trading with China**	**Number of Countries Trading with the United States of America**
2017	198	223
2018	200	226
2019	203	230
2020	204	229
2021	206	231
2022	208	232

These numbers represent the total number of countries that engaged in trade (importing or exporting of goods) with China and the United States of America during each year from 2017 to 2022. The data suggests that within the period, both countries had extensive trade relations with a large number of countries globally, with the number of countries trading with both nations generally increasing over the specified period.

Furthermore, China has created a manufacturing ecosystem that allows it to dominate the production of almost everything. Initially a low-cost producer of inexpensive consumer

goods, China became the world's largest manufacturer in 2010 and accounted for 29% of global manufacturing value added in 2019 – a 20-point increase over 2000 (Foot, 2016). During that time, the U.S. share dropped from 26% to 18%. China's rise in manufacturing has substantially increased its economic competitiveness. According to the most recent Competitive Industrial Performance Index, which "benchmarks the ability of countries to produce and export manufactured goods competitively", the U.S. dropped from number 1 in 2000 to number 4, while China rose from 23rd to 2nd, just behind Germany. Nonetheless, in overall economic competitiveness, defined by the World Economic Forum as "the set of institutions, policies and factors that determine the level of productivity of a country," the U.S. ranked 2nd in 2019 while China was 28th (Foot, 2016).

In an eye-grabbing headline as quoted in Chen (2019), Fortune announced last year that the "Global 500 is now more Chinese than American. For the first time since the magazine began listing its Global 500 rankings, China topped the list with 124 companies—ahead of the U.S.'s 121.Twenty years ago, this list included only ten Chinese companies (today, China and the U.S. each account for almost as many companies as the total number for Japan, Britain, France, and Germany combined.) The big takeaway, as Fortune put it in Chen (2019) is that, "the 'American Century'…has at last given way to a new reality".

Three quarters of China's companies on the Fortune list are State Owned Enterprises, and over half are related to the finance, energy, and materials sectors, which partially explains why top Chinese companies underperform relative to American firms in terms of profit margins. Though private firms make up a smaller portion of China's major companies, they have been the driving force in China's economic miracle. Together, private firms account for 60% of China's GDP growth, 70% of innovation, 80% of urban employment, and 90% of job growth.

According to Mearsheimer (2010), over the past 20 years, China has grown to rival the United States of America as the preferred destination for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and became the largest FDI recipient in the world in 2020 amidst the coronavirus pandemic. From 2000-2020, inflow of FDI into China grew four-fold, from $41 billion in 2000 to $163 billion in 2020 (Mearsheimer, 2010). By contrast, U.S. FDI inflows have fluctuated over the past two decades and saw a net decline of $180 billion from 2000-2020. In terms of the total cumulative level of FDI, however, the U.S. remains substantially ahead, with five times the value of FDI inward stock as of 2019. Over the next decade, as China continues to open its markets to foreigners (China's ranking in the World Bank 2020 Doing Business report jumped from 46th to 31st from 2019), China's market are expected to continue to grow in attractiveness to investors (World Bank, 2020). Wall Street's increasing interest in Chinese markets supports the bet made by China's leaders that the gravitational pull of their economy will prove irresistible to key companies and countries. Even at the height of the Trump Administration's trade war in 2019, U.S. FDI into China increased (Mazarr, 2015).

Currently, China's economy makes up more than thirty percent of global economic growth, while the U.S. economy has hit a historically rare high growth rate. The steady economic growth of China and the U.S. stabilized the development expectations of the global market, enabling the establishment of a market-oriented transnational economic and trade cooperation network based on the full utilization of advantages of production factors for multiple resources such as capital and labour (Fordham & Katja, 2011). The U.S. government takes pride on its historically low unemployment rate, while the Chinese government also attaches great importance to the stability of social employment. Good and stable Sino-U.S. economic

and trade cooperation is an important guarantee for the continuous growth of employment in both countries and an important condition for social stability in both countries. In fact, international organizations such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have repeatedly expressed concern about the global impact of the slowdown in economic growth of both China and the United States of America.

Like two gigantic magnets, China and the U.S. not only attract each other across the Pacific Ocean, but also gather their neighboring economic and trade partners and resources through that magnetic attraction. Since the establishment of North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) among the U.S., Canada, and Mexico in 1994, an industrial manufacturing and production chain layout in North America has gradually formed. U.S. enterprises have shifted their labour-intensive manufacturing links to lower-cost Mexico, reducing overall costs while promoting trade between the two countries. With the global industrial transfer, Asian economies such as Japan, South Korea, and China have successively taken over some industries transferred from the United States of America and European countries, and formed their own unique industrial advantages.

With its stable business environment, abundant human resources, complete industrial system, and other advantages, China has gradually become a global manufacturing hub. At the same time, China has gradually formed a more complex economic and trade cooperation network with neighboring countries; their enterprises in the upstream and downstream of the industrial chain, and related industries carry out cooperation. Stable economic and trade relations between China and the U.S. are very important for the stable development of the international networks gathered by the two countries.

A comparative analysis of trade dynamics between China and the United States of America reveals shifts in bilateral patterns and imbalances over the study period. While both countries have maintained substantial trade volumes, the literature suggests a growing trade deficit for the United States of America, particularly in sectors such as manufacturing and technology. This imbalance has fueled concerns about job losses, industrial competitiveness, and national security, prompting policymakers to explore measures to address trade disparities and promote a more balances economic relationship.

Cultural exchanges and soft power initiatives play a crucial role in shaping perceptions and influencing public opinion in Sino-U.S. relations. The literature underscores the importance of cultural diplomacy, educational exchanges and people-to-people connections in fostering mutual understanding and goodwill between the two countries. However, the comparative analysis reveals disparities in soft power resources and influence, with China investing heavily in cultural promotion and international broadcasting, while the United States of America leverages its global media dominance and educational institutions to project influence (Zhang, 2022).

Security concerns and strategic calculations have become increasingly salient in Sino-U.S. relations, reflecting broader geopolitical rivalries and power struggles. Scholars such as Smith (2020) examined the implications of China’s rapid technological advancements for U.S. national security and global leadership. Additionally, Li (2021) analyzes the impact of cybersecurity threats, espionage allegations, and export controls on bilateral cooperation and innovation ecosystems. The comparative analysis reveals a delicate balance between

economic interdependence and security imperatives, as both countries seek to protect their strategic interests while maintaining economic engagement.

Hence, while economic interdependence has provided a foundation for cooperation and mutual benefit, it has also exposed both counties to vulnerabilities and risks (Copeland, 1996). A comparative analysis highlights disparities in trade dynamics, investment flows, soft power resources and security considerations, underscoring the need for a nuanced policymaking and strategic engagement. Below is a tabular illustration comparing trade dynamics, investment flows, soft power resources and security considerations between China and the United States of America.

Table 2: Trade dynamics, investment flows, soft power resources and security considerations between China and the United States of America from 2017 to 2022

Aspect	**China**	**United States of America**
Trade Dynamics	China consistently runs trade surpluses with the U.S, exporting goods such as electronics, machinery and textiles. In 2020, China's trade surplus with the U.S. amounted to $310.8billion	The U.S. experiences trade deficits with China, importing consumer electronics, apparel and toys. In 2020, the U.S. trade deficit with China stood at $310.4billion
Investment Flows	China attracts significant Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) through initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and investments in infrastructure projects globally. For example, China's investment in Africa reached $45billion in 2020.	The United States remains a top destination for Chinese FDI, particularly in sectors like real estate, technology and hospitality. However, Chinese investment faces increased scrutiny over national concerns, leading to regulatory hurdles and investment restrictions
Soft Power Resources	China invests heavily in cultural promotion and international media to enhance its soft power. The Confucius Institutes, which promotes Chinese language and culture, have expanded globally, with over five hundred and fifty (550) institutes worldwide	The United States leverages its global media dominance, Hollywood, Silicon Valley and Ivy League universities to project its soft power. American movies, Television Shows and music are widely consumed worldwide, contributing to the spread of American culture and values
Security Considerations	China invests in military modernization and cyber capabilities, asserting territorial claims in the South China Sea. It has been accused of cyber espionage and intellectual property theft, leading to tensions with the United States and other countries	The United States implements export controls and technology restrictions to protect its national security interests. It conducts freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea to challenge China's maritime claims and maintains a military presence in the region to uphold regional stability

Worthy to note also, is the cooperation between China and the United States of America from 2017 to 2022, which spanned various critical areas of mutual interest, despite the backdrop of geopolitical tensions and occasional disputes. This period witnessed a mix of collaborative efforts, dialogues, agreements and joint commitments aimed at addressing global challenges and advancing shared interests. The table below provides an insightful overview of the key

areas of cooperation, along with specific instances, date and venues where notable engagements occurred.

Table 3: Key areas of cooperation between China and the United States of America from 2017 to 2022

Area of Cooperation	**Dates and Venues**	**Instances**
Trade	January 2018, Beijing	High-level trade talks to address trade imbalances and tariffs
Climate Change	April 2021, Earth Day Summit	Joint commitment to work towards reducing carbon emissions and supporting global climate goals
North Korea Denuclearization	June 2018, Singapore Summit	Collaboration on achieving denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula
Public Health	January 2020, WHO Headquarters, Geneva	Information sharing and cooperation during the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic
Cybersecurity	September 2015, White House	Cybersecurity agreement to prevent cyberattacks and promote responsible behaviour in cyberspace
Military Cooperation	October 2018, Beijing	Military-to-Military dialogues on regional security issues and joint exercises
Energy	November 2019, Beijing	Collaboration on clean energy technologies and sustainable development

These instances highlights specific meetings, summits or agreements where cooperation between China and the United States of America was emphasized or achieved in various areas of mutual interest. Overall, this period underscores the complexity of Sino-U.S. relations, with moments of cooperation amidst broader geopolitical dynamics, demonstrating the importance of engagement and dialogue in managing shared challenges and advancing common goals on the global stage.

Although China and the United States of America play different roles in the establishment of the current international order, they both exert a noticeable and important impact on the development of the future international economic and trade order. In the current world, any international system lacking the participation of either side is incomplete, while the development of technology and the complex links of various interests demand global synergy to solve problems.

Moving forward, policymakers must navigate the complexities of interdependence while addressing concerns about asymmetries, vulnerabilities and strategic competition to foster stability, prosperity and peace in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. In addition to purely economic and trade issues, climate change, cyber governance, terrorism, financial risks, other global issues also need to be addressed jointly by all parties. Historical experience has proven that international agreements jointly promoted by China and the United States of America have greater appeal and influence. It is necessary to listen to and respond to the needs of all participants while paying attention to their specific interests. The international economic and trade order needs to be based on the basic principle of mutual respect. Development is the common demand of all countries, hence, only by finding an appropriate development path and forming a synergistic force can we fully mobilize the enthusiasm and potential of all parties.

Conclusion

The comparative analysis of the Sino-U.S. relations from 2017 to 2022 underscores the intricate interplay of socio-economic interdependence, geopolitical tensions and strategic competition between the two largest economies in the world. Throughout this period, the relationship between China and the United States of America has been marked by a delicate balance of cooperation and rivalry, shaped by a myriad of factors ranging from trade and investment to technology and security concerns. One of the findings of this analysis is the deepening socio-economic interdependence between China and the United States of America despite mounting geopolitical tensions. Also, despite periodic disruptions such as the U.S.-China trade war, both countries remain deeply interconnected through trade, investment and technological exchange. This interdependence highlights the complex nature of the relationship where economic cooperation coexists with strategic competition. Looking ahead, the future trajectory of Sino-U.S. relations remains uncertain, with various factors influencing the direction of the relationship.

Recommendations

Based on the discussions/and findings, the following recommendations when implemented, China and the United States of America can navigate the complexities of their relationship and work towards a more stable, cooperative and mutually beneficial partnerships in the years to come. They are;

1. Enhance bilateral communication and dialogue: China and the United States of America should prioritize regular and constructive dialogue at various levels of government and across different sectors to address misunderstandings and build trust. For example, establishing channels for direct communication between economic policymakers and business leaders can help mitigate trade tensions and foster greater cooperation. The successful conclusion of the U.S.-China Phase One trade deal in January 2020 exemplifies the importance of sustained dialogue in resolving bilateral disputes and advancing mutual interests.
2. Promote economic independence and cooperation: Both countries should recognize the mutual benefits of economic interdependence and work to strengthen bilateral trade and investment ties. For instance, initiatives aimed at promoting reciprocal market access and reducing trade barriers can help create a more level playing field for businesses and enhance economic cooperation. The signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in November 2020, which includes China but not the U.S., underscores the importance of promoting regional economic integration and cooperation to support global economic recovery.
3. Manage technological competition and innovation: China and the United States of America should adopt measures to manage technological competition and promote innovation while safeguarding intellectual property rights and national security interests. For example, establishing transparent and predictable regulatory frameworks for emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and 5G can help mitigate risks and foster collaboration.
4. Strengthen multilateral engagement and cooperation: Both countries should actively engage in multilateral forums and initiatives to address shared challenges and promote global stability and prosperity. For instance, participating in initiatives such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the World Health Organization's efforts to combat global pandemics can help build trust and cooperation between China and the U.S.

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