



RESEARCH PAPER

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: An Economic Corridor or a Corridor to Great Power Politics

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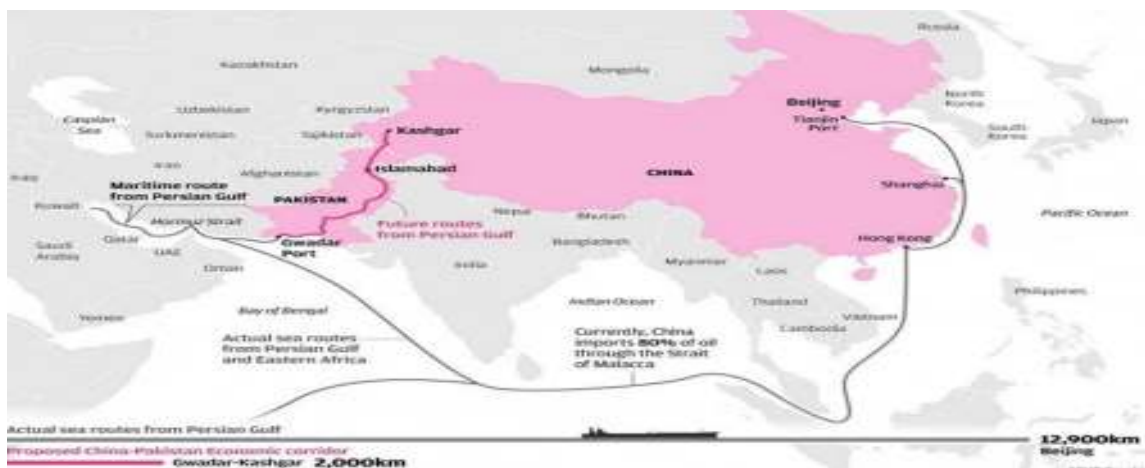
PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: October 08, 2021 Accepted: January 16, 2022 Online: January 21, 2022 Keywords: BRI, China-Pakistan Relations, Connectivity CPEC, Infrastructure, OBOR, Sovereignty *Corresponding Author: qasim.gill@usa sk.ca	The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the sixth corridor planned on the 'One Belt One Road' (OBOR), formally now termed the "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI). This is one of the most prominent parts of this project, planned to connect three of the world's continents. This article focuses solely on CPEC and its economic development perspectives for Pakistan and China to explore how this project contrasts with China's openly declared commitment to restructuring regional infrastructure and connectivity. What is China's motive behind this project to reshape the regional structure of power in South Asia? China is replacing the USA in Pakistan, as according to most analysts it will replace the American presence in the entire region of South Asia. This makes CPEC highly important not only for China but for the US, India, and Russia as well. This project is analysed through the lens of the 'theory of power' presented by Steven Lukes (1974) whose 'three faces of power' are helpful here in highlighting the ability of an actor to become powerful through exercising various faces of power. An attempt is also made to demonstrate how important it is for Pakistan to maintain neutrality through this project and to protect its sovereignty.

Introduction

In 2011, US President Obama announced that the 'US would rebalance towards the Asia-Pacific' (BBC Asia, 2011). As a countermeasure, in September 2013, the Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed 'One Belt One Road' (OBOR), a grand strategic plan. China's vision was to establish its lead role in the region beyond economic and political cooperation (Hussain, 2017). The 'One Belt One Road' plan could impact upon more than half of the world's population and includes a total economic volume' (TEV) of around twenty-one trillion US dollars. This project consists of two parts, the land-based New Silk Road and the sea-based 'Maritime Silk Road'. These two plans need to come together with the aim of creating the 'Silk Road Economic Belt', built on a vast network of railways, energy pipelines, fiber-optic cables, economic-corridors and ports spread across Europe and Asia, connecting three continents.

'The China Pakistan Economic Corridor' (CPEC) is the sixth corridors planned along the Belt. During his first officially visit to Pakistan in 2015, Chinese President XI Jinping announced the CPEC, stating that China would invest US\$46 billion. The importance of the CPEC as a stepping stone in this project cannot be underestimated. Due to the importance of this project, both countries have established the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Council (CPECC) to address any issues and challenges occurring in this project (CPECC, 2015). Under this agreement, both countries have opened CPECC offices in their capitals to provide services on legal, security and all other related matters to the CPEC (CPEC Council, 2015). The strategic location of Pakistan makes this corridor very important, as the CPEC 'is located where the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road meet' (Hussain, 2017).

CPEC will connect Pakistan's Gwadar Port to Xinjiang province of China. Gwadar is a warm-water, deep seaport at the point where the Arabian Sea meets the Persian Gulf, Its strategic location is vital because it lies on the gateway to the Strait of Hormuz, interlinking South Asia, the Middle East and Central Asia, an important landlocked region full of natural resources. The port would link the OBOR and Maritime Silk Road projects and has the capacity to handle millions of tons of cargo and crude oil per year (Kahlon, 2015). China is aiming to develop a 'direct crude oil pipeline from Gwadar to Xinjiang' under this project (Khetran, 2015). After developing Gwadar Port, all trade between the Central Asian Republics and the entire world will adopt this route via Gwadar which would be the shortest available route. Pakistan could be the biggest beneficiary through its role in connecting world trade. Pakistan thus has a unique opportunity to boost its economic growth with this project and has the potential to become a major global petro-chemical channel. Gwadar Port will operate 'like the tail of the New Silk Road' expected to connect the Chinese city of Kashgar to different communication networks (Hussain, 2017). Gwadar as a key shipping point could play a key role in ensuring China's energy security, as it provides a much shorter route than the current 12,900 km route from the Persian Gulf through the Strait of Malacca to China's eastern seaboard.



Source: Saira Nasir (2016). "How will CPEC boost Pakistan economy?" Deloitte. p. 5. Retrieved May 30, 2019.

Economic Development Perspective of CPEC for Pakistan

The construction of this megaproject through Pakistan is not new. A few decades ago, an American company proposed a project in which oil and gas pipelines would run from Central Asian states through Afghanistan and Pakistan, but this could not be implemented due to security problems in the region (2). As stated by (Hussain, 2017), "It is situated at the juncture of energy proficient to the energy deficient countries".

Pakistani Ambassador to China, Masood Khalid, said: "The territory of Pakistan is like a corridor which connects China and the Arabian Sea and Pakistan is a bridge between China and the rest of the world" (OBOR, 2016). CPEC will provide an opportunity for Pakistan to revive its infrastructure, particularly its energy sector. The small city of Gwadar and its port could potentially change the fate of Pakistan converting it into a hub for regional commercial activities of important countries of the world e.g., Afghanistan, China, Gul, and Central Asian states. This project could also give the "Pakistan Navy with strategic depth beside its coast as a marine base" (Syed, 2013). This project has three dimensions: communication, energy, and infrastructure that are involved in strengthening connections politically, economically and strategically among the states and have the potential to reshape South Asian geopolitics.

CPEC will contribute to a huge variety of sectors such as transportation infrastructure, trade and business volume, investment opportunities, industry, agriculture, tourism, financial cooperation, education, and health services. CPEC can help create new employment in different sectors i.e. transport, construction, and trade. Once the project becomes operational, more new jobs will be expected with the creation of industrial zones that are planned along with this project. A lot of manpower is needed to secure this route, which is around 2000 km, so hundreds of thousands of jobs will be created for this project. In addition, around 25,000 security personnel will be needed for this project (Gulf News, 2019).

Through this project, Pakistan could overcome its internal security challenges and bring prosperity and development in Balochistan, as a lot of investors will come from China and other countries to establish manufacturing units along CPEC. This will bring opportunities for new jobs in remote areas. This is important because it is difficult to develop those areas, specifically in Baluchistan due to the internal security issues, which will ultimately address the grievances of the Baluchistan people. The issues in Baluchistan associated with resentment and deprivation, discrimination and the allocation of resources will be easy to tackle under CPEC, and this project will bring them into the national spotlight. China is also heavily investing in Baluchistan because this project depends on peace and development in Baluchistan, and any kind of insurgency in Baluchistan could disrupt this project. Gwadar is situated in Baluchistan, and around half of the route goes through this project. According to (Pakistanmdtf.org), Baluchistan is 45% of Pakistan and 5% of its population, most of the province is undeveloped, the internal security situation inside the province due to fighting between separate groups reinforces the Pakistani intention to promote peace and bring development in this region. The development and mega projects along CPEC such as international airports and economic zones will further enhance Baluchistan, which is very important for the unity of Pakistan. CPEC will bring opportunities for Balochi youth to acquire modern innovative skills to become part of CPEC (Ijaz A., 2016). Major infrastructural projects have been planned under this corridor, including the "Gwadar

Expressway, Gwadar International Airport, the up-gradation of KKH phase-II, parts of the Karachi–Lahore Motorway and the Muzaffarabad–Mirpur Expressway” (CPEC.Gov.pk).

CPEC will bring foreign investment and development in the tourism industry of the country. It will also “help Pakistan to overcome its energy crisis” (Hussain, 2017). This project has a capability to address the energy crisis, which is the major challenge for Pakistan presently, connecting its economy with neighbors except for India, as India has raised objections about CPEC due to its route, which goes through disputed territory. China, however, has denied this claim and said that “CPEC does not involve territorial dispute” (Economic Times, 2018).

Economic development perspective of CPEC for China

For China, this project is essential for two reasons. First is the advancement of west China, as 33% of poor people in China live in the Western region. Considering this, China sees this venture as an opportunity to stabilize its borders and develop its western states. Second, CPEC is critical to increasing China’s energy security, as it is a vital energy corridor and gives China an alternative, and shorter, energy supply route (Xiaolu 2015). This project is also crucial in terms of development because China hopes to develop its western region through this project, and it faces the same problems of internal security due to religious groups in that area, particularly in the province of Xinjiang. This is similar to how Pakistan hopes to develop its Baluchistan province through this project. China is also planning to give a boost to landlocked western regions that are far away from any port (see Fig 1). The only option before was to go through ports in Shanghai or Beijing, which was too expensive in terms of trade and development.

China transports its 80% oil through the State of Malacca, crossing more than 16k km; yet CPEC will shorten this distance to merely 5000 km. This is the reason, “Pakistan has been used as a transit route between China and the rest of the world through expanding and improving connectivity to fidgety Xinjiang” (Khan S., 2016). As mentioned before, China will greatly benefit economically from this project, as it gives the country a shortcut route to the Indian Ocean, avoiding the Strait of Malacca. This will put less of a burden on China’s economy and accessing the Indian Ocean through this route is the easiest way on all sides because of China’s ‘all-weather friendship’ (The Guardian, 2018) with Pakistan.

As Gwadar is located in front of the Strait of Hormuz, which is a “check point of global oil and around 30% of global seaborne crude passes through” (Financial Times, 2019), the access provided by this project will decrease Chinese shipping costs to other continents i.e. Europe, Africa and other parts of Asia such as the Middle East.

China is looking for an alternative option to boost and stabilize its economy due to a number of upcoming challenges in international markets. China is changing its strategy and, in addition to exports, its concentration is being put on increasing domestic consumption because exports alone are not able to sustain their desired economic growth. China needs a reduction in transport costs for energy and other goods, Through CPEC, China will try to overcome these cost and time issues, and both will be reduced dramatically (Paracha, 2016).

Economic Development for Strategic Benefits

China is a state that shares borders with fourteen different countries, yet its relationship with Pakistan is viewed differently by the Chinese due to its important strategic location. Besides economic development, China has some security issues associated with transporting its oil from the Middle East in the presence of its rival, India, which is a future concern for China in terms of energy and economics (Caessar-Gordon, 2016). These anxieties make this route extremely important. The Malacca dilemma is one of the most persistent headaches for China, and it is a major hurdle for the Chinese in terms of maintaining their economic growth and helping them in their ambitions to achieve the status of great power in the world and particularly in the region.

Chinese oil travelling from the Persian Gulf runs very close to the Indian maritime region and through the Malacca Strait. China wants to secure its route with a substitute/alternate option, which is referred to by the Chinese as the "Malacca Dilemma". (Caessar-Gordon, 2016) tried to find the answer to his research question: "Can China secure its supply to the extent necessary to mitigate the Malacca Dilemma?" He came to various conclusions, and Pakistan (Gwadar) was one of the recommendations identified in his research. China needs an alternate route that can secure its supplies "CPEC provides the most secure and economically feasible alternative to link with this side of the world" (Ahmed). Gwadar-Kashgar (CPEC) will greatly decrease distances for China and will provide the safest way of transporting oil to China.

For China, the biggest challenge is to secure its SLOC (sea lines of communication) to secure its future trade (energy, economic development). China needs a continuous oil supply without any hurdles but due to a lack of control and the absence of naval power in the area, these ambitions are impossible, putting its security at risk. The "Malacca Dilemma" is an ongoing issue for China. There is only a narrow path (a waterway) separating Malaysia from Indonesia, and Singapore is on its southern side. However, the strongholds of Singapore with an Anglo-American bloc, China is looking for a passage for their oil. As mentioned earlier, China transports its 80% oil through this route. The only option left for China that would allow it to secure its oil and other trade/imports is through the Gwadar-Kashgar route (CPEC). "This corridor will serve as an alternative route for Chinese trade, thereby allowing China to circumvent the threat of a blockade of Chinese oil supplies through the Strait of Malacca in the future" (Ahmed). This is a strategically very important alternative route, which is one of the goals for China under CPEC, and CPEC serves this purpose perfectly well (Paracha, 2016). Pakistan has leased Gwadar Port to China for 40 years. Control of Gwadar would allow China to supervise the "sea lines of communication", which are very near to "Karachi to monitor the maritime US occupation in the Persian Gulf, and the Indian Naval Bases of Gujarat and Mumbai" (Ashraf, 2015). Some political analysts maintain that China's initiative is planned to counter the US and India. Therefore, China is determined in making a success of this project and putting all its resources in this economic corridor, "based on the logic of improving security through economic development" (Zhiqin, 2016). China is taking this opportunity to improve regional connectivity as an important and fundamental element of increasing its stature at a global level.

Most analysts in Pakistan think that China is trying to use the opportunity of strategically located Pakistan for her own benefits while exploiting the situation. China wants a secure path for its trade and energy imports which currently go through the Indian

Ocean and Strait of Malacca and these both waterways are under control and overseen by the Indian Navy. CPEC will provide the access to China in the Persian Gulf and in the Indian Ocean, as “Gwadar port can be used for joint naval patrols in the Indian Ocean, further increasing the naval outreach of China and Pakistan in the region” (Khan T).

Chinese activities in this project (CPEC) and control of Gwadar could likewise challenge Washington’s influence. China will further dominate in South Asia and will most likely have a huge influence over the waters of the Indian Ocean. India sees it from the perspective of its security concerns in light of its rivalry with both Pakistan and China (Rajesh 2018). The US is developing bi-lateral relations with India in order to further its interests in South Asia. America views CPEC through a security lens and in relation to long-term concerns. The control of Gwadar port will give greater influence and power to Chinese maritime activities in the Indian Ocean, which are a potential threat to the authority of the US. The growing U.S.-Indian strategic relationship in recent decades is proof of the “United States empowering and supporting Indian naval capacity to counter the growing Chinese impact in the Indian Ocean” (Hussain, 2017). The United States is anxious because of China’s rise as a major challenger to US authority.

The Theoretical Aspect of Luke’s Theory of Power

Steven Lukes’ theory of power is helpful to understand the above situation, as this concept highlights the ability of an actor to become powerful through exercising these faces of power (which were described by Lukes). “Power: A Radical view” his famous book was published in 1974 and re-issued in 2005 with the expansion of his views in two new chapters. He admitted that “the concept of power that he used in his original (1974) book is flawed, but he still wants to defend the position that he advanced there” (Morris, 2006). Lukes focuses on the least debated aspect of power. He argues that “power is one of those concepts which is unavoidably value-dependent both its definition and any given use of it, once defined, are inextricably tied to a given set of value-assumptions which predetermine the range of its empirical application” (Lukes, 2005). It is always difficult for researchers and scholars to implement this concept, as it involves disputes. Lukes characterizes power as “If A gets B to do something A wants but which B would not have chosen to do, power is being exercised”. Lukes depicts three faces of power in his book and has divided power into these different faces, with each focusing on a specific aspect of power. (Wickett, 2015) defined the Lukes three faces of power as First, **Decision Making** in which “power can involve the ability to influence the making of decisions”, second is **Agenda setting** in which “Power may be reflected in the capacity to shape the political agenda and consequently prevent decisions being made” and the third face is known **Thought Control** where “Power may take the form of controlling people’s thoughts by the manipulation of their observations and preferences”.

The first face is the open face. In this face, people clearly understand the decision process. This is considered an obvious exercise of power that has a significant role in political power, where the government has the power to make decisions. In the simple definition of the first face, “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do” (Dahl 1957). This dimensional view of power proposed by Lukes is called a pluralist view of power. Dahl, Polsby, and Wolfinger examine power in the same manner. This view is the most direct and obvious one. “This face of power focuses on behavior in decision making on issues over which there is an observable conflict of interests, seen as express policy preferences, revealed by political participation” (Lukes, 2005).

The second face is more secretive, in which power is exercised behind closed doors. "Power is exercised when A participates in decisions affecting B". For instance, the transport mafia, who are damaging the environment, are putting pressure on the government not to pay attention to protestors/activists who are trying to raise awareness in public and want to have influence over the agenda. So, between the protestors and the mafia, there is a second face of a power struggle in deciding what to discuss and make decisions about. This face "focuses on decision making as well as control over the agenda" (Wiegmann, 2014). This face is also about preventing decisions from being made or reducing the choices that are considered. A common feature between the first and second dimensions of power is the emphasis on noticeably overt or covert conflict.

The third face is manipulative and ideological in nature. This dimension involves manipulating people's interest, in which one actor manages to "influence the other by shaping their preferences" (Wiegmann, 2014). In these cases, people do not even realize there is a problem in the first place. "This view allows us to consider the many ways in which potential issues are 'kept out' of politics, whether through individuals' decisions or through the operation of social forces and institutional practices" (Lorenzi, 2006). This view is about convincing people that they have different interests than they should have based on their socioeconomic position.

Implementation of CPEC and the First Face of Power:

Pakistan is currently experiencing the worst economic situation and internal security challenges it has faced since it was established. Pakistan considers this project a blessing because China is the only country that supports Pakistan on all international platforms, and in this situation, Pakistan is willfully ignoring Beijing's strategic motives and is focusing on the investment this project will bring. The first dimension in this theory is the 'open face' of power, which has the ability to exert influence in an open way. In this face of power, people clearly understand when decisions are made, how they have come about and why they have been made. The only potential reason why Pakistan is permitting this to happen is because of the dissatisfaction with the status quo of being an ally of the United States for 40 years. Since US forces killed Osama bin Laden within Pakistani territory, Pakistan has started establishing more relations with China and has decided that "if relations with Washington are going into a tailspin, Islamabad will turn to Beijing instead. China has made it clear up front to both the United States and Pakistan that the all-weather friendship was already as deep as they wanted it to be, and Islamabad needed to focus on fixing its relations with Washington" (Small, 2017). Although this development strategy contains significant problems and risks for Pakistan, it has created a general perception in Pakistan that China is a neighboring country and will respect its sovereignty because it is ultimately for the benefit of both nations. This face was outlined by Robert A. Dahl (A political theorist) as "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do." For instance, as the first face of power is "the most obvious and is limited to the observable influence exerted over others, the other actor is fully aware that his interests are being compromised. Here, the focus lies on the observable behavior of actors. What is analyzed is the decision-making taking place and the actors that take part in these decisions. This face of power is only concerned with observable, overt conflict as it plays out in a public policy debate. The subjective interests of each actor are revealed through their policy preferences when taking part in political decision making" (Wiegmann, 2014).

Implementation of CPEC and the Second face of Power

Critics of CPEC in Pakistan are demanding that the terms of the agreements in CPEC should be open to the public because they believe that CPEC is not an investment of \$46 billion but rather a loan that Pakistan has taken from China. These critics also have questioned what will happen if CPEC fails. How will Pakistan pay this loan? The second face of power involves “exerting power by restricting and influencing the topic that is up for debate. The second face of power goes beyond the first by also paying attention to what decisions are not made and what issues are kept from arising. It focuses on decision making and control over the agenda” (Wiegmann, 2014), which is, in fact, the secret face affecting decision making and agenda setting. Pakistan will have to return \$100 billion to China until 2024 for the \$18.5 billion that China has invested under CPEC. Although this project has the potential to boom the Pakistani economy, this transformation could come at the heavy price for which the sovereignty would be in the hand of China. Pakistan keeps signing the agreements of development and getting loans from China which is a major gamble for the Pakistani economy in future (Khaliq, 2018). Pakistan understands the situation in CPEC but has shown immense immaturity and short-sightedness in agreeing to this project. This project could affect the sovereignty of Pakistan due to its terms and conditions, and people inside the country have raised many questions and have called to open this project for publishing, but “it remains focused on an observable conflict in which two or more groups are aware that their interests are conflicting. But aside from the overt conflict in the form of open confrontation in the debate, this second face also includes covert conflict, where one group is unable to get their key issues on the table and opened to debate. The analyzed interests remain subjective and voiced through preferences and complaints when their issues are ignored” (Wiegmann, 2014). A common feature between the first and second dimensions of power is the emphasis on a noticeable overt or covert conflict. Lukes says that the second face of power is an improvement over the first face of power, but it could be further improved, and he provides the third dimensions of power.

The Implementation of CPEC and the Third Face of Power

The basic objective of CPEC is connectivity and cooperation between the two neighbor countries. The plan is based on “economic centrality, infrastructure development, regional connectivity, unimpeded trade, inclusiveness, and enhanced people-to-people ties” (Javaid, 2016). “China has gained its power mainly through its economic growth. Beijing today is an inevitable partner for international trade” (Vandamme, 2017) and is trying to take strategic advantages of this status through initiatives like OBOR throughout the world but more specifically through CPEC in Asia. The third dimension is about convincing other players that they have different interests than they should have based on their position. According to Lukes’ definition, “A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B’s interest”. A similar situation arises here. Despite the potential benefits, Pakistan must face big risks and challenges in this project, but Pakistani authorities have been convinced that this project will lead to many opportunities, and it is a blessing from China to Pakistan; therefore, as discussed before, the main beneficiary of this project is China. Based on prior arguments, what are the major consequences for Pakistan due to this project? Will Pakistan benefit from this project while mortgaging its sovereignty to China (Khaliq, 2018). China is planning to acquire a military base in Pakistan, which has made China’s intentions clear in the Indian Ocean (Rajagopalan, 2018). Will Pakistan compromise its military sovereignty? China is a major power, and this project will fulfil China’s goal of

becoming a world economic power, but what will happen to Pakistan? Will it be the right decision to take the risk to take out \$46 billion in loans that they have to re-pay? Due to the confrontation with India and United States, Pakistan has been trying to reduce its diplomatic dependence on the United States, and unprecedented Chinese military access in Pakistan cannot be acceptable for India in the region. China holds the biggest industry and moving its trade will massively affect the environment and indigenous industry. Should this be enough for Pakistan to compromise on all these aspects for this project? Still, Pakistan considers this “gift” from China to Pakistan to be the only option left for Pakistan as TINA (There Is No Alternative). The state has officially announced that this is the right choice to join OBOR and has portrayed an extra-ordinary positive image of China through different scenarios giving examples of Trump crude hostility bolster this policy. Lukes argues that “Such power involves the concealment of people’s ‘real interest’ by ‘false consciousness’ evokes bad historical memories and can appear both patronizing and presumptuous”. China’s development strategically benefits itself, and the country is making a great power play in the region in the name of the development of this region. This is clearly manipulation for its own benefit, which is the third face of power described by Lukes. As he said, “Domination occurs where the power of some affect the interest of others by restricting their capabilities”. Power is demonstrated by one actor when it manages to influence another by shaping its preferences. “These and other mechanisms constitute power’s third dimension when it works against people’s interests by misleading them, thereby distorting their judgment. To say that such power involves the concealment of people’s ‘real interests’ by ‘false consciousness’” (Lukes, 2005) by, for example, “employing social myths, power is exerted as thought control where actors are made to adopt and agree with views that are not in their real interest. This dimension of power goes beyond the second face by also focusing on the power of one entity to shape the interests of the other, and it requires decision making, control over agendas, and addressing (potential) issues. The open conflict would break out if the oppressed become aware of the interests of the oppressor. But power was previously exerted to shape their view away from their real interests” (Wiegmann, 2014) by “Shaping their perceptions, conceptions, and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things” (Lukes, 2005). This face prevents people “from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cognitions, and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things and further Lukes argues that With the third face of power there is not necessarily a grievance as the person whose ‘real’ interests are being ignored has accepted their role in the existing order” (Lukes, 2005).

Conclusion

Who will be the actual beneficiary of this project (CPEC)? Most of the discussion on this topic in Pakistan suggests that the CPEC is like a blessing for Pakistan, and this project is considered a very strategic and important project, not only for China but equally for Pakistan. The general perception is that if this project is completed, Pakistan will become a country of prosperity soon but as shown by the above analysis, the major beneficiary of the project is China. China wants to benefit economically and strategically through this project and “kill two birds with one stone”. China is trying to take advantage of Pakistan’s current situation and is trying to convince Pakistan that this project is, in fact, a blessing for them. China always benefits strategically through economic projects, and CPEC is a clear example. Pakistan has given Gwadar to China on lease for the next 40 years. The new government in Pakistan has reportedly concerned agreement of heavy Chinese loans from previous

governments that are part of the (CPEC), as it fears these loans could push Pakistan into a debt trap. The major point of confusion regarding the investment of China whether it is a gift or loan to Pakistan but a “complicated set of infrastructure investments that will be paid for mostly by Pakistani investors, consumers, and taxpayers in the form of commercial loans from Chinese banks. They will be paid back by Pakistani power generation companies and the government, and electricity tariffs will be paid by ordinary Pakistani consumers. China is not losing money through CPEC” (Tirmizi, 2017), as they are profiting consistently. Is China dreaming of becoming a superpower and does it see this project as providing a step towards its ambitions? Pakistan should not repeat the same mistakes it made during the Cold War between the US and USSR. The presence of the Chinese army in Pakistan will affect its sovereignty. There is a perception that millions of jobs will be created through this project because if we look at African countries where China did invest, they employed their own people, and this started in Pakistan last year.

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