

## Gilgit-Baltistan's Public view on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

Nusrat Azeema<sup>1</sup>, Awais H. Gillani<sup>2</sup>, Syed Mubashir Hussain Shah<sup>3</sup> & Sehrish Saba<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> M.Phil Mass Communication, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Media Studies, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan.

<sup>3</sup> M.Phil Mass Communication, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

<sup>4</sup> LLM Human Rights Law, International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan.

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### Abstract:

In 2015 a project was signed between China and Pakistan which is called CPEC. Public agenda on CPEC was investigated through survey in Gilgit-Baltistan's (GB). This study examines the role of the local public of GB in the project of CPEC and explores the list of the public plan. It also helps both governments of Pakistan and China to make further policies regarding the Gilgit-Baltistan region. Study found that, the public feels happy about infrastructure development and the area's living standard, and overall improvements. Still, on the other side, they have concerns about security, peace, and cultural damages.

**Keywords:** CPEC, One Belt One Road (OBOR), Media, Public, Agenda, Pakistan, Gilgit-Baltistan

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### One Belt One Road (OBOR) Project

The OBOR project has long and medium-term goals, and this initiative will strengthen the economic geography of Pakistan, Iran and Gulf countries. OBOR focuses on trade, infrastructure, security and investment (Shafqat, China's rise: How is it impacting the gulf, Iran, Pakistan and beyond?, 2017). The initial focus of this project is on infrastructure and energy projects; after that, its focus will be on communication, tourism, and trade. More than 65 countries will participate in this project (George & Catalin, Chinese economic pragmatism: The belt and road initiative, 2018). The OBOR project is favourable for all participating nations because it will build and provide excellent infrastructure and cooperation. For the smooth running of this project, fair laws and a team of investors are required (Sarker, Hossin, Hua, Sarker, & Kumar, 2018). It is a long term project, and 30 to 40 years may consume its completion (Lochel & Nawaz, 2018). For the success of the OBOR project, China wants to reconstruct the Silk route. CPEC is one of the six corridors of OBOR. Due to its geostrategic position, CPEC is more important than other projects (Iftikhar & Ahmad, 2018). This project will connect Central and South Asian countries with a significant mutual trade increase. But the connectivity for economic boost depends on modern and high transportation technology (Adam, 2018).

OBOR will give China significant foreign policy and economic leverage (Reynolds, Tara, & Wang, 2018), resulting in China may influence the whole world. On its completion, the project may change the geo-economy of the world. Scholars believe that OBOR will connect the world (Adam, 2018) despite many challenges. One such challenge is the public opinion of the CPEC corridor (Sultan, Omar, & Imtiaz, Analyzing Prevalent Internal Challenges to China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) through Public Opinion, 2019) Yet media agenda in Pakistan is usually in support of the project (Iqbal K. , 2019; Yousaf, Ahmed, & Fiaz, Framing of China Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC) in the Leading Press of Pakistan and China, 2018). The study analyzes different frames used by the local press regarding the project of CPEC and checks the differences between the media agenda and public agenda regarding CPEC.

### Literature Review

The success of CPEC depends on China's OBOR and dominant position in international affairs (Rehman & Shrong, 2017). CPEC connects China with Gawadar port via western and eastern routes. The route of the west is short and less expensive. This route passes from the underdeveloped areas of Pakistan; thus, such regions will improve economically. It is time to give priority to this route to create equality. To free Pakistan from isolation in the region and make people financially

well-off, political leaders should change their thinking and do their best for Pakistan and Pakistani people (Mengal S. , 2016).

### **OBOR Project of China**

OBOR is a plan of China to march west through land-lock countries and warm water of the sea; the primary goal of China is to improve its trade. OBOR is a massive plan of infrastructure (Ikram & Rashid, 2017). As a peace-loving country, China wants prosperity and peace in the region. China's policies do not involve wars and conflict; instead, they support peaceful economic activity and the prosperity of people. Under the peaceful OBOR project, China intends to promote economic progress and will empower developing countries in the region (Khattak & Khalid, 2017). The central aim of OBOR is to exert influence on different continents of the world, but the project will also assist in bringing peace, prosperity and constancy in Asia (Chawla, 2017).

### **CPEC**

CPEC is a grand economic and strategic scheme. This plan is valuable for Pakistan and advantageous to China and all those participating in this project. Road projects and seaport are part of this enormous project. We need to appreciate China's companies because they can invest and provide investment chances (Khalil, 2017). As a part of the OBOR project, CPEC will bring far-reaching social and economic impact and play an active role in developing China and Pakistan (Haq & Farooq, 2016). CPEC is a chance for Pakistan, China and entire south Asian countries to change their fate. It expands the economy and enhances integration among regions. The project is passing from GB, so the chances are high that it may thoroughly impact the region's culture and social values. It is a fact that most natives of GB are optimistic that the impact of this project would be positive (Bano & Khayyam, 2018).

### **CPEC and Gilgit Baltistan**

The status of GB is undefined till now. People of GB have many expectations from CPEC because it will address the desires of local people

regarding the project. It will also address conspiracy theories like CPEC will provide little attention to the region. But the dominant perception is that there is a complete chance of empowerment due to CPEC, and the economic zones of the project will provide thousands of jobs. The unique culture of GB will also get representation internationally, and the policy of the government of Pakistan toward the region will change under this project (Shafique & Iftikhar, 2017). The matter primarily discussed in GB is CPEC because it will provide economic assistance to the region. The government of Pakistan should focus more on the region because once the CPEC finalizes, it will bring prosperity to the region's economy, resulting the infrastructural and socio-political reform will also come. It is correct that the people of GB have some concerns about CPEC. Pinpointing and resolving such problems is highly crucial to the project's success (Siddiqua, 2015).

The public of GB welcomes CPEC but with some concerns. There is no direct benefit to GB from CPEC because significant projects have not started yet. Another grievance is that due to heavy vehicle transportation, the pollution will affect the region's environment. The administration should address these grievances of the local community by getting the confidence of the local community. Unemployment and poverty are high in GB; people from Gilgit-Baltistan have many hopes because there are many opportunities in this project. Islamabad must assure the people of GB regarding solving their concerns (Beg, Baig, & Khan, 2018).

With the increase in population, the need for electricity is also increasing. For the last many years, Pakistan is facing the problem of electricity shortage. This shortfall of electricity causes poverty and many other social issues. Voice is out in the general public and government circles that the power projects of CPEC will affect the environment (Abuzar & Hasssan, 2017). The power projects of CPEC impact the socio-economic progress of Pakistan. CPEC will contribute in all fields, including tourism, transportation, job creation, and infrastructure development. Hopes are high that CPEC will show the face of Pakistan society positively. However, lack of funds, political instability and lousy security are some challenges for CPEC (Khurshid, Akhtar, & Zahid, 2018).

## Gawadar Port

The development of Gawadar port is the mega strategy of China and Pakistan for business and defence purpose. It will produce thousands of job opportunities and investment. It is a new sign of economic development for coastal regions of the country, which is valuable for the country's economy. It will meet the requirements and desires of Pakistan (Naz & Ali, 2018). Pakistan will get the ability to strengthen its navy due to the Gawadar port. This port is not only beneficial for trade, but it is also essential for military reasons. It will bring prosperity to the whole region. Through Gawadar port, it will be trouble-free to trade with far eastern countries and approach the entire Indian Ocean region (Malik H. Y., 2012). China's technical and financial assistance in the construction of Gawadar port is an excellent example of Chinese commitment. CPEC is the necessary step of the massive Chinese program of OBOR. China has its interest from CPEC, and this project will peacefully support Pakistan and the whole region. Therefore, China is working hard to complete this scheme to achieve the strategic interest of both China and Pakistan (Ahmad, Hameed, & Shahzad, 2017).

A vast amount of infrastructure changes will come with Gawadar port in Gawadar and other areas of Balochistan. Gawadar port will be the locus of trade. However, the port may bring income inequalities between natives of Gawadar and the people belonging to other parts of Balochistan. To control these disparities government should plan to build development projects and small industries in different districts of Baluchistan (Naizai, Ali, Ali, & Raza, 2018). Through the port of Gawadar, Pakistan will develop its infrastructure, industry and boost up its geographical importance. This port can make Pakistan a trade and business hub of the world (Asif, 2018).

Some concrete steps are necessary to make the port operational and effective. Heads of management must be aware of these steps, which will be helpful to enhance the port functions. Port efficiency can be achieved with excellent infrastructure and logistic facilities. Better port efficiency would benefit China and Pakistan (Hanjra, Bhatti, & Niazi, 2017). The

port of Gawadar has amazing economic capacities. This port will be changed into a hub of trade for regional countries. It provides a chance to build a naval base; the large project CPEC will help connect the Gawadar port with China and the whole region. Socio-economic progress will bring in local people, and the Pakistani economy will be changed into a robust and active economy (Hussain & Khan, 2017).

## Economic and Infrastructural Projects under CPEC

The nation of Pakistan has so many hopes from CPEC because it will bring integration, stability and economic progress. It gives a chance for backward areas of Pakistan to connect with the rest of the country, its advantages are limited to Pakistan, but it will be a source of development for the whole region (Arif, 2016). This project is expected as a modifier for Pakistan because there are infrastructure, roads, energy and industry. CPEC is not only a short and safe route for trade, but it also helps China to get more control in the region (Beg, Baig, & Khan, 2018). CPEC will be beneficial for Pakistan. It will stabilize the Pakistani economy by providing jobs to unemployed youth, giving a suitable port to Pakistan, creating new chances of trade in the country, and giving unique geopolitical importance. These entire steps will make a positive image of Pakistan in the global community. (Makhdoom, Shah, & Sami, 2017).

Through his study, the researcher investigated CPEC in light of the OBOR summit of May 2017 and says that the OBOR initiatives will change the economic and social scene of those participating in this project. OBOR help to foster trade among member nations (Chawla, 2017). Until 2020, with 6.4 percent, Balochistan will benefit, the share of Sindh will be 6.31 percent, KPK will get 5.19 percent, and Punjab will receive 3.5 percent welfare gain from CPEC. So, it will be expected that through CPEC, Balochistan gains more and more benefit, which will bring prosperity to Balochistan (Haq & Farooq, 2016).

With a two-thousand-kilometre road, CPEC will link China with the port of Gawadar. This project will be considered as a modifier for the economy of Pakistan. After finalized of CPEC, China will easily import oil from gulf countries.

There are many advantages for Pakistan from CPEC, but there are also many challenges in putting into practice this project (Abid & Asfaq, 2015). CPEC will give China freedom from the South China Sea route, which is not secure for trade. The CPEC is a safe and secure route for trade. This project can sum up the economic problems and give geostrategic importance to Pakistan. Regional and international trade integration will enhance (Ali A. , 2015).

There is a strong association between power, labour force and price ratio. When CPEC completes, Pakistan's energy sector will be well; this is fruitful for the Pakistani economy. The employment ratio is increased, and the country's GDP will be improved (Raza, Osama, & Hena, 2018). Pakistan is facing an energy crisis. There are many energy projects under CPEC. These projects will help to control the energy crisis. After completion of these projects, thousands of job opportunities will be produced. Industries in Punjab and Sind region increase their production when energy is available (Raza, Mohiuddin, Zaidi, & Osama, 2019).

CPEC is like the Suez Canal and Panama Canal. China can easily trade through this route because this route is secure and short. It will be necessary for international trade because this route reduces time and distance. The project will generate revenue and employments (Idrees, Shapiee, & Ahmat, 2018). As a critical project, CPEC will benefit Pakistan and provide an alternative safe and secure route to china. China will import energy products and give recognition to its product in a new market through this route. Pakistan will able to counter India in the region as a major hub of trade. It boosts the Pakistani economy and helps the country overcome the energy crisis (Singh & Magray, 2017).

CPEC is equally profitable for both countries, but China will get more benefits from this project. It will provide more than 20,000 jobs to Pakistani youth. The cement and steel industry of Pakistan will flourish (Wasim & Saddiqi, 2018). Pakistan has both imported and export trade with China. However, Chinese trade has been well-matched with the mandate of Pakistan. Trade between Pakistan and China has been significantly

progressive, and it seems that it will continue. The policy of China regards Pakistan as well, and the fact is that India is losing its advantage. The trade routes and policies between China and Pakistan will be compared to Pakistan and India after completing CPEC (Sahoo, 2012).

### **Impacts of CPEC on Regional Countries Relations**

CPEC will further strengthen the relations between Pakistan and China, which is a positive point for peace in the region (Beg, Baig, & Khan, 2018). The associations between Iran and Pakistan are not functional now; the investment between both countries is low. At this phase, CPEC will give good chances for Iran and Pakistan to cooperate and enhance their trade. Both Chabahar and Gawadar port has geopolitical importance. If CPEC connects with the Chabahar port, it will enhance Iran's trade and give Pakistan benefits to good relations with Iran (Arif, 2016).

CPEC will expand relations of Pakistan with its neighbour countries and help Pakistan in all aspects, especially in the economy (Ahmad & Mi, 2017). Some regional countries like Iran, India and Afghanistan will also connect through this project (Idrees, Shapiee, & Ahmat, 2018). The project also helps to maintain peace. By making good relations with India, Pakistan can bring stability to the region, which needs to achieve this project (Singh & Magray, 2017). The relation between Pakistan and China is strengthening within five decades. Historically, these relations were on a military basis. Now both countries expand the limitation of relations to commerce and trade. These relations play a vital role in the politics of the region. In this situation, Pakistan should expand its economic trade with China (Javaid & Jahangir, 2015). Pakistan is a member of SCO, SAARC, and ECO. As a member of these organizations, the country has a unique status to connect regional countries. Pakistan and China intend to upgrade Karakorum Highway under the project of CPEC; the new road gives a new market of trade and opportunities for land-locked countries of the region (Anwar, 2011).

### **Environmental and Cultural Impacts of CPEC**



CPEC will connect many ethnic regions. As a result of these connections, a new racial society will exist, creating conflicts and problems with culture. CPEC is a commercial project, but its ethnic effect cannot be avoided. As the largest country, it may be possible that China will support large scale migration to Pakistan. This type of migration is a significant threat to culture and representation (Khanwal & Shafique, 2018). To overcome the energy crisis, give good infrastructure and roads are positive aspects of CPEC, but the project has also negatively impacted our culture. The study showed that CPEC would produce a significant influence on our culture, which is not favourable. The youth is worried about CPEC's negative impacts on the Pakistani economy; it is expected that the significant population of Pakistan will adopt norms and values of other countries (Sultan, Ahmed, & Zafar, Measuring the Impact of China Pakistan Economic Corridor on the Socio-economic Aspects of Pakistan: A Quantitative Research Highlighting the Public Opinion, 2017).

### **Impacts of CPEC on Tourism and Agriculture**

The Pakistani tourism industry will also flourish when roads and railway route complete. The beautiful areas near Pakistan and China border will be a good resort for tourism, which is an excellent benefit for both countries (Khalil, 2017). In the upcoming days, CPEC will access new development in trade and tourism for both nations. It is a need for Pakistan to focus on the importance of the tourism industry through the CPEC. The natural beauties of Pakistan are acknowledgeable and have changeable weather, which is significant for the tourism industry (Ali, Haider, Ali, Ali, & Ming, 2017). CPEC has numerous impacts on the sector of agriculture of Pakistan; it helps to control the shortfall of energy and provide excellent infrastructure, which will positively affect the agriculture of the country. CPEC open new doors for scale farmers to raise their exports (Ali, Shang, & Saif, 2018).

### **CPEC and Media**

Information platform will speed up transportation, so information cell should be built with the government's help. Regularly press briefings and media news regarding CPEC will assistance to expand the project (Deng & Li, 2017). The media,

educational institution and thinker of both nations should prepare for the success of the OBOR project. The project will play as a tool to strengthen relations between both countries and give long term economic benefits (Irshad, Xin, & Arshad, 2015). Pakistani newspapers are not in the position that they could be compared with the newspapers of India and China regarding the space of improvement coverage. Indian Newspapers provides more space for continuous coverage. Pakistani Newspapers gives limited coverage to the progressive project like CPEC; it is essential to cover developmental projects. Regarding CPEC, Pakistan media should bring itself into line (Hassan, Shabir, & Seyal, 2018). A research was conducted to check the campaign of CPEC in two leading newspapers. The results showed that these newspapers are playing a functional role to promote CPEC. This struggle to positively image CPEC is good (Mengal, Hussain, Taj, Liang, & Imran, 2018).

Leading press of both countries framing positively about the news of CPEC. Especially trade, development, peace, security and economy. Through research, the investigators showed that both countries leading daily newspapers, the "China Daily" and "Daily Dawn" of Pakistan, reported positively about CPEC. Whereas only a tiny number of editorials and news reported the subjects adversely or impartially. Pakistani press is playing a dynamic role in the achievement of CPEC by reporting the subjects (Yousaf, Ahmad, & Fiaz, Framing of China Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC) In the leading press of Pakistan and China, 2018). The media of China and Pakistan should assist each other to eliminate the problems of CPEC. Five major English dailies of Pakistan were targeted at this study from April 20 to April 26 2015, during Chines President Visit. The results showed that the Pakistani newspapers gave positive coverage on that occasion (Akif & Humma, 2016).

### **Challenges for CPEC**

There are some horrible challenges to CPEC in Pakistan. Relations between Pakistan and China are reasonable. Both friends must struggle to reduce the challenges by cooperation (Rehman & Shrong, 2017). The major challenge for OBOR is America and its

partner countries. Still, China should require to remain peaceful and increase its financial support to those developing nations who are part of this enormous project (Khattak & Khalid, 2017). Many countries want to make hurdles in this project, Pakistan and China and Pakistan should stand with each other for the achievement of CPEC (Beg, Baig, & Khan, 2018). CPEC is cross through Gilgit-Baltistan. India claims that this region is part of India. Due to this claim, India criticizes the CPEC project. In the Balochistan region, the Bloch liberation army and some other terrorist groups create tension for China. CPEC and other China projects are massive projects, so host countries should think about their economic condition; these projects may create financial problems to host countries (Kaur, 2019).

CPEC will completely change the fortune of both countries and possibly affect the counties of south Asia. China and Pakistan should struggle to complete it because the project has many challenges. Both the government should cooperate. Pakistan has initiated some steps to handle security issues. Political harmony in Pakistan is necessary for the success of CPEC. The Chinese government also took some steps to control the ethnocentric groups in contrast to CPEC (Ali S. , 2015). The USA and its supporters have many objections to this project. Pakistan and China should understand the plan of India and America against CPEC and take fundamental steps to overcome threats (Chawla, 2017).

The relation between Pakistan and its neighbour country India is not good. The tension between Pakistan and India is a big challenge for economic activities in the region. Cooperation with regional countries, especially China, Pakistan, and India, boosts economic activities and confidence. China can play its role in reducing tension between Pakistan and India, which will be fruitful for South Asia's economy (Sattar, Ali, Rehman, & Naeem, 2018). People to people contacts regularly visit high-level delegations, and a bilateral security plan will help in cooperation, understanding and peace, which is favourable for this Corridor (Ikram & Rashid, 2017). The unfortunate situation in Afghanistan and corrupt relations between India and Pakistan are some

challenges for CPEC because Afghanistan and India are neighbour countries of Pakistan (Ali A. , 2015).

Ethical dealings between India and the USA, the role of Iran, and the USA's presence in Afghanistan are some distresses for China and the project of CPEC. In this situation, Pakistan should try to decrease tension with its western and eastern neighbours to make the dream of CPEC into reality (Butt & Butt, 2015). People of Balochistan have many reservations about CPEC; it is needed to get the assurance of local natives of Balochistan about the Chinese project of CPEC, which will help to bring the dream of CPEC into reality. To make Pakistan a healthy economy, it is a need for positive thinking among Pakistan's citizens, military, and political parties about the corridor project (Ashraf, Shafique, & Batool, 2017). There are some serious challenges for CPEC, so Pakistan and China should plan to counter the challenges. Pakistan should control terrorism, corruption and enhance harmony among the different regions of the country. To counter external threats, Pakistan and China should make bilateral policy, and equal facilities should be provided to all areas of Pakistan. Both countries need to fulfil their commitments and complete the project in time, reducing more expenditure and giving reducing more expenditure and giving confidence to the nation (Hussain, Mehmood, & Saeed, 2012).

Through CPEC, land-lock areas of China will be connected to the sea. Many countries of the region showed their anxieties about the project. However, CPEC has a positive impact, but its success depends on regional connectivity. India wants to counter CPEC for this purpose. India is investing in Chabahar port, and future India will use Iran and Chabahar port against CPEC (Ahmad, Asmi, Ali, Rehman, & Abbas, 2017). Stable Pakistan is essential for the Corridor of China. If Pakistan remains stable and peaceful, the project of the corridor will complete in time. In this situation, CPEC is blessed for Pakistan and regional countries. Pressure from America and western countries to Pakistan, the impact of ethnic and religious groups, bad relations between India and Pakistan and unfavourable law and order situation in Afghanistan are some severe problems. It is proud of Pakistan that CPEC is passing through Pakistan. This project is part

of the vision of China to connect the world (Arshad & Haidond, 2017). The government of Pakistan should overcome the challenges for the success of this project (Mumtaz, Smith, & Khan, 2017). Balochistan and KPK have many grievances about CPEC, and these are challenges for the project. The project can be given under Pakistan's military because many international nationalist struggles to create hurdles to CPEC. The Pakistani army can handle these issues because Pakistan's army is one of the vast armies (Ahmad & Mi, 2017). The contractors of Pakistan are not happy with the project because most contracts are awarded to contractors of China. Many Pakistani contractors criticize the bidding process (Wasim & Saddiqi, 2018).

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework is one of the essential and critical steps in research; it is like a structure that helps to support a theory of research. It offers a framework to investigate a problem. This study has been conducted under the outline of Agenda setting and Framing theory of Social Science.

Agenda setting theory describes how the media shape the list of the public regarding any issue or problem. CPEC is an essential project in both Pakistan and China. The success of CPEC depends on the public of both countries. In this study, Agenda-setting theory also plays a vital role to understand the role of national and local media to promote public opinion regarding CPEC.

The frame of any news gives prestige to any issue. Media frame any news negatively and positively. To check the frame of news regarding CPEC, the framing theory of mass media is the investigator's focus.

### **Framing Theory**

The idea of framing is associated with agenda-setting tradition but amplifies the idea of agenda-setting theory. Todd Gitlin (1960) was among the first persons who explored framing in his analysis of how new media underestimated the students. Goffman (1974) stated that two divisions are natural and social distinction, to

play a vital role in understanding data. Thus, the central theme of framing is to draw attention to specific news or object. Thus, the idea of framing means to "draw attention to specific attributes of the objects. Tuchman (1978) stated that, like other things, any content/information also in need has structure. In media, every content that a media received needs structure, so the media gives structure. The foundation of framing theory is that the media emphasizes certain happenings and then places them inside an arena of meaning. According to this concept, the media give a specific perspective to any event or problem with a specific meaning which the media define. Media can change the underlying theme of any event according to their schedule. In this theory, audiences are shown as passive audience. This theory is one of the essential concepts of mass media. It shows the power of media organizations and the ability of media to frame any news according to their will and wish. Framing is just like structure; it means that how media give structure to any topic.

### **Research questions**

**RQ1:** What type of opportunities CPEC bring in Gilgit-Baltistan?

**RQ2:** What is the list of the public agenda about the project of CPEC in Gilgit-Baltistan?

### **Data collection**

Questionnaires were used to acquire the public agenda about the CPEC. The Question papers were divided into three Sections. In the first section, there were five questions about the personal information of respondents. In the second section, there were fifteen questions. Through these questions, the researcher tried to check the opinion of the public. In the third section, here is my question. Through these questions, the researcher wanted to know about the genuine concerns of the residents of Gilgit-Baltistan. Likert scale was used to measured results (agree, disagree and neutral). The questionnaires were distributed and collected from Government Offices, Schools, Universities, residential houses, different markets, commercial areas and restaurants of the Gilgit.

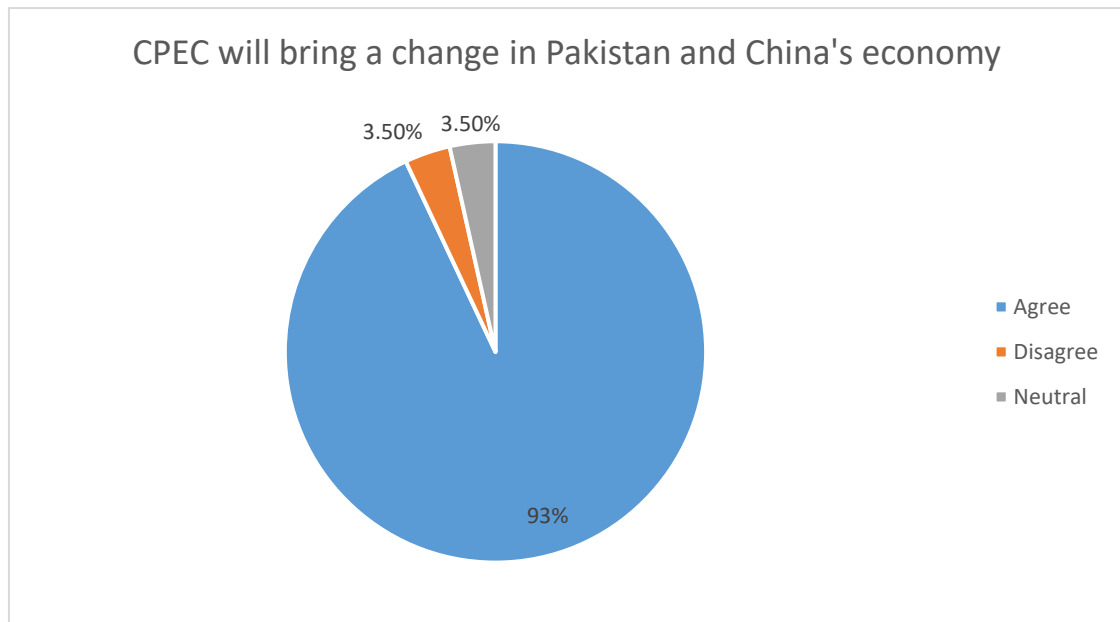


Figure 1: showed that out of 200 respondents, (186, 93%) were agreed that this project would bring change to the economy of Pakistan and China, seven people disagreed, and seven were neutral.

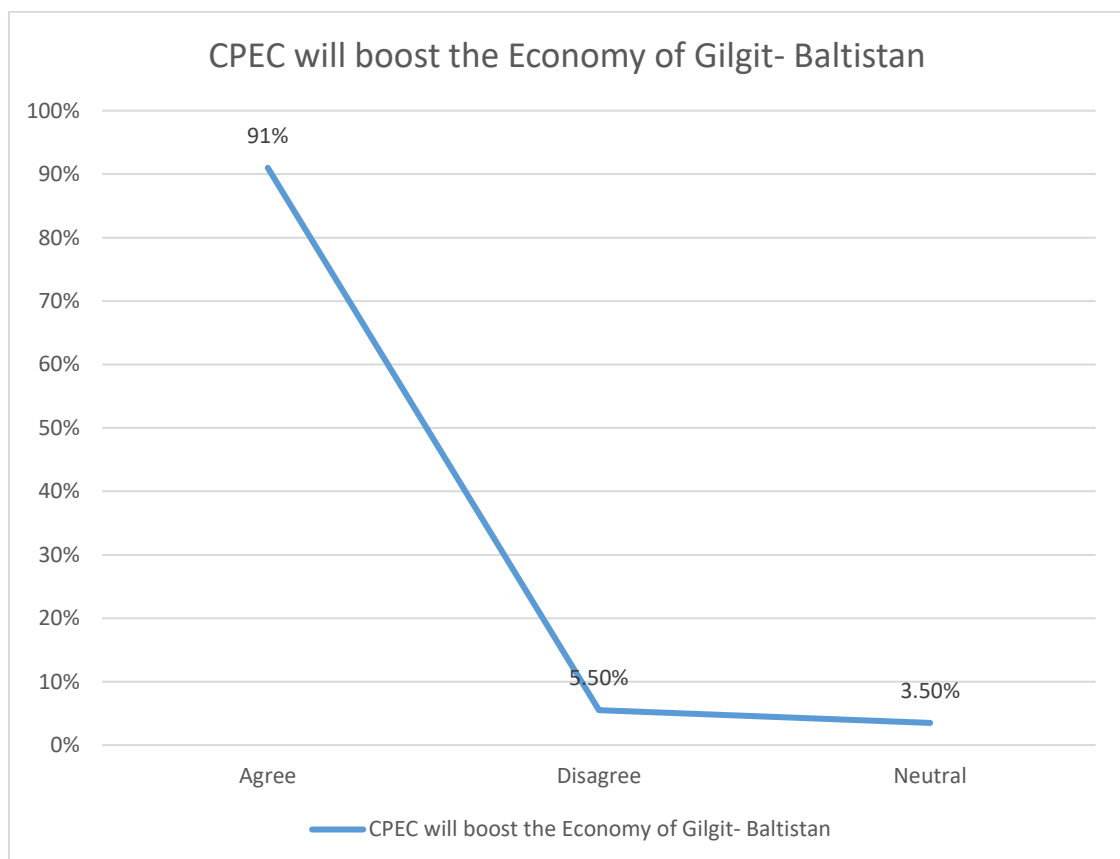


Figure 2: showed that out of 200 respondents, (182, 92%) were agreed that this project would boost the economy of Gilgit-Baltistan, (11, 5.50%) people disagreed, and (7, 3.50%) were neutral.



### CPEC will bring job opportunities to local public

		Total
CPEC will bring job opportunities to local public	Agree	191
	Disagree	6
	Neutral	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>200</b>

Table 1: showed that out of 200 respondents, (191, 95.5%) were agreed that CPEC would bring job opportunities, (6, 3%) people disagreed, and (3, 1.5%) were neutral.

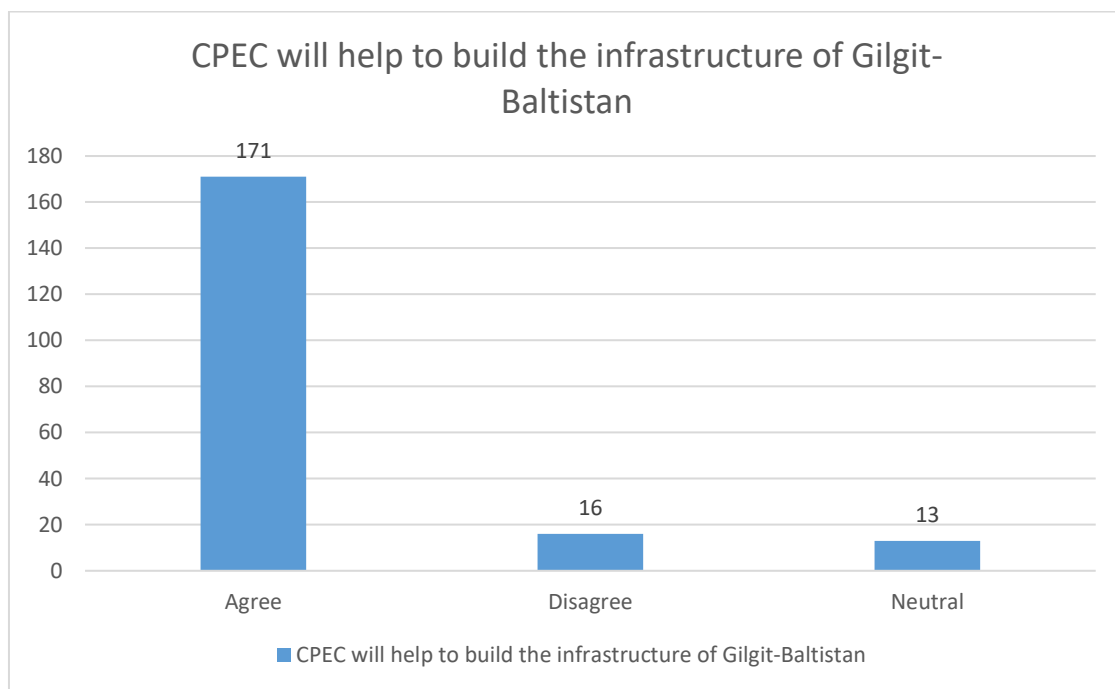


Figure 3: showed that out of 200 respondents, (171, 85.5%) were agreed that CPEC would help to build the infrastructure of Gilgit-Baltistan, (16, 8%) people disagreed, and (13, 6.5%) were neutral.

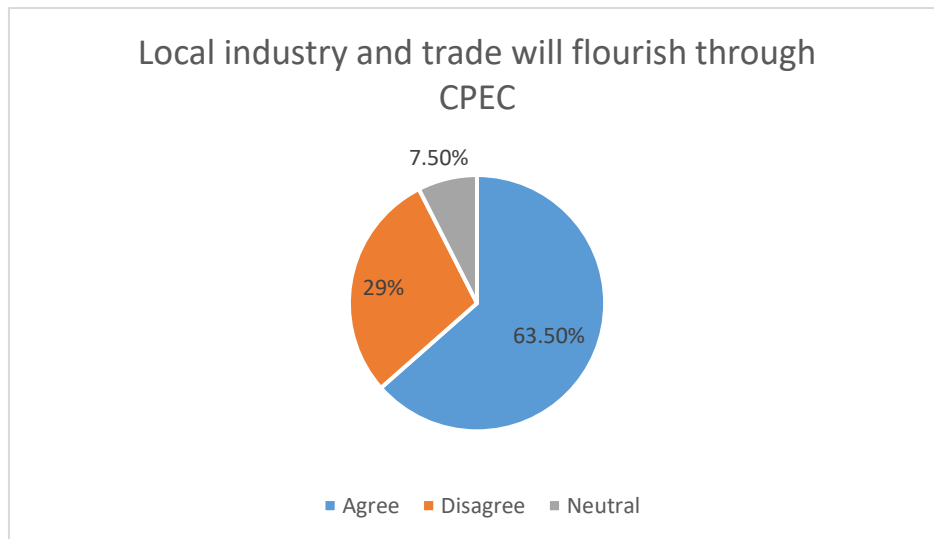


Figure4: showed that out of 200 respondents, (127, 63.5%) were agreed that CPEC would help to flourish local industry and trade, (58, 29%) people disagreed, and (15, 7.5%) were neutral.

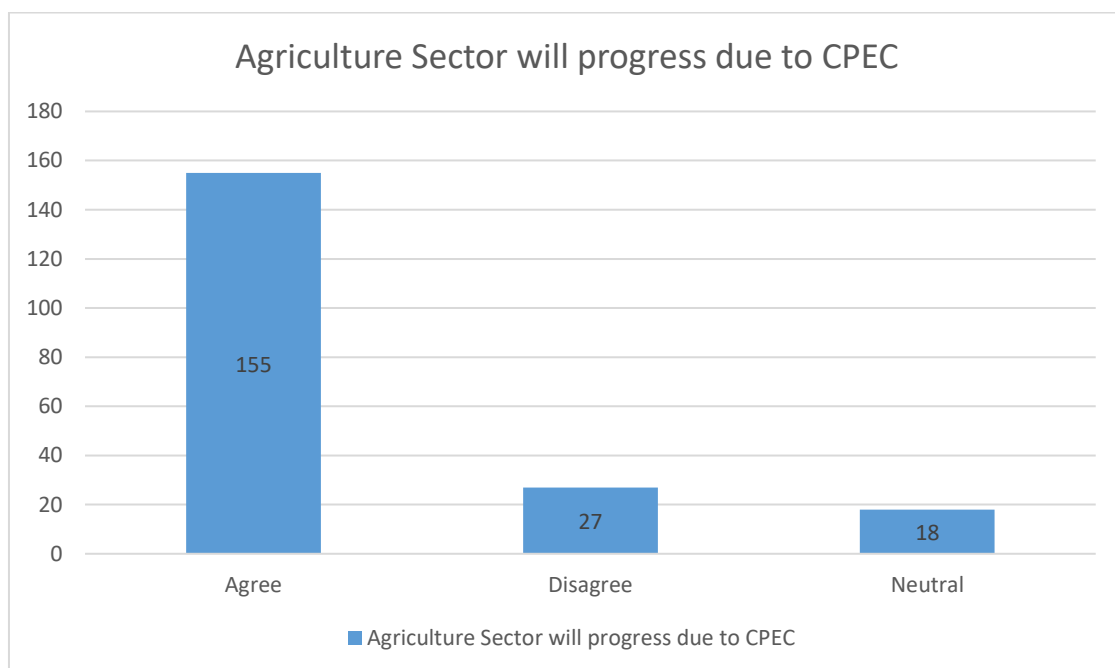


Table 6: showed that out of 200 respondents, (155, 77.5%) were agreed that the agriculture sector would progress due to CPEC, (27, 13.5%) people disagreed, and (18, 9%) were neutral.

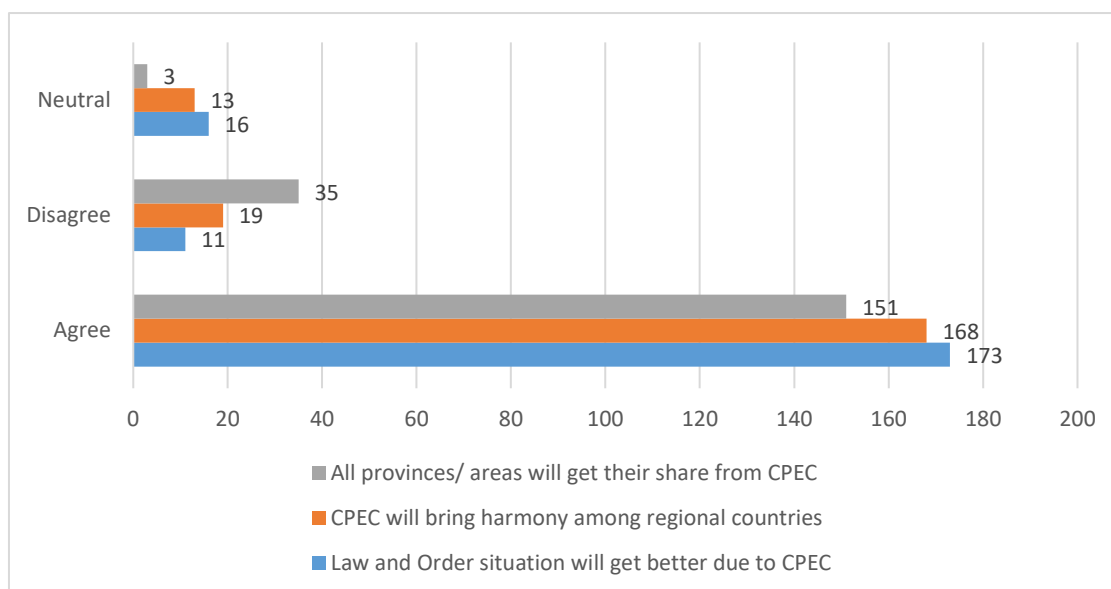


Table 7: showed that out of 200 respondents, (173, 86.5%) were agreed that the Law and order situation would get better due to CPEC, (11, 5.5%) people disagreed, and (16, 8%) were neutral, (173, 86.5%) were agreed that CPEC would bring harmony among regional countries, (11, 5.5%) people disagreed, and (16, 8%) were neutral, (151, 75.5%) were agreed that all provinces/areas would get their share from CPEC, (35, 17.5%) people disagreed, and (14, 7%) were neutral.

### Health and education sector will develop by CPEC.

The results showed that out of 200 respondents, (151, 78.5%) were agreed that economic zones and energy projects would build with the help of CPEC, (39, 19.5%) people disagreed, and ten were neutral, (148, 74%) were agreed that CPEC would bring social development, (27, 13.5%) people disagreed, and (25, 12.5%) were neutral.

### Progress on CPEC projects in GB is satisfactory.

The result showed that out of 200 respondents, (112, 56%) were agreed that progress on CPEC projects in GB is satisfactory, (77, 38.5%) people disagreed, and (11, 5.5%) were neutral, (132, 66%) were agreed that if the agreement of CPEC will be reviewed/revised, the GB might be affected, (52, 26%) people disagreed, and (15, 7.5%) were neutral, (159, 79%) were agreed that there are some serious challenges and threats to CPEC, 27 people disagreed, and (14, 7%) were neutral, (79, 39.5%) were very often read local daily newspapers, (67, 33.5%) were often read, (25, 12.5%) were read sometime, (18, 9%) were rarely read, and (11, 5.5%) were never read. The demographic of our survey respondents were, (53, 26.5%) respondents were Up to matric, (60, 30%) were intermediate, (61, 30.5%) were graduate, and (26, 13%) were postgraduate.

### Findings

1. For the survey, 200 residents of Gilgit-Baltistan were selected. The out of 200 respondents, 79 were very often read local daily newspapers, 67

The results showed that out of 200 respondents, (157, 78.5%) were agreed that the health and education sector would develop by CPEC, (36, 18%) people disagreed, and (7, 3.5%) were neutral. were often read, 25 were read sometime, 18 were rarely read, and 11 were never read.

2. There were a total number of 200 respondents of the survey as per qualification wise out of 53 respondents were Upto matric, 60 were intermediate, 61 were graduate, and 26 were postgraduate.

3. The majority of the public of Gilgit-Baltistan have positive thinking about CPEC 70.51% of the public was agreed that CPEC would bring prosperity and development in the region while 29. 49% public agenda told that there were some severe challenges to the project, the government wants to review the agreement of CPEC and Gilgit-Baltistan was neglected in CPEC project distribution.

4. According to residents of Gilgit-Baltistan, the project of CPEC will bring economic and infrastructural revolution to the region. Still, they gave priority to peace and security and wished that this project will bring peace and strengthen security. On a priority basis, the media and public agenda were different from each other.

6. Interestingly, both media and the public were on the same page and agreed that CPEC would

strengthen relations between China and Pakistan \, bring harmony among regional countries.

7. The researcher was asked nine more questions from the respondents about concerns of the local public of GB from CPEC, and the finding showed that environmental changes would come due to CPEC and the respondents wished that media should give coverage to the Environmental effect of CPEC.

8. The respondents were agreed that culture invasion due to CPEC is a big concern, and the media should give adequate coverage to this concern.

9. There are many religious concerns due to CPEC, and the respondents were agreed that the media should cover this concern.

## Conclusion

The local public of GB is optimistic about the project of CPEC. 70.51% public was agreed that CPEC would bring prosperity and development in the region, while 29. 49% public agenda told that there were some severe challenges to the project. Mostly the content of these stories expressed that CPEC is a fruitful project which will bring economic and infrastructural development to Pakistan. The project is beneficial to all Province/regions of Pakistan and brings peace and prosperity to the region. Both the local public and local press have positive frames about the CPEC. According to the local public, there are some public concerns about CPEC and the local media of GB was not given coverage to these concerns. The public wished that the media should give coverage to those concerns. The concerns of the local public of GB from the project of CPEC were Environment, Cultural, religious and local industry.

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