

US Foreign Policy towards Iran-
Case Study of Obama Administration



By

Rimsha Raza

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Supervisor

Dr. Irfan Qaiserani

**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Bahria University, Islamabad.**

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Abstract

US and Iran share a complex history of relationship. After the 1979 Iranian revolution the relations between the two states got strained and couldn't develop any diplomatic ties for years. Until the Obama administration, who tried to change the America foreign policy approach towards Iran from confrontation to pragmatism and tried to settle disputes with Iran through a Nuclear deal. In 2015 JCPOA was signed between P5+1 and Iran, which proved to be a ray of hope between the two states. This research paper will examine the cause and effects of the Nuclear deal, the limitations, objections and demands made by Iran and US in the deal. And how Obama managed to develop a pragmatic approach towards Iran unlike his predecessors. The deal is considered the greatest achievement and legacy of the Obama's administration, it was due to the relative decline of US power and the rise of other states as power that made US shift their policies towards its adversaries like Iran. hence Obama shifted from confrontation to policy of engagement. Neoclassical Realism is used as the theoretical approach in which the relative decline of state power is considered as the independent variable and the shift in state's foreign policy as the dependent variable. It also explains the Trump's administration and his reaction towards the JCPOA. The US withdrawal from the deal in 2018 and what were the consequences it had to face in the region, globally as well as domestically. The research paper focuses on understanding what were the factors that intended Obama to change the decades old US foreign policy and adversary towards Iran to initiate a policy of engagement with them.