

# Impact of China Pakistan Economic Corridor on Economic Development of Balochistan: A Descriptive Study

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## **Abstract**

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor study aims to connect Gwadar's deep seaport in Balochistan province with Kashgar in northwest China. It serves as a gateway linking Europe to Africa when fully operational. The project seeks to provide a comprehensive financial overview of the corridor project and examine investment flows, especially on Gwadar's development potential. The research aims to assess the corridor's impact on the province's economic conditions using quantitative methods involving primary and secondary data analysis for descriptive purposes. The study concludes that while indicators such as HDI, FDI, and FPI have shown improvement over recent years, there is still limited awareness among the general public about CPEC's current impact on provincial economic development, leading to dissatisfaction amongst native people.

**Keywords:** CPEC, Balochistan, Quantitative, FDI, HDI

**JEL Classification:** O11, O15

## **1. Introduction**

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor involves the development of infrastructure, including roads, railways, and ports, as well as investments in various sectors such as energy, agriculture, and industrial development (Asif et al., 2021). These investments and infrastructure development are expected to increase economic growth, create jobs, and improve connectivity between the two countries. Moreover, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has the potential to benefit not only China and Pakistan but also the entire region (Asif et al., 2021). The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a crucial initiative to strengthen economic cooperation between China and Pakistan. It has the potential to bring significant economic benefits to both countries and contribute to regional development and integration. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor aims to strengthen economic cooperation between China and Pakistan through infrastructure development, investment, and job creation (CECP Significance, 2021).

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a multi-billion dollar project that aims to enhance connectivity and promote economic cooperation between China and Pakistan. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has been a significant point of discussion not only for China and Pakistan but also for the entire region. The project involves infrastructure development, energy projects, and economic initiatives that are expected to substantially change the region's trade and development dynamics. The corridor, which spans from Gwadar in Pakistan to Xinjiang in China, is a colossal undertaking that has the potential to reshape the region's economic landscape. The collaboration between China and Pakistan in the CPEC project symbolizes a deepening of their strategic partnership. It is not only an economic venture but also a testament to the growing political and diplomatic ties between the two countries (Rank et al., 2022)

Additionally, the project is expected to bring economic prosperity to Pakistan's underdeveloped and marginalized regions, providing new employment and growth opportunities. Given the ambitious scope of the CPEC, some concerns and challenges need to be addressed. These include environmental impact

assessments, security considerations, and the socio-economic implications of the project on local communities. However, with careful planning and transparent governance, CPEC has the potential to serve as a model for regional corridors. The economic corridor is a monumental project that aims to revolutionize the connectivity and economic cooperation between China and Pakistan (Sheikh et al., 2019).

The Economic Corridor of China-Pakistan is the first collection of projects in the world. Western China is linked to Baluchistan; this massive effort in Pakistan is worth about \$46 billion. CPEC is one of Pakistan's megaprojects, "One Belt, One Road." Pakistan sees this as a sign of China's long-term friendship (Wolf, 2016). The presidents of China and Pakistan have put forth a long-term strategy for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. By the end of 2018, the \$28 trillion early harvest plan will be finished. In Pakistan, Gwadar is another main component of the CPEC. It belongs to China Overseas Port Holding at the end of the corridor, while it belongs to Pakistan's government. The Chinese media have tried to concentrate instead on Pakistan's advantages. However, the port is also familiar with the geopolitical challenges of the US and India (Naz, 2018)

The two countries have banned Chinese energy imports, which could intensify China and China's tension. Though plans are delayed, economic growth in Pakistan has shifted to port. The project is expected to be fully extended by 2030. CPEC appears to have significantly impacted Pakistan's regions, especially Baluchistan. The project should have greatly affected the city because it was a significant European oil export route. This article analyses the financial benefits Baluchistan could gain from the project. It also discusses capital inflows and their effects on Gwadar Harbor (Baloch, Shahzad & Ahmed, 2024).

The project is expected to benefit both countries and increase development efforts. However, criticisms have highlighted several aspects that should be excluded. This study is in Baluchistan, a project to identify the benefits of CPEC and Gwadar's Port's role in economic development. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (Chin-Pakistan Economic Corridor) is a megaproject aimed at developing the port of Gwadar to link the three main corridors leading to the Silk Road. Baluchistan, a poor province, needs a high degree of development from this project. A significant amount of evidence is required for the project to be practical; this project indicates the CPEC project's vision in Pakistan. CPEC development must be measured in the sense of this project after many years of initialization. This research includes three key assumptions that can serve the study goals: a financial overview of the advantages of CPEC (Wolf, 2016).

## **2. Review of Literature**

Pakistan and China have entered into new ties through joint participation in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project. Thanks to China's many benefits, the project was a "moral incentive" for Pakistan. Critics say that CPEC was China's key strategy for the Indian Ocean to take over. Many condemned the Gilgit-Baltistan project in Pakistan. Like India, other countries are raising whether the project would facilitate the Chinese military to Pakistan. The official agreement on port repair between China and Pakistan was concluded on February 18, 2013. The Chinese president plans to visit Pakistan for the formal beginning of the CPEC in 2014 (Ramay, 2016).

China Pakistan has embarked upon a novel relationship by participating in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor initiative. After the 1950s, the relationship between the two countries took off. Due to China's various benefits, the project has proven to be a "morale booster" for Pakistan. The primary reason for this is that Pakistan's economy lags behind other Asian nations, and it is a country that seeks asylum from different nations like China (Ashraf, Shafiq & Batool, 2017).

Opponents claim that China's ultimate goal in controlling the Indian Ocean is to seize control of the region through the CPEC. According to a Pakistani official, Gwadar's construction was explicitly done as a favor to make financing and operations in Islamabad easier. In actuality, the Gwadar naval base was intended to be constructed by 1958—before China even attained the status of a significant world power (Ashraf et al., 2017). For this reason, Pakistan has appealed to the US and the USSR for assistance. Instead of endorsing the location's potential strategic importance, Musharraf claimed that China initiated the building as a favor. Officials in Pakistan, however, do not support the critiques. They claim the port's purpose was to serve as a gateway to Asia and the nation's economy (Ashraf et al, 2017).

### ***2.1. CPEC project***

The key objective of the economic corridor China-Pakistan was to establish trade ties between the two countries. China has access to blue water from the Baluchistan-Xinjiang project. Pakistan also has the objective of launching this initiative. The Pakistani newspaper has released a long-term plan for 2017. It spoke of the interest in agriculture, which promotes rapid plant growth. Thanks to China's many advantages, the project has become a "moral stimulus" for Pakistan. Relations between the two nations started in the 1950s and have grown. Most CPEC projects in the country are built to produce and provide electricity. As a country, China invests at a rate of two percent in public lending infrastructure projects. Chinese grants have funded all Gwadar-related ventures (Hali, Shukui, & Iqbal, 2015).

### ***2.2. Specifics of the project***

Around 64% of all investments are to be invested in Pakistan's electricity production. Approximately \$686 million is spent expanding Gwadar's port and related ventures. The Orange Line Metro project was the only CPEC transport program. It is not a short-term CPEC deal; it is a long-term plan which will be dissolved from 2014 to 2030. However, short-term CPEC ventures are expected to be completed by 2017. CPEC begins in northwest China and ends in Gwadar Port. Gwadar Port is now under Chinese influence in Pakistan (Shah, 2015).

Pakistan suffered from decades of power shortages, particularly in the manufacturing sector. CPEC plays a significant role in the electricity and fuel supply to Pakistan as a whole. China uses coal as an essential fuel and electricity resource; Pakistan is vulnerable because of the high resource cost (Raziq et al., 2021). By 2020, China intends to complete the project. It will increase the country's GDP, create jobs, and eventually raise living standards for people. CPEC impacts the country's economy and considerably affects the individual level (Baloch et al., 2024).

It is expected to invest approximately \$34 billion in energy by 2020. Gadani in Baluchistan is one of the biggest failures of this initiative. Several related projects have been canceled for many factors, which could lead to a shift in investment. China aims to attract additional infrastructure projects to promote growth in Pakistan as well as agricultural and industrial projects. The latter concerns vegetation growth, which benefits both countries equally (Huang, Fischer, & Xu, 2017).

### ***2.3. Effects of such projects***

Pakistan will quickly see short-term project results. China's plans will be well-planned and prepared for the city's entire population. The project is also projected to increase the economy of Pakistan by 5 percent in the future. The World Bank anticipates GDP growth will rise by 5.8% in 2019. When done, Gwadar Harbor will be a central hub for many things, including gas and LNG. The country has export potential in many sectors, such as agriculture and industry (Huang et al., 2017).

Pakistan sees Gwadar port as a focal point for many nations, such as Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. According to Wang (2017), a Sino-Pak specialist, Karachi is the biggest competitor. Because of the road and other advanced features, Karachi is in danger of being more attractive than Gwadar by 2020. The

port of Karachi is experiencing congestion problems, which lead to payment. For many neighboring countries, Gwadar can be a cheap alternative. The government is rising as the population increases (Haq & Farooq, 2016).

**2.4. Baluchistan**

Baluchistan has become a Central Asian, Middle East, and South Asian corridor. Baluchistan's climate is mild all year round and is the right choice for many traders. In Pakistan and neighboring countries, the Gwadar port is significant. This expanding port attracts global infrastructure capacity; China is Pakistan's second-largest recipient of the port. Nevertheless, despite its rich mineral wealth, Baluchistan has yet to demonstrate its high economic contribution to Pakistan. Several factors include poverty and the map's ruggedness (Adnan & Fatima, 2016).

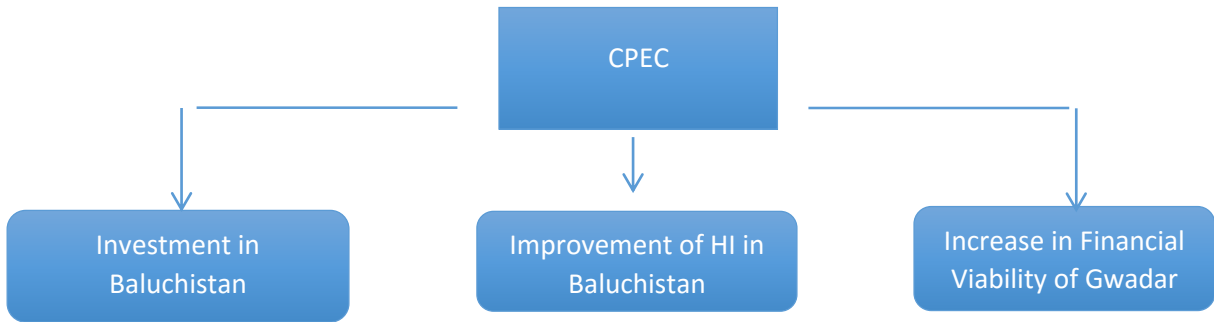
**2.5. One Belt One Road**

The Silk Road has been a 400-mile highway linking China, India, Egypt, Rome, Greece, and the African Subcontinent. Critics argue that the CPEC project would profoundly impact Baluchistan as a whole. The harbor of Gwadar will become a center for business and trade. This project would increase Pakistan's economy by 5% in the future. The economic motives for the whole project are short routes up to 6,000 kilometers. The question is whether this project will help the public in the end (Huang et al., 2017).

The area still has the banner of Pakistan's least famous and most impoverished province. Its literacy rate is the lowest, and its industrialization level is low (Jinchen, 2016).

**3. Conceptual Framework**

Information regarding CPEC investments in the province of Baluchistan may be included in this financial report. The sum of money spent on construction is essential to be mentioned here; It also describes citizens' buying power due to the lack of jobs and development in the CPEC project in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Conceptual Model**

The first part of the framework contains detailed information on Baluchistan investment. It analyses the growth or decline of investment-related development factors. The CPEC project was a success factor in providing the planned development with the growth of an investment (Wolf, 2016). However, if the statistics are negative, then it is clear that the rejection rate favors critics and adversaries. The analysis of China's proper use of resources was also part of the structure. The study also provides statistical information based on official websites. Furthermore, the success of the CPEC project also reflected changes in the physical infrastructure (Jinchen, 2016).

For China and Pakistan, the elements of FDI and FDI are essential. Despite China's comparatively low level of foreign investment, Pakistan's FDI is thriving, according to recent data from the World Bank. This hypothesis holds water since it demonstrates China's investment in Pakistan.

H1: Baluchistan receives Chinese FDI and FPI support.

Another tool for evaluating a nation's growth is the Human Development Index, which can offer criteria based on outcomes. For instance, a nation's development status will decline if its index is low in two years.

H2: CPEC investment increases the Baluchistan Human Development Index (HDI).

Gwadar and the Chabahar Harbour compete with one another in the fields of economy and commerce. Another source of controversy was that financial incentives would dictate the port's commercial use; some claimed that Chabahar Port would benefit China.

H3: Gwadar's port is much more financially viable than Chabahar's port (Iran)

The financial position might resolve whether the Chinese government is sincere about Pakistan's growth. The conceptual framework is used, and these hypotheses are for research purposes.

#### **4. Methodology**

Research methods focus on perfection-oriented research. It is based either on human philosophy or on authentic sources. In the 19th century, when science was associated with research, the word "paradigm" appeared. The initial term positivism, Auguste, says the approach is objective and does not affect people's emotions and feelings. Using this method, the researcher can achieve high accuracy using a hypothesis or research experiment. This way, unscientific or superstitious beliefs are eliminated. The main objective of this paper is to examine the financial benefits of the Baluchistan CPEC project. A thorough analysis of the accounts and financial statements was mandatory; a survey by several economic officials and residents were also critical.

The study required a scientific approach to analyzing CPEC and Baluchistan's financial aspects. Two different methods for quantitative research were identified when choosing a technique: measurable and working with numbers. The result of a particular study ends with confirmation or confirmation using a quantitative approach. The financial facts reflecting CPEC projects taken from websites like the World Data Bank and the Human Development Index were analyzed to determine the economic facts. A detailed analysis was carried out to measure the hypothesis and fill the literature gap and the available data.

The main focus of this project is to evaluate funding for the Baluchistan CPEC project. There were approximately 150 respondents who received recent surveys. After carefully studying the literature and the subject, the people were selected. The respondents set included several officials on the financial aspects of CPEC; businesses (commerce chambers), 30; online (social media) surveys, 70; news channel TV reporters, anchors, and research analysts, 30; the Ministries, 20.

The study aims to obtain accurate information to analyze the benefits of the Baluchistan CPEC project. The question of the research was the starting point for the entire study. Essential topics for in-depth assessment have been selected. An analysis was carried out using all possible quantitative methods.

The study required information on both sides: basic and additional methods. The first way of collecting data is significant since it can affect the results' accuracy and reliability. This technique aims to better understand the CPEC benefits for Baluchistan and analyze China's financial aspects. Further information was needed to analyze and evaluate the survey data.

The data collected were analyzed with SPSS software. The information had to be entered into an SPSS sheet. Different tests were also conducted, such as a paired T-test sample and variance analysis.

Validity is an important research topic because it represents the researcher's credibility. The validity of the report also depends on its accuracy. This paper carried out a t-test analysis to confirm the accuracy of the data. It has been used to check the accuracy of the obtained data. Validity is an important research topic because it expresses the researcher's trust. The validity of the report also depends on its accuracy. The FDI, FPI, and HDI data were taken from the central bank's official website.

Quantitative research has been carried out to measure the results and ensure accuracy. The papers mainly discussed contradicting factors that increased the desire to take on the project. Furthermore, the selected respondents involved many Baluchistan officials in CPEC financial aspects, especially Gwadar. About 80 respondents were provided with a close-ended survey questionnaire. At first, the finance-related people were selected from various sources such as newspapers, the Internet, and others. These sources also provided information about the involvement of each respondent in the financial sector. After that, the invitation email was sent to the selected respondents. There are a total of 26 departments in Baluchistan and 47 ministers.

Moreover, the chosen respondents involved these ministers and all the laborers and staff members in the financial sector. Of about 80 possible participants, 50 replied that they had ten ministers and Ex Ministers in the Baluchistan province. Furthermore, they were given the questionnaire in the correct format through emails. The data was collected from July 2018 to December 2018.

	<b>Number of respondents</b>
Businessmen (Chambers of Commerce)	18
Online Survey (Using Social Media)	15
TV reporters, Anchors, and Research Analyst from news channels through email	7
Ministers & Ex Ministers	10
Total	50

**4.1 Instruments used**

For the survey, SPSS or Software Package for the Social Science was used to get accuracy. Secondary information was also needed to analyze and evaluate the survey's information. The secondary data was gathered from the World Data Bank and the Human Development Index and verified through the State Bank of Pakistan and Ministry of Finance Government of Pakistan data. Ultimately, combining both sources of resources can ensure that the particular research is correctly formulated.

**5. Results and Discussions**

Every question about the various economic sectors impacted by the Baluchistan CPEC project was included in the survey. Transportation, healthcare, education, the economy, industry, human development, equitable prospects for developing the Gwadar port, and mass incomes were among them.

Particulars	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	50	100.0	100.0	100.0

The frequencies and percentages of the survey and the questions asked from the respondents are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**

Particular	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Gwadar Port gets benefits from highways and railways.				
Yes	50	100.00	100.00	100.00
No	0	0.00	0.00	
CPEC project brings better health				
Yes	47	94	94	94
No	3	6	94	100
Balochistan government is interested in education projects.				
Yes	34	68	68	68
No	16	32	32	100
The province's financial stability will improve from CPEC.				
Yes	34	68	68	68
No	16	32	32	100
Can Industrial Development increase job creation under CPEC?				
Yes	20	40	40	40
No	30	60	60	100
Has the CPEC project affected the common man's life positively?				
Yes	44	88	88	88
No	6	12	12	100
Do the people of Balochistan benefit more than those of the other three provinces from CPEC?				
Yes	9	18	18	18
No	41	82	82	100
Economy development started after CPEC.				
Yes	40	80	80	80
No	10	20	20	100
Total	50	100.00	100.0	

All the respondents think the Gwadar port will benefit from the network of roads and railways under the CEPC project. Infrastructure development boosts the performance and utilization of the Port. The health issues of the people of Balochistan will improve under the CPEC projects. According to the descriptive survey, 94% of the respondents believe that the health conditions of the public in Balochistan will improve; only 6% think otherwise. A 50-bed hospital is under construction at Gwadar; some other health projects are designed and approved for the people of Balochistan but have not yet been completed and operational.

Facilities such as the girl's college, water purifying facility, and Gwadar cleaning project for cross-border trade and fish export are meant to improve the region. The federal government has also arranged customs, business, and immigration in the Mand, Gwadar, Mashkel, and Panjgur regions.

About 57% of the population attended school by 2016, considerably less in Baluchistan. About 56% of literature persons are literature, while matric enrollment students represent approximately 44% of the country.

32 % of respondents think that the Balochistan government is not interested in education projects, whereas 68% believe that the Balochistan government is working to improve education through the CPEC projects. A similar percentage of respondents replied to the next question related to the financial stability of the province. 32 % of respondents think Balochistan province will not have financial stability, whereas 68% of respondents believe that the province will be financially stable.

As asked by the respondents, industrial development under the CPEC will create job opportunities for the people of Balochistan. 60 % of the respondents think Balochistan people will not get job creation and opportunities, but 40% believe that CPEC will create job opportunities in Balochistan. About 88% of the respondents replied that the project CPEC positively affects the lives of the people of Balochistan. In contrast, only 12 % do not agree with the statement that CPEC will not positively impact the lives of people in Balochistan. Most respondents think that the people of other provinces will get more benefits than those of Balochistan. Only a few respondents believe that Balochistan will benefit more than other provinces. 80% of the respondents think economic development started in Balochistan, whereas 20 % think otherwise.

*Hypotheses testing*

*"H1: Due to FDI and FPI of China, Baluchistan will gain the funds through investment.*

The main goal of the CPEC project is to link the port of Gwadar with Xinjiang to create a shorter route for trade. For developmental packages such as highway and road development, 62 billion has been provided to the country.



**Figure 2: FDI rate of Pakistan**

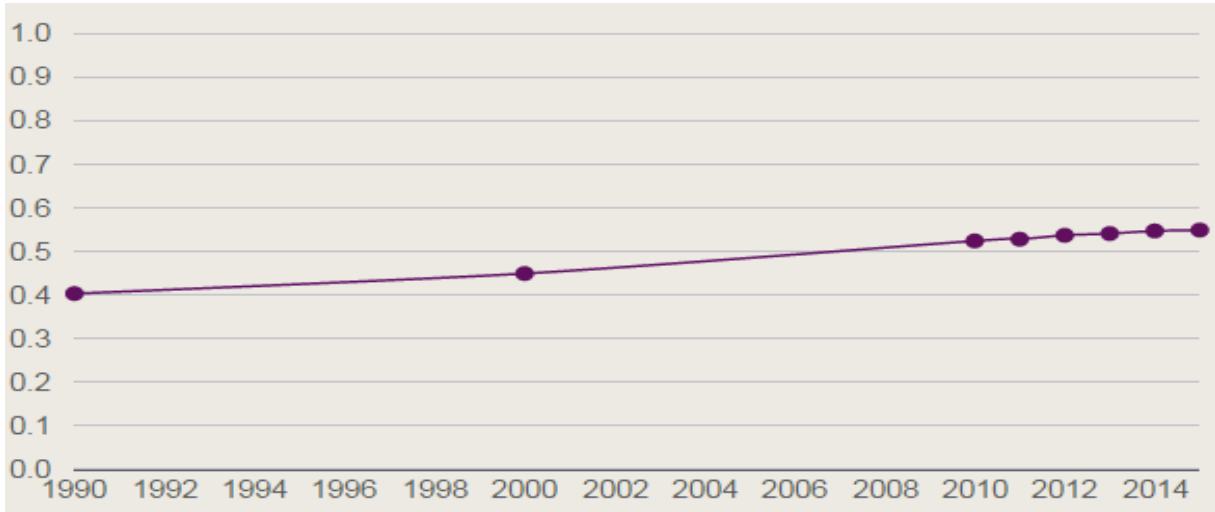
The rate of increase in FDI since China decided to invest in the nation is seen in figure 2. Around \$27 billion worth of CPEC projects are expected to be completed for Pakistan's future growth (Bechtel, 2018). The evidence supports the hypothesis that Baluchistan Province will gain additional funds through CPEC.

*H2: Due to CPEC investment, the human development index (HDI) will improve in Baluchistan.*

The results in figure 3 demonstrate an additional facet of progress in Baluchistan through human development. It was noted that both locals and visitors will gain equally from the project. Furthermore, it was observed that Baloch's development was given precedence in particular sectors, such as industry.



The responses from the respondents were compared to Pakistan's human development index (Bechtel, 2018).



**Figure 3: Human Development Index of Pakistan**

Source: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/PAK>

Pakistan is now ranked 147th in the world in terms of the Human Development Index. It demonstrates how the Human Development Index's cost has steadily increased during 2013–2014. The world's average price was found to be 0.710, although the human development index rate is 0.550. The evidence presented here supports the second hypothesis. The CPEC project is causing the nation to experience development in terms of human growth (Bechtel, 2018).

*H3: Gwadar Port is financially more viable than Chabahar Port (Iran).*

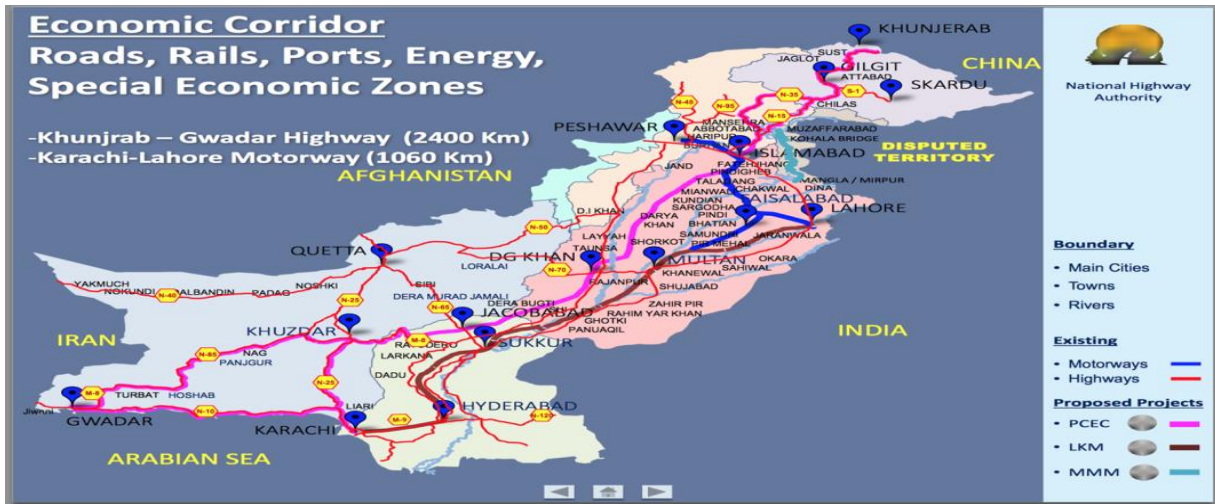
As part of the CPEC project, Pakistan and China recently inked six additional agreements to enhance the port of Gwadar. On the other hand, the port of Chabahar has been delayed several times in developing the plan. Iran may look to China to advance quickly (Yunling, 2015). Compared to other ports, these figures demonstrate the financial viability of the port of Gwadar.

Pakistan's foreign minister also said the government sought ways to use proper communications across the country. He added that the CPEC project is vital to the country's development (Yunling, 2015). This revolutionary change will lead to prosperity and economic stability. It was a universal statement from all Pakistani news. The financial development and accessibility of Gwadar's port compared to the port of Chabahar is obvious".

Pakistan was facing a high energy crisis before the start of the CPEC project. The energy sector needs to improve in a developed country. Baluchistan has a high level of natural resources, and energy security can be provided to Pakistan. The energy source is a lifeline for a country that strives for industrial development. China needs the energy to boost the development of the port to shorten the Silk Road. Under the CPEC project, a share of around 33 billion dollars is planned, increasing its energy efficiency (Economic Division, 2023).

The development of the railway is one of the most critical CPEC projects. Economic returns and rail network development go hand in hand. The railway network in Baluchistan is not in good condition to make trade easier without any problems. China offers a rail network development strategy to improve

trade in Pakistan's economic corridor. The project will upgrade several highways highlighted in Figure 4, including Karachi-Lahore-Peshawar (ML-1) (1736 km) (Idress et al., 2018).



**Figure 4: proposed projects (source: Haq's Musings)**

The project will supply cargo and container equipment by connecting various cities to Balochistan. Farmers are not losing because they have no vehicle. Baluchistan will benefit primarily from the new railways, connecting to remote areas like Havelian, Turbat, Huzdar, Besima, Khoshab, and Gilgit. President Hussein said the economic corridor between China and Pakistan would help the country as quickly as possible. Only if they know and speak Chinese can young people benefit directly from the project. The corridor has already brought numerous changes, such as an abundance of energy that requires future energy—this CPEC project intended to turn Gwadar Port into a second Dubai. The development of the port of Gwadar can bring stability and peace to the country. The economic hub offers the nation good opportunities. The project changed many Baluch people's lives (Bakhtiyar, 2023).

## 6. Conclusions and Policy Implications

For the two countries, the China-Pakistan corridor was an equal substitute. Baluchistan has been viewed as one of the country's most significant regions, encouraging several traders and countries to use the gateway to economic growth through its strategic position. The study provides a detailed analysis of the economic factors linked to Balochistan's CPEC project. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor was one of Pakistan's best substitutes. The project will also help the underdeveloped province of Baluchistan in Pakistan grow. Due to inadequate roads and railroads, farmers find traveling and selling fruit challenging. The province still lacks abundant natural resources, while others are trying to use them (Khan & Liu, 2019).

The economic corridor between China and Pakistan has only raised many people's expectations if they understand their life advantages. The investment will be aimed at developing the Gwadar port. Road and rail development could benefit local farmers and fishers, equalize prosperity, and boost the local Sardinian economies. Both countries will benefit from this project equally. The real benefit to the people of Baluchistan is that they will be given proper employment opportunities. China can be sure it spends much money persuading the local people. Most of the investment money should be spent on infrastructure, education, and health, which can benefit society considerably. The importance of the project and its cost-benefit must be presented to the local native people. The province's economy is primarily informal; positive steps are needed to record the economy, which will lead the province to economic growth and development (Shahzad, Ahmed, & Fatima, 2023).

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**Data Availability Statement**

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

**Disclosure statement**

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