

The Politics of Corridors: Pakistan Under New Paradigm Shift

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Abstract

This research paper sieges that how corridors are affecting and changing our current world. It also explores how the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor enhance globalization and regional connectivity. The China-Pakistan economic corridor is a gateway for the Asiatic region as well as Africa and Europe. Pakistan and China are key beneficiaries of this project and Pakistan is passing through a big paradigm shift. The foundation of this research is based on current data available through print and electronic means likewise, National and International Journals, organizational reports, books, academic papers, electronic sources, Newspapers etc. because it is a very recent and current international symposium. The methodology of this research is qualitative, descriptive and analytical. This study finds that corridors are thoroughly changing our world. The China-Pakistan economic corridor is not merely a rope of hope between two neighboring countries rather it is a factual way designed by the thinkers of both nations. It proves that in the changing geo-strategic and political conditions of the world, the China-Pakistan economic corridor will enhance the process of globalization and regional connectivity; it will be a leap forward in the economic development of the entire region, especially Pakistan. This research paper delves into geo-strategic, geo-political; geo-economics and geo-cultural paradigm shifts through this corridor in the context of globalization and glocalization. This research will play a vital role to open new galaxies for the research scholars related to International Relations, Defense & Strategic Studies, Political Science and other concerns. It will be a vivid and lucid narration of Corridor politics and Pakistan under a new paradigm shift for the curious in this regard. **Keywords:** Corridor, Pakistan, CPEC, Globalization, Glocalization and Paradigm Shift

Introduction

Slumbering Chinese start awakening and The Himalayan springs tumultuous. (Ibal, 1935). Today, the world has become a global village, where every nation is seeking for better opportunities to increase its national power, sustainable development, and constantly extending global roles on the principle of interdependence. Especially the concept of economic corridors has fully changed the global and regional financial narrative of development and growth; China's (OBOR) One Belt One Road Initiative; to be a step towards globalization, a way to prosperity and long-term deep relations among different nations across the globe and the region itself. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), formerly known as One Belt One Road (OBOR) is an international infrastructural programme launched by the Chinese government in 2013 to invest a huge amount of capital in more than 70 countries. (World Bank. Archived, 2019)

It is an era of regional connectivity, globalization, glocalization, economic development and integration. We are living in the world of corridors. CPEC is the offshoot of OBOR, a trillion-dollar mega Initiative. It is very much necessary for globalization, soft balancing and economic equilibrium in the region to promote projects like CPEC, so that, through interconnectivity, we can make progress and enhance parity in the region. Rasool, S., and Kundi, M. (2018) CPEC is an integral part of the OBOR initiative. This project will surely be beneficial both for China and Pakistan as well as for Central Asian States, Iran, Afghanistan and the whole region. CPEC is based on win-win model and it will enhance regional connectivity through new networks of road and rail and air linkages. With this, the exchange of goods and services will improve and people will come nearer to each other, People will understand new cultures and regional knowledge which will promote more business and trade. All this will increase business, regional integration, national harmony and economic interdependence (iv).

CPEC is thought to be an enormous and the biggest investment for promoting regional harmony and connectivity and also for provision of funds for infrastructure development. Baruah, D. (2018) scholars of the world are very keen to put their attention on corridor politics, as it has deep strategic, economic, political and cultural impacts for Pakistan. Pakistan's geo-strategic location provides a chance of investment to Chinese as well as Pakistan can get financial benefit to uplift its deteriorating economy, poor security conditions and severe political instability. As it has been mentioned that it's a huge project of \$62 billion, it can change our fate and can give a new life to Pakistan. To build up a powerful state, wealth has big role, a stable economy can give more influence in all areas of state power. Pakistan keeps an important geography, a large young population and 6th biggest army in the world. It has the capacity to become Asian tiger. The News, (2016, July 21).

CPEC is a fabric of territorial networks and integration. It will not only

be fruitful for Pakistan and China but the region as well. The development of geographic interconnections with better networks of rail, road and transport will open new horizons of economic growth, masses interaction, cultural understanding, higher level business activities and energy mechanism. CPEC is based on win-win model and surely will change the destiny of the region by increasing level of mutual cooperation and integration. It is a way forward towards glocalization in this global village. There is hope that region will make geo-strategic, geo-economic -geo-political and geo-cultural growth and establish peace for future generations. This research explores that Corridor politics of modern times is a new phenomena and according to my research study approximately nobody has discussed Corridor politics from Pakistan's strategic, economic, political and cultural perspective of globalization and glocalization and there is research gap to fill in. This research sieges that CPEC will enhance globalization and regional connectivity. CPEC is a gateway for Asiatic region as well as Africa and Europe. Pakistan and China are key beneficiaries of this project. There will be an economic paradigm shift from Europe towards Asia after the completion of CPEC.

The foundation of this research is based on current data available through print and electronic means likewise, national and international journals, organizational reports, books, academic papers, electronic sources, newspapers etc. because it a very recent and current international symposium. Methodology of this research is qualitative, descriptive and analytical.

This study aims to examine the geo-strategic, geo-political, geo-economics and geo-cultural impacts of CPEC in the perspective of globalization and glocalization under corridor politics. Recently, CPEC is the core issue of discussion among national and international scholars. Many researchers have worked on different angles of CPEC but there is lack of sufficient work on this topic conducted by any researcher. So, there is desperate need to work on such hot topic. There are lot of doubts about CPEC. Some call it a game changer for Pakistan and some think that it's a debt trap and another slavery of foreign forces. There are so many stories that common man cannot understand the real facts. So, it is very much necessary to make a comprehensive investigation of facts and research study on the geo-strategic importance of CPEC in the perspective of globalization and glocalization and all related questions to this mega project, because this project has become the lifeline for Pakistan. Above all, very little attention has been given to this important project and matters have been politicized. All political elite of Pakistan wants to get credit of CPEC by cheap slogans and no serious work has been done to understand foreign propaganda and eradicate that through the research based information. This research work is an effort to highlight the geo-strategic impacts of CPEC and produce results through standard research to fill this literature gap on such an important national project. Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives (ix).

Almost all short term projects related to energy, infrastructure and Gwadar port have been completed and medium term projects are under the way.

CPEC has been entered in the second phase of its completion. Two more phases' midterm in 2025 and long term in 2030 yet to be completed. Many Pakistani and foreign researchers have worked on different aspects of CPEC, but to the best of author's knowledge nobody has properly worked on this research topic. The Politics of corridors: Pakistan under new paradigm shift.

How do you elaborate the politics of corridors from Pakistan's perspective? What are the expected strategic, economic, political and cultural impacts of CPEC in the perspective of globalization and glocalization? This key research question has clear thrust to explore CPEC as a journey in the current global and local geo-strategic, geo-economic and geo-political and geo-cultural perspective. For more learning about CPEC, I shall also analyze this from socio-economic-political and cultural outlook with reference to globalization and glocalization.

Literature Review Corridors

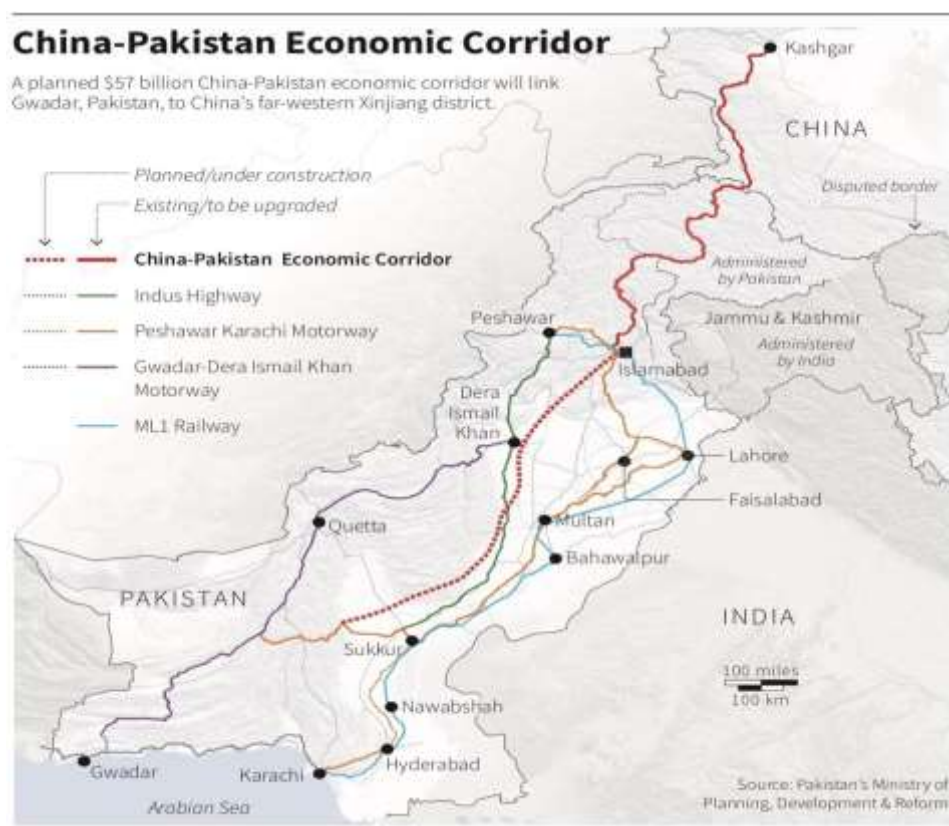
While understanding the BRI, it is compulsory to deeply know about concept of economic corridors. Brunner (2013). Brunner clearly defines that such geography where many clusters of linkage are shaped and engage by some special economic handlers are called economic corridors. Such corridors work as connection between multiple economic axes, commonly made in urban areas. They work through different networks instead of isolation. Such corridors provide proper share to each partner, likewise, E.U and NAFTA and China's One Belt One Road also work on this theory. (Xie, Ma & Li, 2015).

OBOR CORRIDORS



China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

CPEC is a huge project for improving bilateral relations between two countries to overhaul and build infrastructure integrating regional countries. On 20th April 2015, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif signed 51 agreements and MOUs costing \$46 billion. The main purpose of CPEC was to uplift the deteriorated economy of Pakistan by building up energy projects, overhauling of old railway tracks, building new rail and road networks for fast and speedy transportation. It will connect deep sea port of Gwadar to Xinjiang province of China. China's Xinjiang borders meet with Russia, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, India and Pakistan having old silk route going through its territory. CPEC is called the Marshal Plan of China for Asiatic region and many countries are part of this initiative. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Silk-Road-trade-route>



The CPEC project is expected to incorporate an approximately 2,000-kilometer joint transportation route between Kashgar in northwestern China to Gwadar Port on the Arabian Sea, very close to the Iranian border. After the completion of the corridor, oil from the Middle East can be offloaded at Gwadar. This will provide Pakistan a chance to be an “Asian

Tiger.” In the past, Pakistan has neglected two of its most rich resources areas, that is, Baluchistan and the sea. CPEC is a great opportunity to reverse this strategic course. A Kazi - CPEC Conference, Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad, 2017.

GLOBALIZATION

In 1930s, the word globalization was firstly used in the English language, but could not get popularity and merely used in the context of education. For decades, this term was just only used in scholars and nothing else. French economist François Per Roux in his essays from the early 1960s had used the term French (mondialization) which means worldization. Since its creation, the word, globalization keeps variety of competitive definitions and interpretations. It goes back to worldwide movements of empire and trade throughout the Asiatic region from the colonial period since the 15th century. As, it is a very complex term to define, different research articles, projects and dialogue usually focus on a single aspect of globalization. Karl Marx in 1848, mentioned the increasing level of capitalized national interdependence, he gave the idea of proletariats world regime. He states: “The exploitation of capitalist forces has become worldwide in character. This universal role of capitalists is due to the industry on which it is erected. As long as the industry flourishes, it will create more tensions for itself. Big fish will eat the small ones. Their hunger for exploitation will force them to act globally and seek new markets worldwide (x).

Origin of the Word None of us clearly knows who invented the word “globalization”. Someone might have spoken this word. It is a combination of the English words, “global” and “ization”. It means “to become global” or “to make global”.

The word globalization was first used in the 1930s. Later on; it was put into the Merriam-Webster dictionary in 1951. In the 1960s, it was commonly used by social scientists and economists. In 1962, Marshall McLuhan, a Canadian scholar, used the term “global village” while analyzing the impacts of mass media on society. Ted Levitt is thought to be the founder of this word, globalization, after German defeat in WW2. It became a buzzword and popularized across the world.

“The act of globalizing”; from the noun “global” meaning “pertaining to or involving the whole world”; “worldwide”; “universal”

GLOCALIZATION

The word glocalization is a compound of "global" and "local." The term was customized on Japanese word, Dochakuka that means to take up the farming strategy to someone's own local environment. From business point of view the idea refers to global localization. This idea and related word is derived from Japanese. Manners, I. (2000).

"Glocalization" was introduced in the 1980s in a publication of the Harvard Business Review. Roland, Robertson, expressed his views in 1997 "globalization and Indigenous Culture", he stated that glocalization "means the collective presence of global and local approach in products." In 1990s, Robertson introduced this term in English community, whereas Keith Hampton and Barry Wellman Canadian sociologists used it in late 1990s. Zygmunt Bauman, Erik Swyngedouw were also late users. According to the Oxford dictionary of new words, the term "glocal" and the process noun "glocalization" are developed by using global and local to mix up." Shamsuddoha, M (Globalization to glocalization: a conceptual analysis), assistant professor.

Word Spy, describes, glocalization tells "any product created for international market while customizing according to regional culture." <http://www.wordspy.com/words>. In 2000, the word glocalization had become a slogan of business class. It has a history where the locals is mingle with the global leadership and markets consisting of new cultural clashes. It introduced new cultural ideas and concepts. In short words, we focus on centralization in globalization while glocalization means to decentralization of economy.

Analytical Analysis

Corridor Politics and new paradigm shift Strategic, Economic, Political and Cultural Change. We are living in the era of corridors. China has introduced OBOR while west is launching its own Corridor project to counter the rising strategic, political and economic domination of China in the Asiatic region as well as in the whole world through its OBOR vision of Xij Jinping. CPEC being an off shoot of OBOR has deep geo-strategic significance for Pakistan. It is the lifeline for Pakistan. CPEC will deeply impact on Pakistan's geography, foreign policy, population & culture, economy, military and politics. CPEC is the combination of multiple projects, it gives access China to Gulf region and Africa and influence over Pakistan. Before starting CPEC, Pakistan was unstable and weak due to internal economic crisis and war on terror outside. If we look Pakistan's geography, it has very important geo-strategic location in the world. Many important and veto power states around us make us more important. In the west, there is Iran rich with oil and gas, In the north west, there is Afghanistan enriched with mines and minerals, Also Russia via Vakhn corridor, in the North there is our deep, time tested and loyal friend China, the largest population and second world class economy, in North East there is Siachin and Kashmir valley, In the east and south east side is India, the world second larger population and growing economy with an average of 8% annual growth. (2018, August 31) The Economic Times, India.

Gwadar port is the key project of CPEC, which is situated at the mouth of Persian Gulf and quite near to world trade route Strait of Hormuz. Pakistan had given Gwadar the status of sea port in 1964. Gwadar

port provides access to landlocked countries to deep Arabian sea. Geography of this port shapes it into regional hub as it is situated in the Centre of Persian Gulf, Middle East, Afghanistan, CARs and South East Asia (Kataria, J. R., & Naveed, A. 2014). The Chinese province Xinxiang's city Kashgarl is the origin of CPEC. Entering through Khunjrab Pass in Pakistan, linking up all provinces and G.B, it ends at Gwadar Port. Afridi, M. K., & Khalid, I. (2016). No doubt, being all weather, all rounder friends, China has supported in all possible ways but CPEC has made two nations two in one. Although, we have controlled foreign terrorism by massive army operations but Baluchistan is still insecure due to BLA and other separatists groups. This situation is constant danger for CPEC and geography of Pakistan. Many countries are trying to sabotage this project because they do not want to see Pakistan a prosperous and strong country. For CPEC security, Pakistan has created a SSD or special security division which consists of 15000 soldiers and deployed in six security zones to stop any illegal activity against Chinese workers (Ibrar et al., 2016).

Pakistan and China have two different political ideologies and different cultures but economic ties and geo-strategic relationship have linked both countries so strongly that world exemplifies our friendship. Our friendship is sweet like honey, deep like Arabian Sea and high like Himalayan Mountains. We are all weather and all round friends indeed. Pakistan is an Islamic democratic republic and its good for us that we have deep brotherly relations with all Muslim states due to Islamic factor, close relationship with west due to democracy and on economic and geo-strategic grounds, we are near to China. Both big Islamic countries Iran and KSA are part of CPEC and investing in different projects. Now-a-days, we are very close to China due to CPEC because economic interdependence and geo-strategic interests have linked both countries having two opposite political ideologies and cultures. China is a socialist country with strong political authoritarian command of communist party, where as Pakistan is an Islamic republic and democratic state. Due to multi-billion project of CPEC, both the states are in a honey moon period, as CPEC is interconnecting whole Pakistan. All provinces are equally participating in CPEC (Hameed, M. 2018).

Culture has vital impact on making a positive and soft image of any country in global politics. Joseph Nye threw light on the importance of culture and he is of the view that it is an effective tool for any state to have soft power. In very old times, traditional trade ways between the East and the West have played role in the development, growth and transfer of art, religion and culture. Nye Jr, J. S. (2004). The ancient silk route had provided as a corridor link Eastern side of China & India to western way with Roman world. This trade route was an excellent tool for cultural exchange among regions and civilizations. (2017, November). Spearhead Research, CPEC: Enhancing Pakistan-China Cultural Exchange.

All world religions like Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism are the examples of people's interaction and connectivity through this old silk route and definitely spread due to mutual interaction & exchange of thoughts. OBOR is the new and modern shape of Silk Route. It has the potential to boost up cultural relations among nations. The South side of this new silk route is called CPEC passing through Pakistan. It is hoped that CPEC will have great and significant influence on geostrategic, economic, political and cultural conditions of Pakistani people as well as the region. There will be love bond among the people of region. Civilizations learn from each others, China's communist values are totally different from Pakistan's Islamic values. Through CPEC Pakistan can avail the opportunity to spread its culture. CPEC will increase people to people contacts and it will enhance cultural cooperation which also important for the project of CPEC. Pakistan and China should exchange each other's cultural programmes, films, art, drama and literature. Both are encouraging exchange of students in their respective universities. In coming five years, China is providing 2000 training opportunities for Pakistani people and 1000 Chinese language teachers for Pakistan (Butt, K. M., & Butt, A. A. 2015).

Although Pakistan is severely facing internal socio-economic and political crisis as anti Corridor forces are active to sabotage this billion dollar project which is surely an economic, strategic, political and cultural paradigm shift for Pakistan because on the successful completion of CPEC Pakistan will be more stable on socio-economic -political and military fronts as compare to its current national situation.

Findings

This research article finds that Corridor politics is an ongoing phenomena in the region. CPEC is an offshoot of OBOR, and it is still entering through its second phase, so the results of this study cannot be concluded till the successful completion of this project. However, after researching on this important topic, the writer has concluded some factual based results which are as follows:

1. Corridors are key for development and change. CPEC is an integral part of China's trillion dollar OBOR strategy, which enhances its significance.
2. Strategically, China-Pak Economic Corridor is considered the lifeline for Pakistan. As; it enters into Gilgit Baltistan from Xinjiang province that means Gilgit has been accepted Pakistani territory rather than a disputed area. It will directly impact Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir as GB will be a free trade zone.
3. Geo-strategic location of Pakistan increases the significance of the CPEC because we are a gateway towards North, West and Central Asia as well as for South and Eastern Asia.
4. Pakistan will be able to secure and control Baluchistan insurgency and

- TTP in KPK as it has developed a Special Security Division deployed to protect Chinese workers and engineers on different CPEC projects.
5. Geo-strategic significance of CPEC has been increased as Gwadar is the Hub of this corridor. Geographically, it will connect through Xinjiang where three OBOR corridors are also passing through to interlink China with Russia, Central Asia and Europe.
 6. Gwadar port has been completed and fully functional, that means China has got access to Arabian Sea and Africa via CPEC, Its time, distance and cost have been minimized three to four times rather than the Malacca Sea route. China is now feeling more comfortable.
 7. If possibly, Pakistan develops Gwadar port into a strategic naval base, it will enhance its geo-strategic significance but it may endanger our relations with the US as it has already deployed its submarine into Arabian Sea to protect oil imports/cargo.
 8. China-Pak Economic Corridor connects all Pakistan through three major Routes, 1. Western, 2, Central and 3, Eastern; it will directly benefit Pakistan's industry and agriculture because time, distance and cost will be reduced to sell the products in regional markets.
 9. Free trade zones will enhance economic activities and will generate more jobs.
 10. CPEC will generate 2.3 million jobs till 2030. A total of 122 projects will be completed under CPEC. 32 projects have been completed, 54 projects are under completion and remaining is in pipeline. It has created 75000 jobs for Pakistanis right now. 82.5% labor belongs to Pakistan and 17.5% workers and engineers are working from China.
 11. The Corridor politics may also weaken Pakistan because Pakistan has become a pendulum between China and western interests. Its current unstable condition is the clear result of foreign intervention through politics of world institutions.

Conclusions

After Russian downfall in 1991, the world is facing injustice, exploitation and balance of power crisis, and severe human crisis under the new world order of the U.S.A. No third world countries have been left especially; the Muslims of the world are facing severe threats around the world. The U.S world order has been shaped into globalization. Firstly, developing economies have been high-jacked by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization. Secondly; they have controlled the world economy through Multinational Corporations now. No parallel power after Russia is there to fill the gap in the international system based on balance of power and justice. The world is being run by single S.H.O. After two decades of war on terror, Asiatic region especially Pakistan and Afghanistan are facing serious

security and economic and political issues. Afghanistan is facing the Taliban again and there is an economic & human crisis, whereas Pakistan is an atomic power with a lingering economy, unstable political system, outdated education system, injustice, extremism, terrorism by non-state actors, corruption, bad governance, low growth rate, trade deficit, internal, external debt, energy crisis and off course Kashmir dispute in the region instead of having great human capital and natural resources. Above all, Pakistan has very important geo-strategic and geo-political location in the region. A well trained army with lot of professional skills, atomic weapons, latest missile technology and wish to lead the Islamic Ummah, increases its glory and honour. But due to severe problems mentioned above, facing since its creation, Pakistan could not be able to lead the Ummah and play a pivotal role as Asian tiger. There was a time when Pakistan was considered a role model economy for developing world, North Korea took its five year plan from Pakistan, China freed two years later and astonished to see Pakistan's development in 1960s, but Pakistan indulged in crisis over crisis after some economic development.

U.S knows that if this project is materialized than its economic, military and financial monopoly would be challenged, that's why America as well as India has been creating hurdles in the way of CPEC through BLA, TTP, ISIS and other institutions like IMF and FATF. Actually, CPEC is an economic paradigm shift from West to East. And the people of Asia have decided to get free themselves from western chains of slavery by becoming part of CPEC and OBOR initiative. CPEC is a starting of new Asiatic era of regional connectivity, economic prosperity, cultural diversity and achievement of geo-strategic goals and in real sense government of the people over people rather than western mashies. Europe and U.S can also get benefits if they become part of Sino-globalization in the supreme interest of humanity. On the other hand, there would be new cold war between China and U.S for economic and military and technological domination & supremacy as U.S.A has launched its trillion dollars mega project of Corridors to counter expected hegemony of China in the world politics.

Recommendations

After a detailed research on this topic, writer suggests some recommendations to policy makers.

- a. Pakistan and China should remove all concerns of U.S.A and India especially on CPEC.
- b. Govt. of Pakistan needs a nationwide consensus on equal development through CPEC.
- c. Pakistani leadership should focus on political stability of the country rather than fighting against each other.
- d. We should demand transfer of technology from the companies working on this corridor.

- e. There should be a joint security mechanism to secure the corridor future.

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