

Abstract: *Geographical primacy plays a vital role in countries' strategic position, creating economic benefits and influencing and shaping the region's dynamics. Pakistan's geo-strategic location is significant in South Asia, surrounded by large countries, waterways, countries, and essential oil reserves that have been blessed geographically. The key segments of OBOR initiated in Pakistan, known as CPEC. CPEC has provided Pakistan with the top-notch possibility to show its strong and diverse socio-cultural values. The tourism industry is significant to make a distinction in the lives of thousands of human beings. Tourism increases awareness, understanding, lowering poverty, creating jobs, and fostering improvement and tolerance. The new dimensions are arising from the route developing between Pakistan and China. Transport is an essential segment of the product; good routes increase comfortability and connectivity and reduce price and time between destinations.*

Key Words: Pakistan, CPEC, Tourism, Gawadar, OBOR, Leiper's Model.

Introduction

The China and Pakistan diplomatic relationships mounted in the 1950s since each country has ties with one another (Kayani *et al.*, 2013). While the relationship of china to this land is from millennia, The south section of the land Silk Roads winds down the highest mountains of the Karakoram through modern Pakistan and then twists east into India. The Silk Road has been formally developed during China's Han Dynasty, a network of trade routes that connected the ancient world realms in trade with 130 BCE and 1453 CE (Ferr, G. M. 2017). The CPEC a joint project "One Belt One Road," through Xinjiang in China to Gawadar seaport in Pakistan through an extensive network of rail & highways, airports, and pipelines (Riaz and Mi 2017). The Chinese Head of State Xi Jinping in 2013, proposed the one Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative. CPEC rests on one of the leading pilot projects of the OBOR initiative. This venture-backed through the Silk Road Fund announced via President Xi Jinping. CPEC investments can be spread over 15 years and expand the perception into beneficial relations between China and Pakistan (Khalil 2017). According to the renowned meaning of Chinese saying is that the riches has happened when you build highways. The CPEC route is 3,000 km from Kashgar to Gawadar, with an average cost of \$46 (Kazi 2017). The value of the CPEC task is now really worth \$62 billion. CPEC is a framework of geographical connectivity connected via the Belt and Road Initiative, which is not always only for China and Pakistan; however, for all the nations concerned in the initiative of CPEC. The impact of CPEC initiatives on the Pakistan economy and its effects on locals' living standards has been studied (Khan, Bibi, Lyu, Alam, *et al.*, 2020; Khan, Bibi, Lyu, Garavelli, *et al.*, 2020). This development will offer regional development, economic stability, and peace (Khan, Bibi, Ardito, *et al.*, 2020; Khan, Bibi, Lorenzo, Lyu, & Babar, 2020). The three phases of CPEC will be furnished in 2018, 2025, and 2030. CPEC not only connects Pakistan with China but additionally to the central Asian states. The route from Kashgar

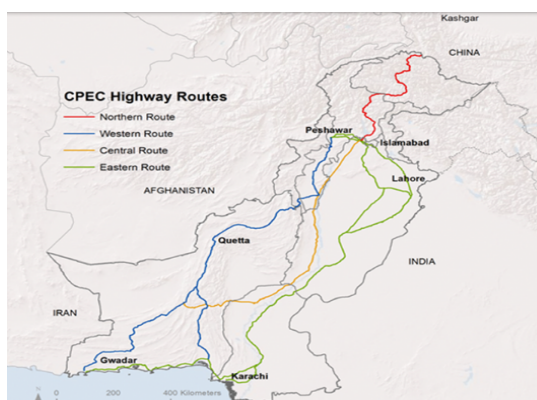


Figure 1: Roads and Power Projects

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[China] enter into the Khunjrab pass [Gilgit Baltistan, Pakistan] reach to Gwadar port [Baluchistan, Pakistan] in Southern Pakistan will serve as a trade transit course for China (Riaz and Mi 2017).

Pakistan 6th populace nation but ranks 126th out of one hundred fourthly in manufacturing competitiveness, 90th in innovation and development sophistication, 150th out of One eighty-three in PCI, 147th within the Human Improvement Index, 44th on GDP size (Monno 2017). According to Gallup Pakistan, 65% of Pakistanis are aware of CPEC, 85% of Pakistanis considered CPEC is important (very a whole lot or rather) for Pakistan's development (Gallup Pakistan 2017). The sector is currently responsible for creating approximately 3 million jobs, which would increase to about 3.6 million with CPEC (<http://pc.gov.pk/>). In the year 2017, a record 1.75 million tourists visited Pakistan, Over 120 Pakistani missions abroad issued visas to 92,000 foreigners, while 39,000 Chinese came to Pakistan in the past five years (Gishkori, 2018). In the northern areas in 0.25 million travelers, both domestic and international, traveled to Pakistan. According to the WTTC, in the final 12 months, income from tourism added around \$194 million to Pakistan's financial system, 6.9 percent of GDP. The WTTC expects to grow into 36.1 bn dollars in a decade. (<https://www.dawn.com/information/1403800>). The Jovago Pakistan estimates that Pakistan's leisure tourism spending will exceed \$10.3 in 2016 to \$17.6 bn in 2026. Business travel spending is predicted to jump from \$1.9 bn in 2016 to \$3.3 bn in 2026 (The explicit Tribune 2017).

Model Fit: CPEC & Leiper's Model of Tourism Systems (2004)

The CPEC can be described through Leiper's (2004) Tourism system model as a system theory. The model's concept considers tourism as a system comprising of 5 correlated segments; tourists, tourism industry), and geographic segments comprising tourist generating region, transit route, and tourist destination region. These segments are matter to effect by outside milieus (LEP; legal, economic, political environments) (Bibi et al., 2020; Hongdao, Bibi, Khan, Ardito, & Khaskheli, 2019). A TDR is a geographic concept of a tourist destination, where tourist attraction lies in facilities and activities. Transit routes are linking the traveller between TGA and TDR and facilitate the tourist. You can find the DMCs and DOMs, attractions, amenities & related services that link another to build a synergistic system in the system (Leiper, 2004). In the CPEC scenario, Gawadar & Xinjiang are the TGA/TDR segment of the system as CPEC as a transit route between the two areas. The routes connect and accelerate countries' development and improve their commerce and tourism (Farid et al., 2020; Khan, Bibi, Lyu, Garavelli, et al., 2020). This road network cuts the distance from nearly 13000 km to just 2000 km (Ali et al.: 2017). Zelinsky (1970) identified some factors that affect the flow of the tourist, which include international connectivity, the distance between the two areas, and attractiveness of one over other countries (Boniface, B., Cooper, C., & Cooper, R, 2006).

Methodology

This study examines the tourism niche development of CPEC projects. This article refers to the desk study method; therefore, the qualitative research method is employed for this analysis. It is based on a secondary source of data gathered from various journals, newspapers, and policy papers. The focus of the paper is reshaping travel and Tourism through CPEC development.

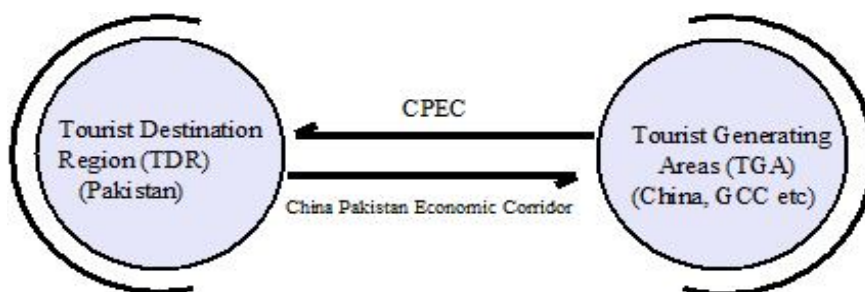


Figure 1: Explaining Leiper Model

Tourism Industry

China has risen as the second biggest economy globally (Hongdao, Bibi, Khan, Ardito, & Nurunnabi, 2019; Khan, Bibi, Lorenzo, et al., 2020). The buying and spending force of the Chines are expanding. Chinese Tourism spending in 2015 was \$120 billion in 2016; it leads to \$135 million and rises to 1.7 million in 2017. Travelling

abroad for Chinese new activity and most of them has never travelled abroad, so like to travel in a group. 31% of them opted for Leisure. Likewise, numerous Chinese don't communicate in English, so they in Tour Groups (UNWTO 2018). This phenomenon of Chinese travelling in the travel industry may favour the Pakistan tourism industry. The Chinese investment via CPEC an opportunity for tourism development between the two countries. The CPEC would enhance the tourism industry's quality of services and benefit both the two nations to robust socio-cultural and economic development. Northern Pakistan is well-known for its natural serenity for rich culture, and history (Khan, Bibi, Lyu, Alam, et al., 2020). It can also attract many tourists to generate tourism revenue (Khan, Bibi, Ardito, et al., 2020). The GB hosts the most significant digits of climbers consistently visiting the K-2 and other peaks of the three mighty mountains. The local community has fewer livelihood opportunity, and for the most part, they predominantly reliant upon agriculture and tourism. The CPEC would bring a new period tourism industry and upgrade the lodging business, making occupations for large numbers of people. Besides, it would enhance, expand, and overhaul the KKH and prosper different enterprises like a cottage industry, handicraft, and cultural activities, including events, festivals, and adventure activities. The British Backpacker Society entitled Pakistan is the top travel destination for the year 2018.

Soft Image of the Country

The CPEC that takeover the discussion in European media and bring Pakistan is the economic debates. The investors are now looking closely at the progress in CPEC and regional opulence. The Global airlines were coming back into major Pakistan cities, which is again a good indication. A special security protocol consisting of nine thousand Pak Army soldiers and six thousand para-military forces personnel are responsible for securing the CPEC and the development along the route. This additional security measure will also enhance peace, law, and order in the remote areas and the CPEC.

Travelling Services; Tourism Accessibility

Travel business is directly connected with the development of travel infrastructure will instantly enhance accessibility (Khan, Bibi, Lyu, Latif, & Lorenzo, 2020; Khan, Bibi, Lyu, Raza, et al., 2020). The story of CPEC can result in infrastructure development, which can positively impact the business in the Asian nation (<https://pakistanourtravel.com/2017>). These routes will increase comfort, reduce the time between the destinations. The CPEC is a blend of debt and investment to create energy and infrastructure in Pakistan to develop trade. It is focusing on 17.7%. i.e., US\$17 will be spent on the transportation and logistics services in Pakistan (<http://www.aei.org>). It'll not solely enhance the trade but also increase employment, tourism, growth in the rural areas and link the rural areas to urban components. Two mega infrastructures, i.e., Sukkur to Multan section and KKH Phase II from Havellian to Thakot section, is one of the most significant transportation infrastructure developments, using about ten thousand local workforces. Pakistan is charmed with peculiar natural areas like Swat, Naran, Kaghan, Muree, Kashmir, and Ziarat; the network will increase the tourist flow from distant areas. New and more comfortable bus services are inaugurated in many cities due to these routes. Shuja Express already started the CPEC Bus service from Lahore to Kashghar, two days approximately 30 hrs of travelling time from Lahore to Gilgit and Kashghar via Khujrab pass. The CPEC transit route will also add a demand for eight hundred thousand automobiles over the next fifteen years and trigger secondary and tertiary employment.

Natural & Leisure Tourism

The rich and unique biodiversity is an attraction it is own. The wilderness of the three mighty mountains in the northern area is the hotspot area for natural and adventure tourism. The mountainous north can become the tourism hub if the infrastructure and superstructure are upgraded. CPEC is passing through the stunning north of Pakistan. The North of Pakistan GB province will connect Xinjiang to the global market through Gwadar in the Arabian Sea. The Tourism industry will grow faster when rail and road projects are completed. This project is an innovative silk route and burning lure in the world. The research investigated that the Gulf Arabs spend much of their time in shopping and theme parks, especially during the summer months. So it is imperative to start tourism superstructure development side by side to attach the wealthy MENA market into Pakistan.

Coastal Tourism

Pakistan already has the essential constituents for a prosperous maritime tourism sector owing its magnificent shores endowed with God-gifted splendor beaches, lagoons, cliffs and headlands, some known

places Sandspit, Hawks Bay, French beach, Sonmiani, Kund Malir, Gadani, Ormara, Jiwani, Kalamat, Pasni, Ganz, Daran, Jiwani, Miani Hor, Astola Island and Gawadar which are core for the viable sea-based tourism industry. Pakistan's coast of 1050 km across the Arab Sea stretches 350 km in Sindh and 700 km in Balochistan. The coastal strip with beautiful beaches and topographical features mark its alternative adventure zone in the south. Worldwide, it is anticipated that coastal tourism contributes to over 183 bn US\$, while data shows that Pakistan has an expected coastal tourism potential of about 4-5bn US\$ ([Shaukat, 2020](#))

This coastal strip has vast potential under the CPEC initiative. The Ketī Bundar Karachi Sonmiani Ormara, Gwadar, and Jiwani are the new popular hotspot coastal tourism potential zones. The development of beach resorts, other lodges, golf grounds, beaches, and soft adventure sports facilities will be the extension of coaster tourism adventures. Maritime and Beach tourism is the new segment waiting to enter the Pakistan tourism arena. To encourage coastal and maritime tourism, we should concentrate on sustainable tourism development by constructing beach resorts, angling, fishing tour with local Fishermans, sea-cruise journeys, scuba diving, island tours, and local food and cultural tourism by involving of the coastal communities.

Cultural and Religious Tourism

Near one fifty million Chinese tourists are visiting abroad and spend more than three hundred billion dollars in 2016. They are motivated to visit the best site sightseeing, attractions, and experience different cultures. The Chinese tourist sees tourism as a renewed attitude to everyday life and knows this difference; they traveled abroad (<https://gbtimes.com>). It is the largest religion in China. The Pew Research Centre stated that the number of Buddhist followers in China is estimated at 240 mn and over 20,000 Buddhist temples. Buddhism is the largest religion, and its followers vary by ethnic group. The north-western region of Pakistan, formally known as Gandhara, is a unique attraction for the Chinese as it remains the cradle of Buddhism and Tantra Buddhism's birthplace. The famous cities Taxila, Takht-e Bahi, Peshawar and Swat, are the most critical areas for Buddhism. Pakistan can utilize the opportunity to provide the best and unique combination of religious, cultural, and business tourism opportunities and to enhance the shopping facilities for both Chinese visitors for foreign products and other foreign visitors for Chinese goods. Pakistan might strengthen its interactions with the Muslim Central Asian States through the CPEC, leading to connectivity between tourism and people on both sides.

Educational Tourism

More than 200,000 students from 64 countries involved in the OBOR initiative were studying in China ([Salim, 2017](#)). It is estimated that more than fifteen thousand students are enrolled in various universities of China (Hussian 2017). Currently, Pakistan has risen to the top three in the number of students, equal to 28,023 in China, according to a statement issued by China's Ministry of Education (Tribue 2019). The CPEC also helped Pakistan's education sector by establishing training centres and allows Pakistani students to study in China. Under CPEC, Pakistan's youth has been availing scholarship opportunities, and students were sent on scholarship to learn the Chinese language. They will also get more options provided by those familiar with Chinese technologies and values. It is believed that the youth will service the Chinese entrepreneurs and business visitors to communicate with the locals. Many Chinese universes are offering courses to learn Urdu and Pakistani culture.

Business (MICE) Tourism

CPEC is crossing the less developed areas of China/ Pakistan and as the short route for safe trade will link the landlocked central Asian and rich Middle East countries to diversify its trade partnerships (Khan, 2015). CPEC is designed to provide quick and easy access for Chinese goods to the world market. Ports and dry port will be the nodes and hubs of the business activities. It is expected that Gawadar will be the next business capital of the Pakistani economy along with other cities. The business tourist will also combine business tours with excursions, Leisure and recreation tours, and shopping. Due to economic growth, the average Chinese can afford expensive goods and foreign products. The price is very high due to levees; therefore, duty-free shops are the compulsory places of interest for most Chinese tourists. They not only substantial their own, but they also shop for relatives, friends, and colleagues to buy many foreign goods. In China, purchasing overseas products for others has already become a large business.

Chinese tourists are the largest spender on the world tourism map. They spent \$2611 Mn in 2016, and in 2017 the expenditure will be raised to \$3000 mn though only 7% or 99 million possess a passport (telegraph.co.uk). The top ten countries include the destinations located nearby, where better communication exists between them. The Chinese tourist is a central dynamic force in the tourism industry, so it is vital to understand the understanding the unique features and needs. They have higher disposable incomes & an aspiration for foreign products and brands. The Telegraph reported that Chinese tourists spend nearly one thousand dollars on average shopping during their business tour. They demand competence, excellent services, high-speed net, 24/7 food supply, and online ticketing facilities. The Pakistani financiers were encouraged to set up their trade Firms in China. The global firms will soon be investing in setting up their commercial firms in both counties related to CPEC will ultimately emerge as a global economic hub. The Pak China visa's policy was relaxed; a commercial business bus service is inaugurated for this purpose. Both countries were agreed to trade in the local currency to give a more robust local effect.

Culinary Tourism

Pakistan has a wide variety of tastes, and the Pakistani restaurants offer a fair share of [continental](#), Turkish to Italian. However, Pakistan's national and local cuisine is trendy among national and international tourists. The locals created grocery shops, vegetable shops, dry fruit shops along the route, and Chinese camping sites. Besides, the local community is also interested in establishing Restaurants with Chines food to satisfy the Chines workers' and tourists' needs. This will provide them with special training courses in Chines culinary to establish and organize a culinary cluster in different areas. The Chinese eateries are already found considerably in many cities, including the federal capital. And The CPEC scenario has additionally compelled local eateries to serve Chinese dishes after an inflow of Chinese nationals. The Capital Development Authority's (CDA) statistics found out that about 15 Chinese restaurants even as 12 were opened after 2013. Mei Kong is considered the was the first restaurant brought returned in the Seventies in the federal capital. Pakistanis, Chinese, and foreign nationals are the potential clients of these restaurants. Due to the influx of Chinese tourists, the number of lodges and restaurant enterprises increases, especially in the Chines influx areas. It presents that the Chines workforce is confined to mining, development, and energy project areas. The new business travel will soon add new Pakistan and Chines restaurants in all major cities to cater to the customers.

Halal Tourism Opportunities

Islamic tourism's main ingredients are similar to traditional tourism like lodges, eating places, logistics, finance, and tours. The assessment and tourism products value are entirely diverse due to the necessities of Islam. These requirements are called Sharia principles like the ingestion of pork and other Haram (forbidden) foods, selling or drinking alcohol, prohibit adultery, gambling, and indecent dressing.

Gwadar's primary market is the Middle East, Central Asia, and North Africa, predominately Muslim. According to the research, companies worldwide are turning towards "halal tourism" to cater to Muslim travellers and to ensure the product and services related to Muslim tourists for the tourist, mostly from wealthy Gulf Arab states. The expansion of "halal tourism" can be seen in the tourist industry with companies expecting to increase revenues, following Saudi Arabia's footsteps that generate a multi-billion-dollar revenue stream with Muslims traveling to Makkah. Halal tourism or Islamic tourism is the new niche market. The Pakistani Halal Industry needs to work closely with CEMEC & SMIIC to develop Halal tourism for the potential market. Produce skillful force to meet the industrial requirement. The Pakistan halal foods industry realized that Islamic Finance and halal foods are both growing industries globally. The counties like UAE, Malaysia, Qatar, KSA, Turkey are the dominant market in OIC.

Wellness and Health Care Tourism

CPEC initiative will bring the spa, wellness, and health care tourism sector because this form of tourism is taking attention from investors and visitors. After all, health consciousness and health care are rising. The spa and wellness centres grow in the hospitality industry and business or part of the five-star hotel services. The government has to improve the medical and healthcare facilities, hospital quality. This will enhance wellness and healthcare tourism in the country through structural and operational development, including wellness tourism experts, professionals working in the health and education industries. The reason for this interest can be found in the intense lifestyle of this target, which is generally stressed, combined with the life quality in the most prominent Chinese cities. According to Tourism Review, particular attention is paid to spas, mostly in luxury hotels, which offer beauty and detox treatments. China and Pakistan can in tandem with CPEC, establish

a CPHC with state of the art hospitals; both the brotherly countries can cooperate in the pharmaceutical industry, and as Pakistan is already flush with Chinese origin medicine a formal mutually beneficial trading framework can make available cheaper raw materials for our pharmaceutical industry. Pakistan Pharmaceutical consists of both national and multinational companies, while the domestic companies fulfilled 58 percent of the local demand and global manufacturers fulfilled the rest. CPEC could play a key role in cooperation between the Chinese and Pakistani pharmaceutical industries. Availability of cheaper raw materials to manufacturers in Pakistan can be of mutual benefit for both countries.

There is an intense need to construct state-of-the-art hospitals and pharmacies at Gwadar's port city, where such students, along with Chinese professionals, might continue their practice. Recently, the Vice-Chairman of Chinese Red Cross Foundation Liu Xuanguo announced a plan to set up second emergency care in Quetta in Baluchistan (<http://www.cpecinfo.com:2017>).

Implications

There are many theoretical and realistic effects of this research. Across all dimensions, the present research leads to promoting the tourism-related industry positively. In the context of spatial tourism growth potential for local population awareness, the current research gives recommendations to CPEC authorities. To highlight the advantages of the CPEC-Tourism linkage, politicians can plan certain public services, seminars, and tv talk shows.

Limitations

Although there are many effects for the present study, it is an emerging research field. The writer also suggests few limits for future studies. First, a CPEC route's influence can also be identified in the route-related destination or bypassing the town. Second, the present analysis is focused primarily on preliminary information. Therefore tour operators, tourist administrators and hotel operators in both countries must compile appropriate information in order to prepare strategic planning.

Conclusion

CPEC is a blessed break for both countries. It is confirmed that developing countries can grow; only attracting more external direct investment to fast-track economic development will automatically enhance its tourism industry. Many problems face Pakistan in the execution of the CPEC program, but Pakistan would also have multiple advantages from this route. Pakistan must raise the percentage share of the GDP allocation for the tourism superstructure development to grow sustainable economic growth. CPEC is also the time testing learning initiative from our strategic partner in joint ventures for economic prosperity, management, and technology.

We are optimistic that Pakistan's tour operators and national tourism office promote Pakistan's tourism destinations through mobile apps in Chinese, English, Arabic, and other popular languages. In that case, China and GCC can turn into the largest tourist generating countries of Pakistan. It is vital to make awareness about acceptable and best tourism practices and train the industry to cop the international tourist requirements to promote tourism in the country. Tourism development will improve the services of info, accessibility, safety, security, etc., benefiting the public and bringing foreign export earnings.

Pakistan needs more four and five-star hotels, mountain resorts, amusement parks, shopping malls as the most demanding segment. We should plan and emphasize vocational training related to tourism and hospitality to train our employees and youth on international standards to take future development in mind.

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