

Academic Session: Socio-Cultural and Media Perspectives on CPEC

Venue: Meetings Room

Chair: Dr. Muhammad Waseem

- | | | |
|---|--|----|
| 1 | - <i>Deepening China-Pakistan Relations Through Cultural Exchanges</i> Dr. Zhang Jiamei | 84 |
| 2 | - <i>Study on Divided Opinions of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor</i> Dr. Huang Delin | 87 |
| 3 | - <i>CPEC: A Baloch Perspective</i> M. Usman A. Siddi & Hanif Ullah Sajid | 93 |
| 4 | - <i>Assessing Ex-Ante Socioeconomic Impact of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) across the Zone of Influence</i> Shahid Habib, Fazal Rabbi, Farkhanda Jabeen, & Adeel Kadri | 97 |

DEEPENING CHINA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS THROUGH CULTURAL EXCHANGES

Zhang Jiamei *

***Abstract:** This paper underlines the significance of the promotion of Sino-Pakistan cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts at a time the two countries have decided to establish “China-Pakistan Economic Corridor” (CPEC). As is known there is a flurry of events in both countries to explore ways to implement CPEC. China and Pakistan adhere to different socio-political systems, languages, customs, religions, folk etc. Despite these glaring differences a little attention was paid to promote cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts. As a result, cultural relations remained far below the political and diplomatic relationship in modern times. This is also obvious from the fact that hitherto Chinese government has established over 300 Confucius institutes and Confucius classrooms in 81 countries and regions, while there are only 3 in Pakistan. This clearly underlines the necessity of promoting cultural exchanges to match them with politically close contact. This research argues that without promoting cultural understanding and exchanges it would be hard to take political and economic relations beyond a certain level. This research further argues that cultural exchanges are an irreplaceable way to promote substantive cooperation, especially the development of the folk culture communication. One of the effective ways to practice the cultural exchange is ‘mining in heterogeneous cultural advantages and weakening economic inequality’. Cultural exchanges could provide an opportunity for self-reflection and a deep understanding of each other.*

Keywords: Pak-China relations, cultural exchanges, people-to-people contacts, cultural power, common development, cultural dialogue

China and Pakistan established diplomatic relations in 1951. Pakistan is one of the first countries to admit People's Republic of China in the world, and is also the first Islamic country to establish diplomatic relations with China. After the Bandung conference in 1955, with the efforts of Premier Minister Zhou Enlai, a mutual sincere trust between the two countries was seeded towards a common development. Heretofore, the two countries have gone through a stormy and rainy journey nearly 65 years, playing irreplaceable roles in each other's process of development. The long-lasting friendship between the two countries without any interruption has become the unmatched, unique relation in the world today. But this does not mean we have taken a full advantage of this relationship and cooperated in an all-around manner. Actually, in most of time we failed to give this friendship a true meaning, based on our different cultural backgrounds, political systems and domestic situations. In other words, compared to the close and frequent governmental exchange, the folk communication has been left behind, and compared to the political cooperation; the economic cooperation has been lagged far behind. These are the main characteristics of the two countries' relations before CPEC is launched. Now it's time to make the name match the reality by China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the first step of “One Belt and One Road” initiative. As the high mountains separate the two countries geographically, the cultures of the two peoples show different colors. Therefore, how to promote the cultural exchanging and understanding, to facilitate economic cooperation, and to make two hearts much closer, is the point this paper is trying to discuss.

Going along with the economic cooperation triggered by “China-Pakistan Economic Corridor,” the two peoples have to face the fact that the basic cultural exchanges between the two countries probably only could be called a “subjective desire” rather than an “objective prospect.” The main reason is, of course, the obvious differences between the two countries' cultures. Due to differences in languages, customs, religions, etc., folk cultural exchanges are completely unmatched to the friendly political relations between the two countries. In the 20th century the governmental cultural delegation's official visits had been given priority to the folk art performance groups with semi-official visits, although the two governments had signed “The Agreement of Cultural Exchange Between China and Pakistan” in 1965. Entering the 21st century, in the end of 2003, the two countries signed in Beijing the “Execution Plan of Cultural Exchange Between China and Pakistan From 2004 to 2006.” In 2006 the first bilateral cultural center was established by Pak-China foundation in Karachi. Hitherto more than 300 Confucius institutes and Confucius classrooms have been founded across 81 countries and regions, but only 3 in Pakistan.

Therefore, new perspectives of cultural exchange are eagerly appealed, to match the political close contact and promote the economic cooperation. Here we cannot help asking: where is the traditional model friendship going in the new age?

Perspective 1: Cultural Propaganda

In a frenzy of internet media, foreign media such as the BBC and CNN etc. have attracted the attention of a large number of young people, although the standpoint and the angle of view could be distinguished rationally by mature-minded adults, but not teenage absolutely. As English is/was the official language of Pakistan, the well-educated group is more receptive to English-relating cultures, and is unconsciously influenced. Especially when any young people coming from Pakistan and with the first sight and contact with Chinese people and Chinese Culture, most of them cannot help shouting out

* Associate Professor and Head of Urdu Department, Peking University, Beijing, China (Email: zhangjm@pku.edu.cn).

“China looks distinctly different from the news and media reports of Western press corps.” On the other hand, the older generation’s memories remain in the era of MAO Zedong and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, or the old movies and popular songs of Pakistan. In addition, Pakistan’s outstanding literary works and Chinese contemporary outstanding literary works are rarely mutually translated and further introduced. In combination with the classic literature, some works after the “9 • 11,” which are representative stories and could draw echoes from the two young peoples. Anyway under the trend of globalization, the attraction of heterogeneous culture in today’s popular culture could not be underestimated.

Perspective 2: Youth Relay

Heterogeneous cultures are most attractive to young people, who are learning in colleges and universities. Taking China side for instance, with the support of Pakistan’s embassy and consulates to China, if exhibitions or lectures could be regularly organized in colleges and universities all over the country to introduce Pakistani culture, no doubt the youth is hardly to refuse loving Pakistan. Meanwhile if Pakistani youth delegation could be invited to visit China, to talk with the people and see the society by their own eyes, what they bring back to their motherland cannot be overwhelmed by Western media. On the other hand, because of less knowledge relating to Pakistan and the insurance of the security situation there, most Chinese young students have few chances to visit Pakistan or study in Pakistani universities. However, in fact, some modern universities in Pakistan, such as the National University of Modern Languages (NUML), the National University of Science and Technology (NUST), COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Allama Iqbal Open University, etc., and not to mention the famous Universities like Punjab University, Quaid-i-Azam University, etc., with a long history and excellent academic tradition, and equipped with advanced facilities, beautiful environment, together with enthusiasm, self-confidence, high sense of responsibility of the friendly students there. Two undergraduate students of the Department of South Asian Studies of Peking University, for example, attended the Model United Nations activities sponsored by NUST at the beginning of 2013; they were deeply impressed by the ability, responsibility, enthusiasm and confidence of Pakistani friends, and gained more than friendship. In March the same year, all the Chinese students learning Urdu language at Peking University took part in the second “China-Pakistan Business Forum” sponsored by the COMSATS, and served an interpretation work. On the Forum, a lack of mutual understanding is obvious between the young generations, and indicated a mismatching to the highly praised profound friendship between the two countries. Therefore, to bridge the gap and increase more universities exchanges to fill the gap would be a breakthrough of the inheriting friendship.

New Perspective 3: Point to Point Communication

First of all, Pakistan is an Islamic country, it could be said that all the Chinese people, who have been to Pakistan, definitely could tell that Pakistani Muslims are moderate, warm hearted, honest and extremely friendly to Chinese people. China is a big country of colorful cultures. In China, most Muslims mainly live in the Northwest region. Ningxia, Gansu, Qinghai, Xinjiang and other places are of Muslim cultural atmosphere and traditions; therefore, it will be a welcome step in Northwest China to Pakistani friends, with more familiar local diet and more conveniently visiting the mosques. In addition, the music and art performances in Xinjiang, such as songs and dances, have much common with Pakistani musical art. So it could be suggested that the communication between near cultures first may not be a bad choice. To establish sister city, district, etc., would be a substantial way to promote people-to-people exchanges.

Secondly, Pakistan is also a country of colorful cultures, including Buddhist culture. There are several well-known Buddhist remains in Taxila, Swat, Peshawar etc., full of ancient Buddhist sites, where not only Chinese monks stayed learning and practicing Buddhism, but was the birthplace of the art of Buddhist statuary in the South Asian subcontinent and the passageway of Buddhism’s Eastward spread. The “Gandhara Week of Buddhist Culture and Art” has been sponsored by the Tourism Bureau of Pakistan for more than decades. To invite international experts and scholars and friends to visit historical sites of Buddhist culture, has been a grateful and influential event in Asia and even across the world. There are located not only Buddhist relics of Asoka period and remains of monasteries where Chinese holy monk Song Yun, Fa Hien, Hieun Tsang had visited and stayed to learn Buddhism and deliver speech, but also museums, such as Taxila Museum, Lahore Museum, Peshawar Museum Dir Museum and Karachi Museum etc., collecting a large number of Buddhist sculptures and numerous antiques. In this field Chinese researchers on Buddhism and archaeologists are facing up an exhaustible treasure, meanwhile tourist and Buddhists could find their favorite destination. Therefore, exchange on Buddhist culture and Buddhist art is also an important part of people-to-people exchanges between the two countries.

Thirdly, art is the best language without borders, the communication of art and culture through a variety of forms such as exhibition, performance, could be regularly held in the cities of the two countries. Except for the previously mentioned music communication, the folk craftsmanship across Pakistan and the traditional art of hand in China also could be introduced in each other’s main areas, both to carry forward the national culture, and deepen the understanding of each other. Moreover, both Pakistan and China are endowed with rich tourism resources, after more routes have been opened by air companies from both sides, more individuals will enjoy visiting beautiful neighborhood in person, under a secure environment.

At last but not the least, educational and cultural exchange is the necessary way of realization of the younger generation to deepen understanding, to seek cooperation, and to pass on friendship. Currently students from Pakistan are mainly studying science and technology, engineering, medicine and pharmaceutical, electronics, physics, chemistry, and Chinese language etc., while business, political and economic direction do not account for a significant position yet. Back to 2003, China Scholarship Council (CSC) and Pakistan Higher Education Commission (HEC) cooperated to arrange the Pakistani Government Scholarship Program, funding of Pakistani students going to graduate school in China, and totally 205 doctoral students were funded by that program. From then on more and more Pakistani students come to China for a further education, they live respectively in Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Nanjing, Wuhan, Xi 'an, Hangzhou, Dalian, Shenzhen, Changchun etc. big cities for a doctorate study. According to the 2011 China's Ministry of Education's official statics carried by China Scholarship Council, the number of Pakistani students who had been studying in China reached a total of 8,516, in the ninth position of all the foreign students from all around the world. Due to different polity and economic pattern of the two countries, a further and deeper understanding of each other is a must; therefore, the number of students in the major of polity and economy studies could increase, aiming at a long term and an in-depth cooperation between the two countries.

In general, the close official exchanges between China and Pakistan is in sharp contrast with the weak people-to-people exchanges. The two governments had signed a large number of cooperation agreements, but not much of them had been carried out effectively. The standing heat of governmental communication between the two countries covers the lack of communication in other aspects. Under the good will and comprehensive plan of economic cooperation, cultural exchange is the irreplaceable way to promote substantive cooperation, especially the development of the folk culture communication. One of the effective ways to practice the cultural exchange is 'mining in heterogeneous cultural advantages, and weakening economic inequality'. What's more the cultural exchange would provide us an opportunity for self-reflection: at least for now, from our old friend and good neighbour Pakistan's eyes, we have seen our less cultural strength and influence; from Pakistani youth, we have seen the Chinese young people's weaknesses and disadvantages; from a Pakistani woman, we have seen our misunderstanding of them. After all, China and Pakistan have obvious differences in every aspect, but it should not be the barrier but the attraction to each other through the goodwill of understanding. To achieve the docking of economic, cultural and other aspects is not an easy task in short term, but under the guidance of the official coordination, China's private enterprises are bound to join the cooperative project and would play an essential role in it, hopefully they could find their position in the domestic market in Pakistan, to strengthen the coordinated development of the two countries.

In a certain geographical area, under the guidance of the desire for a common development, it is the mutual respect, mutual understanding and learning from each other among different cultural groups that leads to going ahead together. Furthermore, culture is the basic mark of people's identity, the foundation of national unification, the lifeblood of sustainable development and the core spirit under the external form. Through communicating with different cultures, a good understanding of domestic culture could be achieved; through other's eyes, a better self could be found. A good friend is like a mirror, reflects what you want to see and the aspect you could not see without a mirror. However, culture could not be excessively praised and could not be measured by quantities, it is hiding in a free country's inner strength and only could be conveyed by its quality and unlimited meaning of human being's history and potential, and anyone could be the judge. The degree of the freedom of the peoples' thoughts is mirrored in the cultural environment, which reflects the effectiveness and rationality of the governance of the country. On the one hand, the cultural development should be verified by history process; on the other side, it could be verified and tested by anyone in the world. Especially in the process of developing and reforming, in regional cooperation, and in the process of globalization, people face much more pressures and challenges, cultural dialogue is a preferred way to dispel misunderstanding and build a better self.

THE ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC OPINION ABOUT CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

Huang Delin *
Li Diren **

Abstract: *As the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor enters its implementation phase, both China and Pakistan would encounter a range of challenges. At this point in time, it is critically important to analyze public opinion in China on the contours of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. On the basis of relevant literature review and a supplementary investigation into public sentiments expressed over the internet, this paper intends to evaluate the Chinese people's opinion on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor strategy. In the end, this paper will analyze and compare the research data, summarize the findings and provide some suggestions on how to deal with and guide the public opinion.*

Keywords: China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, public opinion, analysis, public sentiment, China, Pakistan, strategy

Introduction

When Prime Minister Li Keqiang visited Pakistan in May 2013, he put forward China-Pakistan Economic Corridor strategy. Thereon, China and Pakistan have reached a series of agreements on the implementation of that strategy. Within the framework of “Silk Road Economic Belt” and “21st Century Maritime Silk Road” (collectively known as the One Belt, One Road initiative), China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has been afforded the flagship status.¹

Since the last two years, both China and Pakistan have accelerated the development of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. While the implementation phase is formally in process, some potential risks are being gradually exposed. Since the project presents both opportunities and challenges, it is pertinent to gauge the attitude of the domestic Chinese public since the project is being financed by China. After evaluating the perceptions held by Chinese people, this paper would also propose some countermeasures in the end.

The available literature on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, for the most part, focuses on these aspects: the broader geopolitical significance of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor vis-a-vis the One Belt One Road strategy, the economic prospects of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor for the region and the challenges associated with implementation of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Niu Biao and Chen Lijun believe that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has strategic significance for China with reference to attainment of energy security, development of Western regions including the province of Xinjiang, the strengthening of peripheral diplomacy, promotion of Chinese model of globalization, and achievement of geostrategic security.² Strong bilateral relations, congruency of geopolitical outlooks, and improved prospects for regional connectivity also provide the basis for the implementation of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.³

Although both countries have displayed exceptional determination for materializing the project's goals, the corridor continues to face a lot of risks and challenges. Many observers in China have been apprehensive as to whether Pakistan would be able to ensure the safety of the economic corridor given the security situation in Pakistan vis-a-vis terrorism, ethnic separatism, unbridled religious extremism, absence of political stability, and to some extent foreign interference. It is also questionable as to whether Pakistan's domestic investment environment could support operationalization mechanisms and maintenance costs caused incurred due to natural disasters. Another challenge would be the absence of viable industrial structures in Pakistan and concomitant shortage of skilled labor. Furthermore, misunderstandings due to cultural and linguistic barriers may withhold Chinese enterprises to formulate effective working relations with Pakistani labor market, in the absence of which Chinese companies would have to depend on Chinese workforce. These are the real risks in the implementation of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.⁴

Given above facts, scholar Chen Yun proposes to expand the scale of imports from Pakistan and the scale of investment in Pakistan, establish China-Pakistan transportation network, and cultivate Pakistan's industrial cluster and export processing base for Xinjiang. Scholar Chen Liqun believes that it is necessary to improve interoperability level so as to accelerate the economic development of the region which depends on Gwadar Port.

At present, most studies concerning China-Pakistan Economic Corridor have been either conducted by government sources or are framed on policy issues. However, without the participation of the public, policies are hard to sustain. Although the public has no decisive power in the foreign affairs, policy makers often feel the need to incorporate public opinion. It is, therefore, necessary to understand public opinion through scientific methods so that policy-makers can preemptively adopt

* Professor, College of Public Management, China University of Geosciences, Wuhan, China (Email: dlhuang1030@163.com).

** Faculty, China College of Public Management, China University of Geosciences, Wuhan, China.

any necessary countermeasures to deal with public reaction. Given that, this paper intends to study China-Pakistan Economic Corridor from the perspective of public opinion, and provide some suggestions on how to deal with and guide the public opinion, so as to improve public understanding of the economic corridor strategy in the long run.

Research Perspective

Public opinion is normally not based on consensus as diverse segments of a given society tend to hold variety of political interests and ideological leanings. Therefore, the government must treat public opinion with caution to strike a balance among conflicting viewpoints. “By reflecting the diplomatic dynamics, commenting on the diplomatic gains and losses, and proposing the diplomatic suggestions, and restraining the diplomatic behavior, public opinion has an important impact on the foreign policy and provides an important way for public to participate in foreign policy decision.”⁵

With the rise of social media, public opinion channels have multiplied. People can express their opinions on forums, microblog, wechats, and post bars without any editorial controls. Besides, the timelessness, virtuality, anonymity and openness afforded by social media, online public opinions often happen to be extremely emotional and unrefined.⁶

Therefore, through online public sentiment monitoring system, this paper has collected information from news, microblog, wechat, forums, blogs, questions and answers, and videos from November 1, 2014 till November 19, 2015. In order to make up for the defects of online acquisition, a questionnaire survey was also conducted among university students as part of a supplementary investigation. The reason why the paper chooses university students is based on Lippmann’s point of view. He believes that “public opinion is a collection from large number of important people who express their opinion on important issues.”⁷ University students tend to possess higher humanistic quality and treat the issues more objectively and rationally, which is typical in other elite groups as well.

Through an online analytic system, the author collected 11874 posts which mention China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. After removing similar posts, the effective posts for the research came out to be 6996. The supplementary investigation collected a total of 1298 copies wherein the invalid questionnaires were 103, with the effectiveness rate of 92.1%.

The Analysis of Public Sentiment

Time Distribution Sequence and Major Events

Through online public sentiment system, the paper analyzes a large number of posts (see chart 1) in the past year. Using “China-Pakistan Economic Corridor” as the search term, the post release time was mainly concentrated on the past six months. The relevant number of post grew explosively in April, October and November 2015, which mark the major policy announcements by two countries in order to promote the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor into the full implementation phase.

Chart 1 Post Release Time Distribution Sequence



According to chart 1, the data from November 2014 to April 2015 is relatively stable, mainly concentrated in three days: November 8th, 10 and February 2, 2015. The daily highest number of post reached near 400 in April. However, the data in October and November remained relatively fluctuating with the highest number as 626 and the lowest number as 0. The paper lists the time table (see table 1) of major events concerned with China-Pakistan Economic Corridor on the basis of chart 1.

Among these events, the public was most interested in two events and gave positive feedback. The first event was when Pakistan intended to set up 10,000 security forces for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the other was when Pakistan government officially transferred the right to use the Gwadar Port Free Trade Zone to China (the lease term is 43 years).

Table1: The Time Table of Major Events Concerned with China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

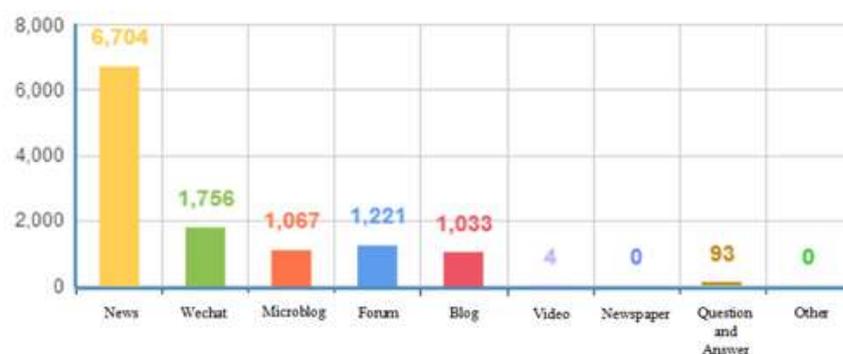
| Date | Event |
|------------|--|
| 2014.11.08 | Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang met with the Prime Minister of Pakistan Sheriff, stressed to build the flagship project named China-Pakistan Economic Corridor |
| 2014.11.10 | China and Pakistan signed an investment agreement of \$42000000000, involving energy, and 20 more |
| 2015.02.02 | The beginning of "one zone and one road," China-Pakistan Economic Corridor was expected to be the first one |
| 2015.04.17 | The seminar of "one zone and one road" and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor was successfully closed, four pragmatic results had been achieved. |
| 2015.04.19 | Xi Jinping published a signed article named "Long Live the Friendship between Pakistan and China" on both <Fighting> and <Daily News> in Pakistan. |
| 2015.04.21 | Xi Jinping presented an important speech entitled <Constructing the Common Destiny between China and Pakistan, Developing a New Journey of Win-Win Cooperation> in Pakistan, and proposed that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor was made as the center task, plus the cooperation with Gwadar Port, transportation infrastructure, energy, and industrial, forming the "1+4" layout. |
| 2015.05.19 | China denied "Carat Canal" memorandum of cooperation that was signed in Guangzhou with Thailand. |
| 2015.08.12 | China-Pakistan Economic Corridor forum fell to the end. 20 memorandums of cooperation were signed, worth about 10350000000 RMB, while the "Karamay Declaration" was adopted. |
| 2015.09.10 | China rent the Gwadar Port, established the first Special Economic Zone in Pakistan. |
| 2015.10.13 | China and Pakistan Entrepreneurs International Seminar was opened in Beijing. |
| 2015.10.29 | Guangdong twenty-first Century Maritime Silk Road International Fair was opened on 29 th , Dongguan. Before the fair, Zhuhai signed four cooperation agreements, concerning "one zone and one road" flagship project, with Gwadar Pakistan in Dongguan, including port construction and trade cooperation. |
| 2015.11.02 | Pakistan railway set up 10,000 security forces for China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. |
| 2015.11.11 | Pakistan government officially transfers the right to use the Gwadar Port Free Trade Zone (about 152 hectares) to China, the lease term is 43 years. |
| 2015.11.17 | China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Media Forum was held in Islamabad, Pakistan. |

Distribution of Public Opinion

The main source of online posts which were collected by online public sentiment system was the news, followed by wechat, microblogs, forums, and blogs (see chart 2). Among them, posts from personal space were mainly concentrated on November 10th, 2014 (most were blogs), and November 2015 (see chart 3). The former attracted some scholars' comments because of the \$42000000000 investment. The latter were mainly from wechat, microblog and forum, most posts were citizens' comments and forwarding news (58.19%). The nature of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor strategy is a political and diplomatic event with no conflicts caused by national complexes. As Pakistan announced some assertive initiatives (such as security forces, etc.), Chinese citizens got all the more interested.

According to the assessment of emotional tendency of the posts, there were 6462 positive comments (92.4%), 198 negative comments (2.8%), and 296 neutral comments (4.2%). The overall tendency was positive, but there were still some negative evaluation. Its time distribution is shown in chart 4.

Chart 2: Type of Post Source



In addition, the ratio of positive post from microblog is 91.7%, the negative ratio is 3.6%, which accords with overall tendency.

Typical Opinion

The paper reorganizes the hot microblogs on the basis of the total number of their comment, forwarding and like. 8 of the top 10 microblog have positive attitude, 2 have negative attitude.

Among them, @Micro World reposts the news about “Pakistan will provide a specialized team for security,” most of the following comments are positive, there are also some people objectively expresses that this is a benefit exchange (@Coldly See the World 0730). @ Global Broadcast, @ Phoenix Weekly, @ Blue Whale Finance Reporter Working Platform, @ Military Flying Leopard and @ Rumour and Truth have posted or reposted the news about “Pakistan leases Gwadar port to China for 43 years.”

People with negative views worry about the risks faced by China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. A microblog of @USTC Hubugui elaborated the difficulties and risks faced by China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. His post also suggested that China should remain cautious during the implementation of the economic corridor. @Mei Xinyu reposted the news about “a Chinese man was kidnapped in Pakistan more than 1 years after being rescued” from @Breaking News, he expressed his concerns about the safety of the economic corridor.

In addition, @Global Eyes GW reposted the article entitled “the first shot of one zone and one road is not loud enough?,” which suggests that the government should be ready to face the on-ground challenges. @ Barron-Maddie commented that “one zone and one road is a dead end. This cooperation is destined to be failed, as Chinese government does not open eyes and see the outside world, and Chinese management mode and development routine are not applicable to foreign countries.”

Given the above typical opinions, most of them are consistent with the current mainstream public opinion, but there are some relative negative reviews in-between. These opinions on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, in any case, cannot be ignored. On one hand, the objectivity of the opinion should be accepted, which could help us keep an eye on the potential risks of economic corridor and setup a preventive plan. On other hand, government should strengthen policy advocacy, dispel public concerns, and ensure the implementation of the policy.

3 Public Opinion Trend of University Students

Based on sample survey of university students, 38.7% of them claimed that they had already known about China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, 7.3% of those who knew about China-Pakistan Economic Corridor claimed that they have had a comprehensive understanding, 46.6% of those claimed that they have had a normal understanding, 15.5% of those claimed that they have had a little understanding. Only less than half of university students who could easily access the frontier information had heard about China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, not to mention the general people's understanding of this issue. Thus, it can be inferred that the popularization of the official propaganda is low. By analysing the ways to get information (see table 2), the paper finds out that university students mainly get information about China-Pakistan Economic Corridor through the new media, such as TV and Internet. In addition, some of them hear about China-Pakistan Economic Corridor through the university entrance examination review process.

Table 2 Ways to Get Information

| Ways | Newspaper and Broadcast | Television | Word of Mouth | Internet and New Media | Other | Total |
|-----------|-------------------------|------------|---------------|------------------------|-------|-------|
| Frequency | 68 | 148 | 79 | 147 | 23 | 465 |
| Ratio (%) | 14.6 | 31.8 | 17.0 | 31.6 | 4.9 | 100.0 |

University students’ cognition of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor can be gauged through the results of questionnaire survey (see table 3, table 4, and table 5). Most of them believe that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor could improve the economic development in both counties, protect Chinese energy resources, and create a good environment for the surrounding region. However, there are still some people who have apprehensions about the huge investment that could become taxpayer’s nightmare, and they do not see any obvious economic benefits. In addition, security was also a concern.

Table 3 What main influence do you think the Chinese 46 billion US dollars investment for the corridor would have on China?

| Options | Improve Economic Development | taxpayer’s nightmare | No Obvious Economic Benefit | Protect Energy Resource | Create a Good Environment | Other | Total |
|-----------|------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
| Frequency | 712 | 185 | 162 | 490 | 502 | 47 | 2098 |
| Ratio (%) | 59.6 | 15.5 | 13.6 | 41.0 | 42.0 | 3.9 | 175.6 |

Table 4 What influence do you think China-Pakistan Economic Corridor would have on Pakistan?

| Options | Improve Pakistan Economic | Improve the Relationship between Two Countries | Solve the Energy Crisis | Increasing Terrorist Targets | Other | Total |
|-----------|---------------------------|--|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Frequency | 701 | 875 | 192 | 192 | 28 | 1988 |
| Ratio (%) | 58.8 | 73.3 | 16.1 | 16.1 | 2.3 | 166.6 |

According to table 5, the main obstacles to the construction of the economic corridor are investment risk, huge cost, complex international factors and security issues. In addition, some fear that Pakistan's domestic political situation and investment environment may not be conducive to the economic corridor.

Table 5 What is the main obstacle to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor?

| Options | Terrorist Threats | High Cost, No Economic Benefits in Short Term | Poor Natural Environment | Over India area, Complex International Factor | Unstable Domestic Political Situation in Pakistan | Poor Domestic Investment Environment in Pakistan | Culture Barriers | Other | Total |
|-----------|-------------------|---|--------------------------|---|---|--|------------------|-------|-------|
| Frequency | 322 | 599 | 409 | 652 | 318 | 240 | 91 | 40 | 2671 |
| Ratio (%) | 27.0 | 50.2 | 34.3 | 54.7 | 26.7 | 20.1 | 7.6 | 3.4 | 223.9 |

Generally speaking, 81.7% of the university students claimed that they were optimistic about the prospects of the economic corridor, and there were also 6.2% of them who claimed that they are not much concern (see table 6).

Table 6 What do you think of the prospect of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor ?

| Options | Very Positive | Positive | Negative | Not Concerned | Total |
|-----------|---------------|----------|----------|---------------|-------|
| Frequency | 200 | 777 | 144 | 74 | 1195 |
| Ratio (%) | 16.7 | 65.0 | 12.1 | 6.2 | 100.0 |

Suggestions

Given the above data analysis, it can be inferred that although public opinion is consistent with mainstream orientation and the official media. It can also be learned from the supplementary survey that the economic corridor strategy has not been popularized in the public or has not garnered enough attention by the public. Public participation is overall quite low.

Therefore, it can be inferred that when the government makes major foreign policy decisions, the public opinion should be duly considered. The government should also encourage the public to participate. This will also help the top-level government make further adjustments in the subsequent implementation process. This paper suggests that before the policy is introduced, the government should widely solicit public opinion, particularly that of experts and scholars.

Conclusion

Since October 2015 the project of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has been taken into the full implementation phase. Most of the public holds a positive attitude. It is worth pondering that the official narratives dominates the public opinion. The paper hopes that the government would encourage the public to participate in the process of policy implementation so as to reduce misunderstanding and friction in the process of policy implementation, and achieve a win-win situation.

In addition, the government should enhance the government's sensitivity to public opinion, solicit more public opinion, and improve the ability to respond to public opinion effectively.⁸ There are still some limitations and problems in this research. For instance, there are demographic differences in online opinions which may affect the reliability of conclusion.

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CPEC: A BALOCH PERSPECTIVE

M. Usman A. Siddiqi *
Hanif Ullah Sajid **

***Abstract:** China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) – a multibillion dollar project – has undoubtedly heralded a new strategic partnership between Pakistan and China – the countries that already have progressively cultivated an all-weather alliance of fraternity since their inceptions and have always apprehended and shouldered each other’s core interests. CPEC aims to connect economic agents along the proposed territory through railroads, highways, and ports, envisioning specialized institutions and structures, treaties, laws, and trade and visa agreements to govern trade in the area. While the project is meant to serve economic purposes, it also entails political, strategic, and even social implications for the region. Where economic, political, and strategic meta-narratives – accounting for global, regional, and national perspectives on the CPEC – are significant, the popular perspective is no less important, if not more. Gwader, Balochistan, is the most important point along the CPEC, because it is the point to which CPEC aims to connect other areas and the very reason CPEC has been envisioned. The paper, therefore, aims at exploring the the popular perspective of the people of Balochistan. The paper is a qualitative inquiry through iterative thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews of the participants.*

Keywords: CPEC, Baloch perspectives, meta-narratives, provincial harmony, political perspective of CPEC

Introduction

Deteriorated centre-province relation, stagnated developmental, and disintegrated internal situation of Baluchistan has been in limelight since the inception of Pakistan. However, with the recent initiation of China Pakistan Economic Corridor, – a flagship project of Chian's 'One Belt, One Road Policy'– once again Baluchistan is making headlines regarding the ex ante estimates of success of the said project within the broader context of an overall law and order situation in the province, federal government's simultaneous wink and nod and or stepping back policy statements (regarding the routes and sub-projects of CPEC), and the success ratio of past projects initiated in and for Balochistan.

In general, in Pakistan, there is a popular perception that the CPEC project is going to be a game changer not only for the settled and developed areas of Pakistan, but it is also going to connect and bring forth the backward areas especially that of Baluchistan into the mainstream economic and developmental activities. Now, the question of concern is that how the people of Baluchistan perceive this project. Do they perceive it as project like its predecessor projects that initiated with great zeal and zest and lost its success tune with the passage of time without achieving the expected outcomes? What are their reservations about the project and the route of the project? Do they have any reservations about the projects? If yes, then according to them how these reservations could be addressed? What prospects and Challenges do they anticipate in the completion of the project? Do they have any suggestions for the project to materialize and deliver? These are the main questions which this paper will try to answer and explain.

Methodology

As the study deals with current and an ongoing project, therefore, iterative strategy of inquiry is used in this research. Semi-structured interviews (telephonic and face to face) and dual moderator focus group have been used a mode of data collection. To make the research reliable and valid, while collecting data, the following considerations were taken into account.

- ✓ Conducting the interviews in comfort places
- ✓ Tape recording the interviews with informed consent and prior permission
- ✓ In order to keep originality of the themes and meanings, providing copies of transcribed interviews to participants before running the analysis.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

| Super-ordinate Themes | Themes |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Overall Perception about CPEC | Positive Overall |
| | Experiences of the Past Projects: Doubts and Fears |
| Reservations | Route Controversy |

* Deputy Director, Centre of Excellence China Studies, and Faculty, Department of Political Science, GC University, Lahore, Pakistan (Email: usmansiddiqi@gcu.edu.pk).

** Visiting Faculty, Department of Political Science, GC University, Lahore, Pakistan.

| | |
|--|---|
| | Other (Demographic) Concerns |
| Effects of CPEC Project on Balochistan | Cultural Exchange |
| | No Excuse for Conflicts |
| SUGGESTIONS: | Route Controversy and Information Dissemination |
| | Setting Priorities |
| | Maintaining Law and Order Situation |
| | Discourage <i>Sardari Nizam</i> |
| | Borders with Afghanistan should be sealed |

Overall Perception about CPEC

Positive: Overall the project is perceived as an omen of peace and prosperity. The people of Balochistan think that as the central point i.e., Gwader is located in Balochistan, therefore, it goes without saying that the project will bring development and peace to the land, and happiness to a common person. The use of the positive collocates such as symbol of happiness and hope during the interview and focus group is a testimony to the fact. As a resident of Chaghi says, "CPEC is a great step towards progress and development. We have high hopes attached to it because the ultimate beneficiaries of the project are going to be the local people of Balochistan."¹ In a short, all else equal, the project in itself is perceived positively by the locales of Balochistan.

Experiences of the Past Projects: Doubts and Fears: Although the people of Balochistan at most seem positive about success of the project and the hopes connected to it, but experiences in the past regarding projects of development and prosperity such Reko Diq and Saindak Copper Gold project which they think yielded no fruits for the Baloch people haunt and fell them into somewhat suspicion about success of the CPEC project as well. As a resident of Chaghi says, "I belong to Chaghi where there is Reko Diq and Saindak Copper Gold project. Living in Chaghi, we have not got any benefit from these projects yet. Then how we can expect that CPEC would benefit the people of Balochistan?"²

But the feelings and fears are somewhat mixed; most of the people think that as this time the project is of strategic, economic and political importance not only for Pakistan but for the region as whole and especially for China and that the army and political leadership of Pakistan seems to be on one page regarding the project and some vigorous steps have been taken to appease the Baloch people and negotiations made with Baloch separatists, hence, the project seems and can be a success story.

Reservations

Though the project is perceived as a 'game changer' and 'fate changer' for Balochistan, but still the people have some reservations about the project and interestingly these reservations are traced back to the controversial and confused policy statements regarding the project issued by the ruling party i.e., Pakistan Muslim League (N) from time to time. Some of these reservations are discussed here.

Route Controversy: Route controversy has made the headlines for the last one year the day memorandum of understanding was signed between the Prime Minister of Pakistan and Chinese Premier in Islamabad on April 23, 2015. The people of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa claim that the original route of CPEC was western route that for most of its portion passes through the underdeveloped areas of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, but later on that route was manipulated by the ruling party – PML (N) – and was planned to be changed with the eastern route that passes through Punjab for most of its portion. So the policies of PML (N) seem Punjab centered rather than that of national integration. If the Eastern route is chosen, then it will benefit Punjab, and if the Eastern route is opted then it will bring forth the underdeveloped of Balochistan and KPK into the mainstream economic activities and infrastructural development. Therefore, any change in the original route may cause severe anti-centre sentiments which may increase the social unrest in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. As a resident of Dera Murad Jamali says, "I fear that somewhere in the middle of constructing China-Pakistan Economic Corridor we may not divide and disintegrate the nation."³

Similarly, the people of Balochistan are of the opinion that the bad law and order situation along the western route is coined as a reason for changing the route. If it is so, then what the government is doing. Isn't it duty of the government to establish its writ through maintaining law and order situation? As a resident of Ziarat says, "Before CPEC, the government duty is to maintain law and order. If the government herself is unable to make peace, then to whom the people of Balochistan should make a plea for peace."⁴

Other Concerns: As the people living in vicinity of Gwader port do not have enough capital to invest in business. Obviously, to investment in various projects in Gwader, people from other parts of country will rush into Gwader. This influx of people from outside into Gwader will push the locals into a subaltern rank making it difficult for them to live and compete. Ultimately, the locals will face economic frustration and unconsciously a sense of deprivation will be created.

Effects of CPEC Project on Balochistan

Cultural Exchange: The more the people get to know cultures of each other the more it becomes easier for them to live in a peaceful way. The CPEC project is a great project in sense that it will expose the rich culture of Balochistan to the people from outside of the province and county and provide a chance for the locals to know the cultures of other people. Hence, apart from economic and strategic gains, the project will bring Baluchistan's rich culture and traditions into the limelight. As a resident of Chaghi says, "CPEC is not a small project, it is an international project, and many great international actors are involved in it. So there are good and greater chances that the traditions and cultures of Baluchistan may expose to the world."⁵

Similarly, apart from cultural exchange, the people to people contact can be a great source for bridging the gap of misunderstandings between the people of Balochistan and other parts of Pakistan. Hence, the CPEC can be a great project in promoting national integrity.

No Excuse for Conflicts: People in Balochistan who are involved in criminal or militant activities are mostly the ones who are jobless, uneducated and hardly find their living. The CPEC, if gets materialized, can provide better chances for engagement of these people in various projects in Gwader, hence, reducing the chances of getting involved in criminal and or militant activities. As a resident of Ziarat is of the opinion, "There are areas where there is no government writ, unemployment is at its peak, and literacy rate is very low; hence, in the absence of any other positive activity, internal conflicts are inevitable to occur. So if the people are involved in CPEC projects, this portion of society can be grown into vigilant citizens and the will be left with no reason for conflicts and militant activities."⁶

SUGGESTIONS

In order to material the CPEC and to present it as a success model it is binding that the government and all other stake holders may take some of the following suggestion into consideration.

Route Controversy and Information Dissemination: The route controversy should be resolved as soon as possible either through All Parties Conferences (APCs) or any other mechanism. Even if there is no controversy as the ruling party PML (N) claims, the government should make all its plans, budget, and all other related information regarding CPEC public. Moreover, the government needs to be clear in its plans and stance.

Setting Priorities: The government needs to set its priorities regarding various projects of CPEC. The projects which are beneficial to a specific area at the cost of other important projects should not be listed first. In this regard a resident of Ziarat says, "Merit wise, the project Orange Lahore does not fall anywhere in CPEC however still it is made a top priority project of CPEC."⁷

Maintaining Law and Order Situation: In order to materialize the CPEC, the government law and order agencies should work actively and efficiently. Moreover, special dialogue series and other mechanisms should be adopted towards Baloch separatist movement. Without maintaining law and order and making peace in Balochistan, no single seems succeeded. Ali from Killa Saifullah explains, "If a person is not able to run his shop, how a big project like CPEC can be succeed then. In other words, if the inhabitants of Balochistan cannot do their business in this volatile situation, how it is possible for the outsiders to do business."⁸ Therefore, it is imperative for the government should to focus on bringing peace to Balochistan through maintaining law and order situation.

Discourage Sardari Nizam: *Sardai Nizam* is a main barrier between the governed in Balochistan and the government of Pakistan. Almost on every occasion the ruling party in the central government for its own vested interests has tried to appease the *Sardars* and have considered demands of the *Sardars* as demands of the common people of Balochistan which is reality are not. The fruits of almost all developmental projects are reaped by the *Sardars* and are barley are reached to the lower strata. Similarly, these *Sardars* also exploit the grievances of the common people and try that the grievances may remain intact and not be addressed properly, so that they may use it for their own vested interests. Therefore, for overall betterment in Balochistan it is imperative for the central government to discourage *Sardari Nizam*, address grievances of the common person and involve him/her in the political process to come forward and become a part of the development and source of integrity.

Borders with Afghanistan should be sealed: Most of criminal and insurgent activities find their roots form across the border with Afghanistan. In order to bring peace to Balochistan and the CPEC to succeed the borders with Afghanistan should be sealed.

Conclusion

Although the people of Balochistan have many reservations about the project but still they perceive the project, with great hope, as symbol of peace, prosperity and national integrity. As for as the success of CPEC in the terms of expected outcomes is concerned, the people of Balochistan think that it can be properly materialized provided the government address

grievances of the locals regarding route controversy etc. Similarly, it is mandatory that all information should be made public and transparent, special quota for the locals of Gwader and Balochistan should be adopted at different positions in various projects of Gwader. In order to further ameliorate the chances of success, the government of Pakistan should take some long term steps such as discouraging *Sardari Nizam*, actively involving the law enforcement agencies in maintaining peace, and sealing border with Afghanistan etc. Similarly, at a grass root level, mass campaign for educating the children and equipping the youngsters with skills related to projects in CPEC etc should be initiated. In a nutshell, the project overall can be a success story provided the grievances of local people addressed and some long term steps taken.

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ASSESSING EX-ANTE SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACT OF CHINA PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (CPEC) ACROSS THE ZONE OF INFLUENCE

Shahid Habib *
Fazal Rabbi **
Farkhanda Jabeen
Adeel Kadri

Abstract: *The development of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) can play an important role in the socioeconomic development of Pakistan. The proposed route will reduce travel time and transportation costs across the surrounding districts of the corridor, referred to as the Zone of Influence (ZOI). This study uses the Probit Model to simulate ex-ante socioeconomic impact in terms of access to education (attendance and enrollment) of school students, and health utilization (Lady Health Worker service) of households across the western route of ZOI districts. The study finds that a decrease in travel time would significantly increase enrollment and attendance of the school students (primary and middle school) and increase utilization of health services (Lady Health Worker service) across the districts. The study can aid in the formulation of education and health policies, which should focus on building schools and health units in districts with less average travel time thereby increasing access to education and utilization of health services by households.*

Keywords: CPEC, socio-economic impact, enrollment, attendance, health, zone of influence

Introduction

The construction of corridors (a network of roads) helps in improving trade and economic connectivity of a region. It enhances regional economic and trade cooperation which contributes towards regional peace and stability. It also creates a welcoming environment for foreign investment and capital inflow. Therefore, infrastructural development offers a unique opportunity for a vast capital inflow. Road networks are an essential part of infrastructure development. Low travel times and unencumbered mobility complements and improves socio-economic indicators in any given area.

In developing economies, road networks improve means of transportation which enhances socio-economic status such as community access to basic facilities like education, health, employment, and economic opportunity. Islam and Adiv (2009)¹ state that the rehabilitation of the Bamyan-Dushi road in Afghanistan has improved socio-economic conditions and benefited the population in the zone of influence (ZOI)².

Education and Health are closely related to travel time and mobility. Howard and Masset (2004)³ argue that reduced time and convenient mobility improved enrolment rates in a developing country such as Ghana. Mattson (2011)⁴ says that reduced time and convenient mobility increases access to the community for the utilization of health care and education facilities.

The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a \$46 billion project that will undertake the construction of industrial zones, highways, and railway links running through most of Pakistan starting from Gwadar in Balochistan and culminating in Kashgar in western China. This corridor is expected to be mutually beneficial for both countries (China and Pakistan). China would be able to use the shortest way to access the global market and it also gives a comparative advantage to the Chinese industry by significantly reducing transportation time and cost. On the other hand, Pakistan would gain economic and social uplift by triggering huge economic activity particularly in undeveloped areas like Balochistan. The Pakistan Government has proposed three routes: Eastern, Western, and Central route for the CPEC. In this study, we will focus only on the western route. It is the shortest feasible route and passes through various districts of Baluchistan, Punjab, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). Bengali (2015)⁵ claims that the western route is likely to be the most cost effective in term of dislocation compensation cost, opportunity cost of land, and environmental cost. The Zone of Influence in the Western route comprises of 11 districts such as Gwadar, Turbat, Panjgur, Khuzdar⁶, Kalat, Quetta, Qila Saifullah, Zhob, Dera Ismail Khan, Mianwali, Attock, and onwards.

The government is anticipating a huge uplift in socio-economic conditions in the ZOI of the CPEC. Education and health are two core indicators of socio-economic conditions. CPEC is expected to reduce travel time for households to access education and health services. By simulating the impact through a Probit Model, the study identifies the potential uplift on enrollment, attendance, and access to lady health worker service⁷. It is predicted that travel time in the ZOIs would be the same as in the developed areas of the country.

* Head of Research, Manzil (Karachi) Pakistan.

** Fazal Rabbi (Email: fazalrabbi@manzilpakistan.org), Farkhanda Jabeen, and Adeel Kadri are Research Associates at Manzil Pakistan.

Research Question

This research is governed mainly by the proposition that (CPEC) will improve the socio-economic conditions of the ZOI. In addition, we have two driving questions for this broader query. These are:

- ✓ What is the impact of reduced travel time and convenient mobility on enrollment and attendance across genders?
- ✓ What is the impact of reduced travel time and convenient mobility on utilization of health care facilities?

Objective of the Study

The study has three objectives. These are the following:

- ✓ To identify the impact of CPEC on health and education indicators
- ✓ To identify the impact of the western route of CPEC on attendance and enrolment across genders
- ✓ To identify community access to social services and basic facilities such as education and health

Literature Review

Research has shown a direct relation between investment in infrastructure and improved education indicators. Phyrum, Sothy, and Horn (2007)⁸ argue that road improvements would enhance access to education, health care, markets, and other public service facilities in the surrounding areas of economic corridors. Vuri (2008)⁹ writes that travel time has a significant impact on student enrolment in Ghana and Guatemala. Vuri's study claims that in Ghana if middle schools are built nearby, parents are more likely to invest in their children's primary and middle school education. However in Guatemala, parents' decision of their child's primary education relied more on school variables (travel cost and distance etc.) related to primary education. Filmer (2004)¹⁰ estimates the impact of reducing average distance to schools on the enrollment of students in 21 rural areas in low-income countries using the Probit model. The study finds that statistically significant impact of distance to primary and secondary schools on the enrollment of 6-14 year olds. Yet the magnitude of the effect is small. Jepsen and Montgomery (2009)¹¹ also find distance to the nearest college a very significant factor in college enrollment of students in the Greater Baltimore area in the United States, using the Probit model.

King and Lillard (1983)¹² argue that travel distance from schools negatively effects schooling in Philippines. Toor and Parveen (2004)¹³ also analyze the determinants of female enrollment at the primary school level in Pakistan using the Probit model. Distance to school is one of the relevant variables affecting the probability of female enrollment.

Mattson (2010)¹⁴ estimates the impact of transportation and distance factors on health care utilization in the rural Upper Great Plains states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming using ordered and binary Probit models. Road networks and convenient mobility give easy access to health care services in case of emergency. Lubetzky et al (2011)¹⁵ write that numbers of patients' visit to specialist-clinics are negatively correlated to the geographical distance to the clinics in Israel. Tanser, Gijbetsen, and Herbset 2006)¹⁶ argue that health facility usage has been significantly reduced by households with increased travel time in South Africa.

Empirical Framework

Data

This paper uses household level data from Pakistan Social and Living Standard Measurement (PSLM) 2012-13 for the 11 districts falling under the Zone of Influence (ZOI) of the western route of CPEC. The dependent variables used to analyze the impact of travel time on education include attendance and enrollment of primary and middle school students overall as well as of male and female students; all taken as binary variables. Since data of these variables is collected from individuals of each household. These variables are redefined at household level. The households with half or more children enrolled and attending school, out of the total number of school-age children (4-14 years), are taken as 1 and 0 otherwise for the respective variables. Similarly, the observations for households with half or more of male/ female children enrolled and attending school, out of the total number of male/ female school-age children in each household, are taken as 1 and 0 otherwise for the respective variables. Haq and Shahid (2008)¹⁷ also used a similar procedure to transform individual level data of enrollment and attendance to household level. The variable used to analyze the impact of travel time on health is utilization of Lady Health Worker (LHW) facility by households (dummy variable: 1 if used the facility in last 30 days, 0 otherwise). The study converted travel time into distance in kilometers since travel time varies depending on mode of transportation (on foot, bicycle; car; etc.). By converting into distance, the travel time of a household is standardized regardless of the mode of transport¹⁸. Thus, the independent variables used as a proxy to travel time are distance from primary schools, middle schools, and health units (in kilometers). The travel time in the PSLM database is a categorical variable, thus the distance is also derived in the categorical form. Other independent variables include gender of household head (male/female), visit to health units by households in last 30 days, and market value of household assets. Table 3.1 describes all

the variables used in the model. For simulation, new distance variables are generated as a proxy of the post-CPEC traveling time¹⁹.

Table 3.1: Description of Variables used in the Probit Model

| Variable | Description | Unit | Obs |
|-----------------|--|-------------|------|
| D _{PS} | Distance from Primary School | Km | 3385 |
| D _{MS} | Distance from Middle School | Km | 3385 |
| D _{HU} | Distance from Health Unit | Km | 3385 |
| Enroll | Enrollment of school-age children | Yes/No | 3385 |
| FemEnroll | Enrollment of female school-age children | Yes/No | 2561 |
| MaleEnroll | Enrollment of male school-age children | Yes/No | 2895 |
| Att | Attendance of school-age children | Yes/No | 3385 |
| FemAtt | Attendance of female school-age children | Yes/No | 2561 |
| MaleAtt | Attendance of male school-age children | Yes/No | 2895 |
| HVisit | Visit to a health unit by household | Yes/No | 3385 |
| LHW | Visit of a Lady Health Worker to the household | Yes/No | 3385 |
| Ghh | Gender of Household Head | Male/Female | 3385 |
| Assets | Market value of total household assets | PKR | 3385 |

Source: Pakistan Social and Living Standard Measurement 2012-13

Estimation Model

To estimate the impact of travel time on enrollment and attendance, Probit models are used. The independent variables used distance from primary school, distance from middle school, gender of household head, and market value of assets, where the distance is used as a proxy to travel time. The Probit models for enrollment (Equation 1) and attendance (Equation 2) are used separately for male students, female students, and overall.

$$Enroll = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 * D_{PS} + \alpha_2 * D_{MS} + \alpha_3 * Ghh + \alpha_4 * Assets + \varepsilon \quad (\text{Equation 1})$$

$$Attend = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * D_{PS} + \beta_2 * D_{MS} + \beta_3 * Ghh + \beta_4 * Assets + \varepsilon \quad (\text{Equation 2})$$

Similarly, to analyze the impact of travel time on health, the Probit model is used to relate the utilization of Lady Health Workers (LHW) facilities by households to the distance from health units, visits to health clinics by households, and market value of assets (Equation 3).

$$LHW = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 * D_{HU} + \gamma_2 * HVisit + \gamma_3 * Assets + \varepsilon \quad (\text{Equation 3})$$

For each of the dependent variables, the average predicted values of the Probit model are compared to the average predicted values of the model after simulation where new distances are used as a proxy of simulated travel time.

Results and Analysis

Estimation Results

Table 4.2 summarizes the marginal effects of distance (proxy to travel time) from primary and middle schools on enrollment and attendance as well as marginal effects of the distance from health units on utilization of LHW facilities.

Table 4.2: Marginal Effects of Distance

| | Marginal Effects of Distance | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Distance from Health Unit | Distance from Primary School | Distance from Middle School |
| Visit of LHW to households | -0.0086* | | |
| Enrollment (overall) | | -0.058* | -0.051* |
| Enrollment of male children | | -0.057* | -0.050* |
| Enrollment of female children | | -0.058* | -0.055* |
| Attendance (overall) | | -0.046* | -0.009* |
| Attendance of male children | | -0.047* | -0.007** |
| Attendance of female children | | -0.033** | -0.014* |

*Significant at 5 percent

**Significant at 10 percent

The distance from primary and secondary schools is significant and negatively related to enrollment and attendance for both male and female students as well as overall attendance. The p-value of the coefficient of distance from a health unit also indicates that the travel time from a health unit is significant and negatively related to the probability of a visit of a Lady Health Worker to a household.

Simulation Results

The estimation results are used to assess the impact of simulating reductions in travel time on education and health at district level. Therefore, the probability values of the models – pre and post-simulation – are aggregated for each of the 11 districts.

Impact of Travel Time to Schools on Enrollment

Figure 1-3 (Appendix) illustrates the impact of simulated reduction in travel time to school enrollment. The top left panel of each graph illustrates the simulated impact of reducing the travel time on the respective variable. Points farther from the 45-degree line are points, where reducing the travel time has a significant impact on the respective variable. The results imply that reducing the travel time from primary and middle schools has a significant impact on enrollment (overall, male, and female) for all districts; all the 11 districts lie above the 45-degree line.

Table 4.3 compares the average travel time from schools with the effects of the reduced travel time on enrollment (percentage point increase in enrolment) for each district. On average, districts with greater travel time from schools experience greater increase in school enrollment, after the reduction in travel time, as compared to the districts with smaller travel time.

Table 4.3: Average Travel Time from Schools and Effects of Simulated Reduction in Travel Time on Enrollment

| District | Percentage Point Increase in Enrollment | | | Travel Time from Households (km) | |
|-------------|---|--------|----------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| | (Overall) | (Male) | (Female) | Primary School | Middle School |
| Attock | 4.8 | 4.7 | 5.5 | 4.4 | 11.6 |
| Mianwali | 4.9 | 5.2 | 4.8 | 5.2 | 11.2 |
| D.I. Khan | 4.3 | 3.8 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 10.8 |
| Quetta | 3.3 | 3.2 | 3.8 | 5.2 | 8.8 |
| Kalat | 9.9 | 10.1 | 10.9 | 4.4 | 19.6 |
| Khuzdar | 9.3 | 8.8 | 9.4 | 4.4 | 18.4 |
| Turbat | 17.9 | 17.6 | 19 | 5.6 | 32.4 |
| Gawadar | 14.4 | 13.6 | 16.2 | 7.6 | 26 |
| Panjgur | 27 | 26.9 | 31.2 | 7.2 | 45.2 |
| Zhob | 19.1 | 19.1 | 18.4 | 7.2 | 34.8 |
| Q.Saifullah | 33.7 | 33.3 | 35.4 | 6.8 | 59.2 |

Source: Authors' estimation

Impact of Travel Time to Schools on Attendance

Figure 4-6 (Appendix) shows that reducing the travel time from primary and middle schools has a significant impact on overall and female attendance for all districts. However, for male attendance the impact is significant for all the districts except Quetta and D.I. Khan.

Table 4.4 compares the average travel time from schools with the effects of the reduced travel time on attendance (percentage point increase in attendance), for each district. On average, districts with greater travel time from schools experience greater increases in school attendance after the reduction in travel time as compared to the districts with smaller travel time from schools.

Table 4.4. Average Travel Time from Schools and Effects of Simulated Reduction in Travel Time on Attendance

| District | Percentage Point Increase in Attendance | | | Travel Time from Households (km) | |
|-----------|---|--------|----------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| | (Overall) | (Male) | (Female) | Primary School | Middle School |
| Attock | 0.9 | 0.7 | 1.4 | 4.4 | 11.6 |
| Mianwali | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.4 | 5.2 | 11.2 |
| D.I. Khan | 0.8 | 0.6 | 1.2 | 4.8 | 10.8 |
| Quetta | 0.8 | 0.7 | 1.1 | 5.2 | 8.8 |

| | | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Kalat | 1.8 | 1.5 | 2.8 | 4.4 | 19.6 |
| Khuzdar | 1.8 | 1.6 | 2.4 | 4.4 | 18.4 |
| Turbat | 3.4 | 2.9 | 4.8 | 5.6 | 32.4 |
| Gawadar | 3.5 | 2.7 | 4.7 | 7.6 | 26 |
| Panjgur | 5.3 | 4.5 | 8.2 | 7.2 | 45.2 |
| Zhob | 3.4 | 2.9 | 4.6 | 7.2 | 34.8 |
| Q.Saifullah | 5.8 | 4.8 | 8.8 | 6.8 | 59.2 |

Source: Authors' estimation

Impact of Travel Time from Health Units on Utilization of LHW Facilities

Figure 7 (Appendix) shows that reducing travel time from health units has a significant impact on utilization of the Lady Health Worker (LHW) facility by the households for all the districts except Attock, Mianwali, and Khuzdar.

Table 5.5 compares the average travel time from health units with the effects of reduced travel time on utilization of LHW service, for each district. On average, districts with greater travel time from health units experience greater utilization of LHW service after the reduction in travel time, as compared to the districts with smaller travel time from the health units.

Table 4.5: Average Travel Time from Health Units and Effects of Simulated Reduction in Travel Time on LHW Utilization

| District | Percentage Point Increase of LHW Utilization | Travel Time from Health Units to Households (km) |
|-------------|--|--|
| Attock | 0.6 | 16 |
| Mianwali | 0.8 | 15.6 |
| D.I. Khan | 1 | 18.8 |
| Quetta | 0.6 | 16 |
| Kalat | 1 | 23.2 |
| Khuzdar | 0.5 | 18.8 |
| Turbat | 2.6 | 35.6 |
| Gawadar | 1.8 | 31.2 |
| Panjgur | 3.8 | 50.4 |
| Zhob | 2.4 | 35.6 |
| Q.Saifullah | 5.3 | 60.4 |

Source: Authors' estimation

Discussion

The economic corridor would play an important role in decreasing travel times to reach schools and health units. As Islam and Wieland (2008)²⁰ argue that the road network developed from Kabul to Kandahar has significantly improved access to education (enrollment and attendance) and the utilization of health services (visits to health units). Therefore, an assessment between the controlled villages and traditional villages indicates that road improvement projects have had a significant impact on enrollment and attendances in primary education in the districts lying within the corridor.

The western route of CPEC would save travel time from schools and health units. In this study, we have simulated the impact of travel time reduced after the completion of the corridor on enrollment, attendance (overall and across the gender) and utilization of health facilities, particularly the LHW service. Most of the areas along the western route are the rural areas of Balochistan where the majority of middle schools and health units are located far from households. The results show that road networks will significantly reduce travel time, which will increase enrolment and attendance at the elementary level (primary & middle). Apart from this, simulation results indicate a significant impact on the enrolment and attendance of male and female students separately. The results also show that the percentage increase in enrollment and attendance of female students is greater as compared to that of male students for all the districts. Islam and Wieland (2008) claim that the rate of female attendance almost doubled from 12.6% to 24% decrease travel time. Road networks and convenient mobility significantly impacts the utilization of health facilities such as regular visits of lady health workers to households.

The results also imply that effect of reduced travel time on enrollment and attendance is larger for districts with greater average travel time from school as compared to the districts with lesser average travel time. The average travel time from households to middle schools in Qila Saifullah is 56 minutes by car for an average distance of 14 km. By reducing the time to 30-35 minutes, there is an increase in enrollment by around 33 percent and attendance by 5 percent. However, the average travel time from households to middle schools in Quetta is 12-15 minutes on foot for average distance of 2.17 km.

Therefore, it would not be any significant reduction in travel time for distances covered on foot. The results indicate only minor increase in enrollment (3.3 percent) and attendance (1.1 percent) in Quetta.

Similarly, effect of reduced travel time on health care utilization (LHW) is larger for districts with greater average travel time from health units as compared to the districts with lesser average travel time. The average travel time from health units to households for Qila Saifullah is 60 minutes by car for an average distance of 15 km. By reducing the time to 30-35 minutes, the utilization of LHW facility would be increased by 5 percent. On the other hand, the average travel time from health units to households for Quetta is 16 minutes by car (32 minutes by bicycle) for average distance of 4 km. By reducing the time to 8-10 minutes by car (15-20 minutes by bicycle), there is only 0.8 percent increase in LHW utilization. These results imply that time required to reach specific destination plays a vital role in the increase in enrollment, attendance, and health service utilization in the districts mentioned as ZOI.

Reduction in travel time in the ZOI would also effect travel time in other districts along the corridor but the magnitude of impact may vary across districts. Howard and Masset (2004) write that the decrease in travel time from schools resulted in high attendance rates in their respective areas. As Filmer (2007) points out that although distance to the nearest school is weakly associated with enrollment, few countries such as Mali, Chad, and Central African Republic showed increases in enrollment by 8.6, 6.8, and 4.4 percentage points respectively.

Conclusion and Policy Implications

The study simulates the impact of reduced travel time after the development of CPEC on education (enrollment and attendance) and health utilization (LHW utilization) for 11 districts that lie within the Zone of Influence. The study finds a significant increase in enrollment (overall, male, and female) and attendance (overall and female) due to reduced travel time for all 11 districts. However, the impact on male attendance is significant for all districts except Quetta and Dera Ismail Khan. The finding also shows significant increases in LHW utilization for all the districts except Attock, Mianwali, and Khuzdar as these districts already have the lowest average distances from health units. The results suggest that the CPEC would play a key role in the socio-economic development of districts that lie along the western route of CPEC.

This study is helpful for policymakers in the education sector who can consider travel time from household to schools in the formulation of education policies. It is also important in the formulation of health policies especially regarding how the utilization of Lady Health Worker (LHW) services can be increased if health units are built closer to households.

The study can be extended further by incorporating education and health variables as non-linear functions of disparity in the travel time. Although enrollment, attendance, and utilization of health services are linear functions of travel time, the impact of travel time on these variables can vary across districts. For example, changing the travel time from one hour to 30 minutes might have a very different and more significant impact than changing it from 10 to 5 minutes. By incorporating the heterogeneity factor in the model, the impact of simulating reduction in travel time would be more accurate, especially for the greater travel times.

Appendix

Note: Each district in Figure 1-7 is labeled with average distance from primary school (PS) and middle school (MS) in kilometers. The simulated distances from primary and middle schools respectively appear in the parenthesis.

Figure 1. Simulated vs. Actual Enrollment (Overall)

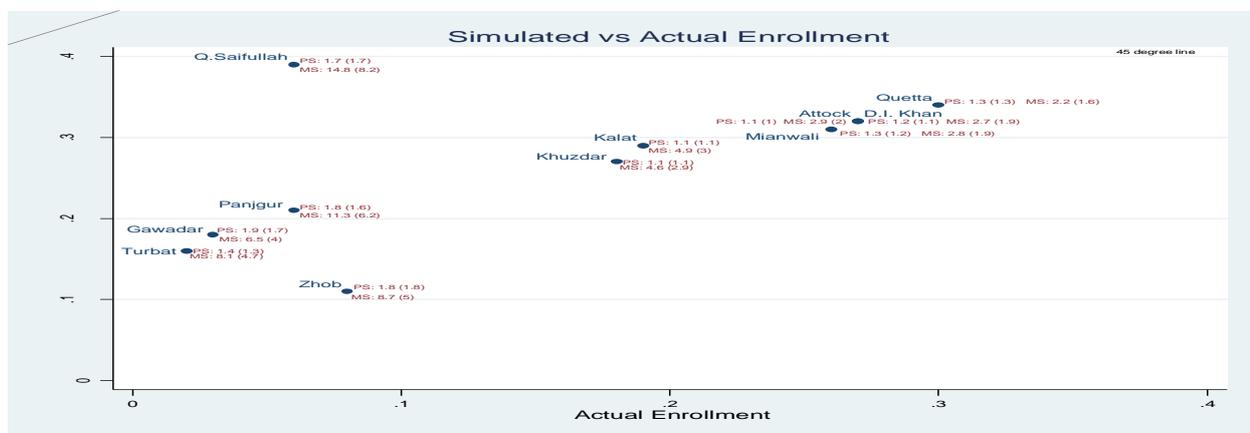


Figure 2. Simulated vs. Actual Enrollment (Male)

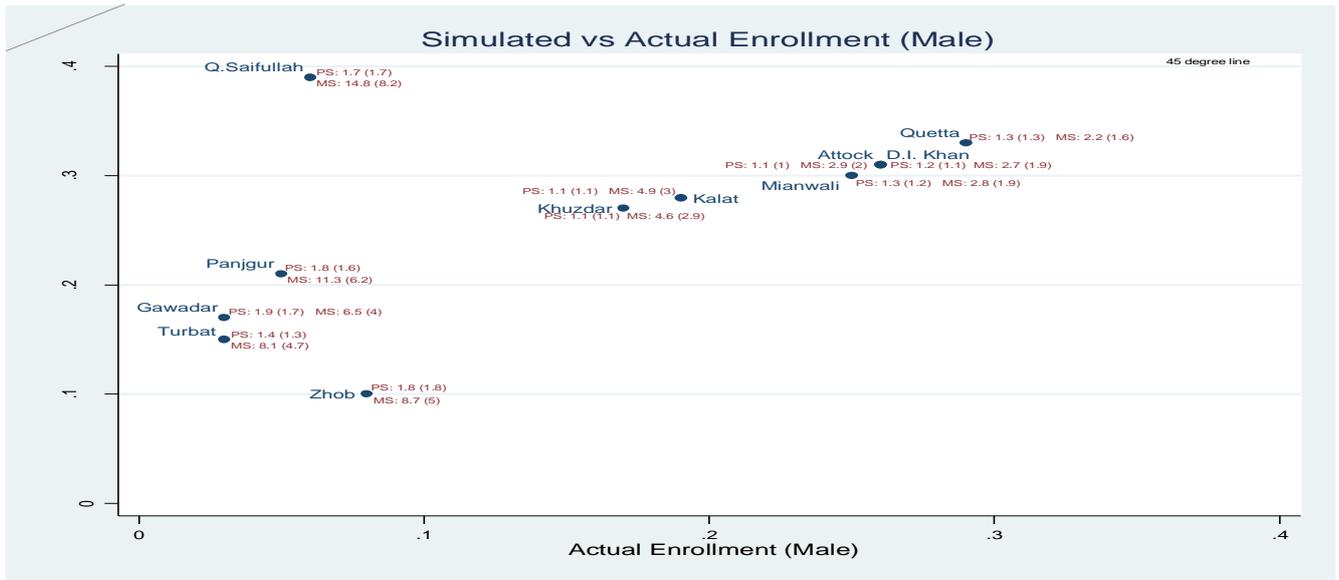


Figure 3. Simulated vs. Actual Enrollment (Female)

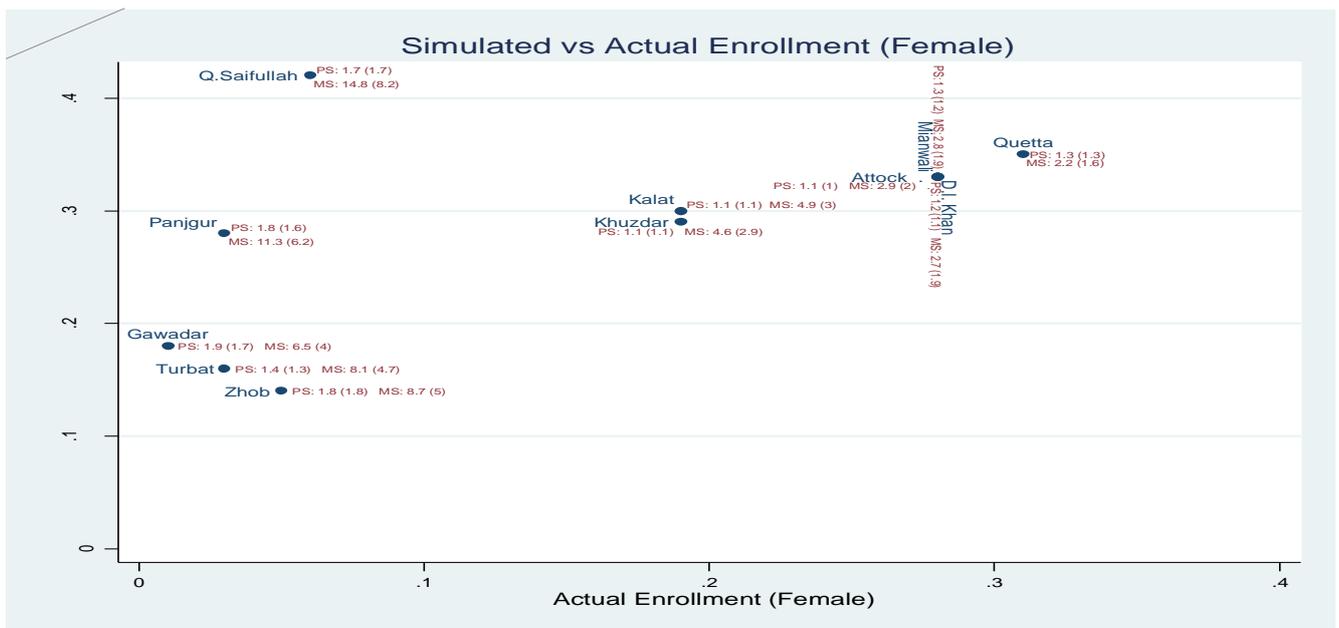


Figure 4. Simulated vs. Actual Attendance (Overall)

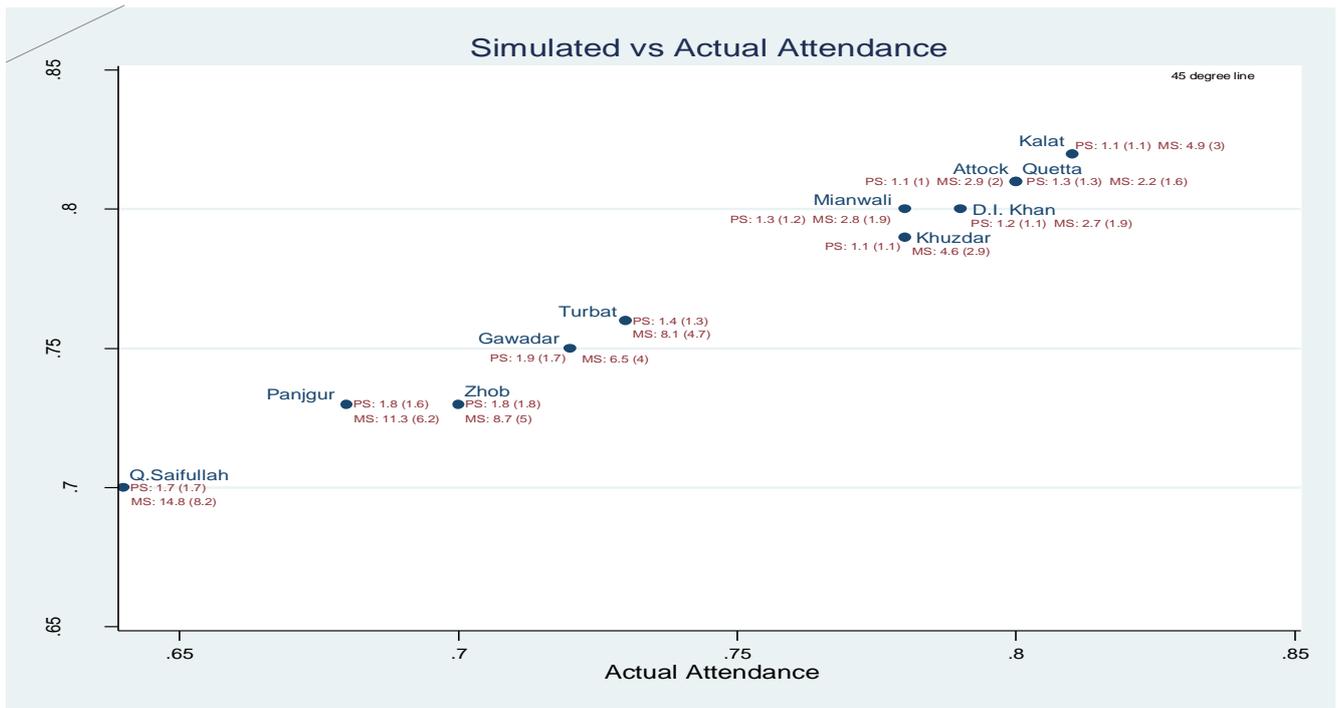


Figure 5. Simulated vs. Actual Attendance (Male)

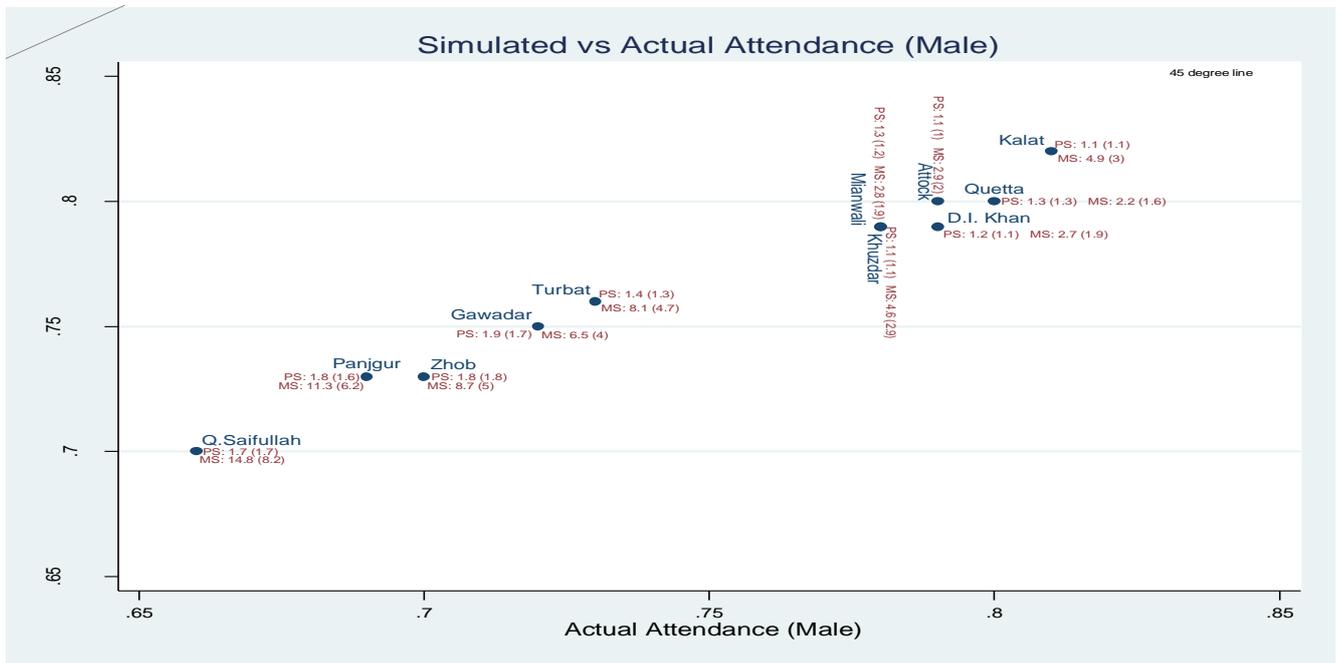


Figure 6. Simulated vs. Actual Attendance (Female)

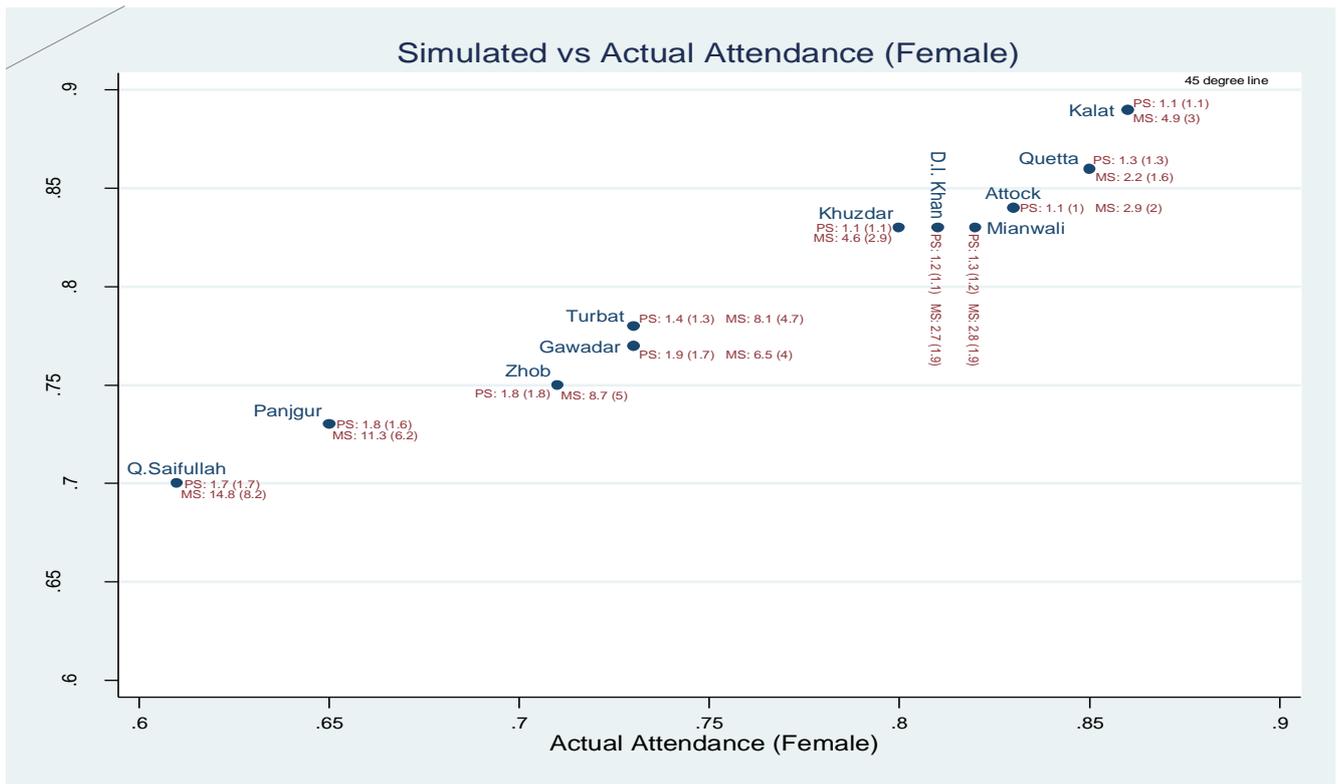
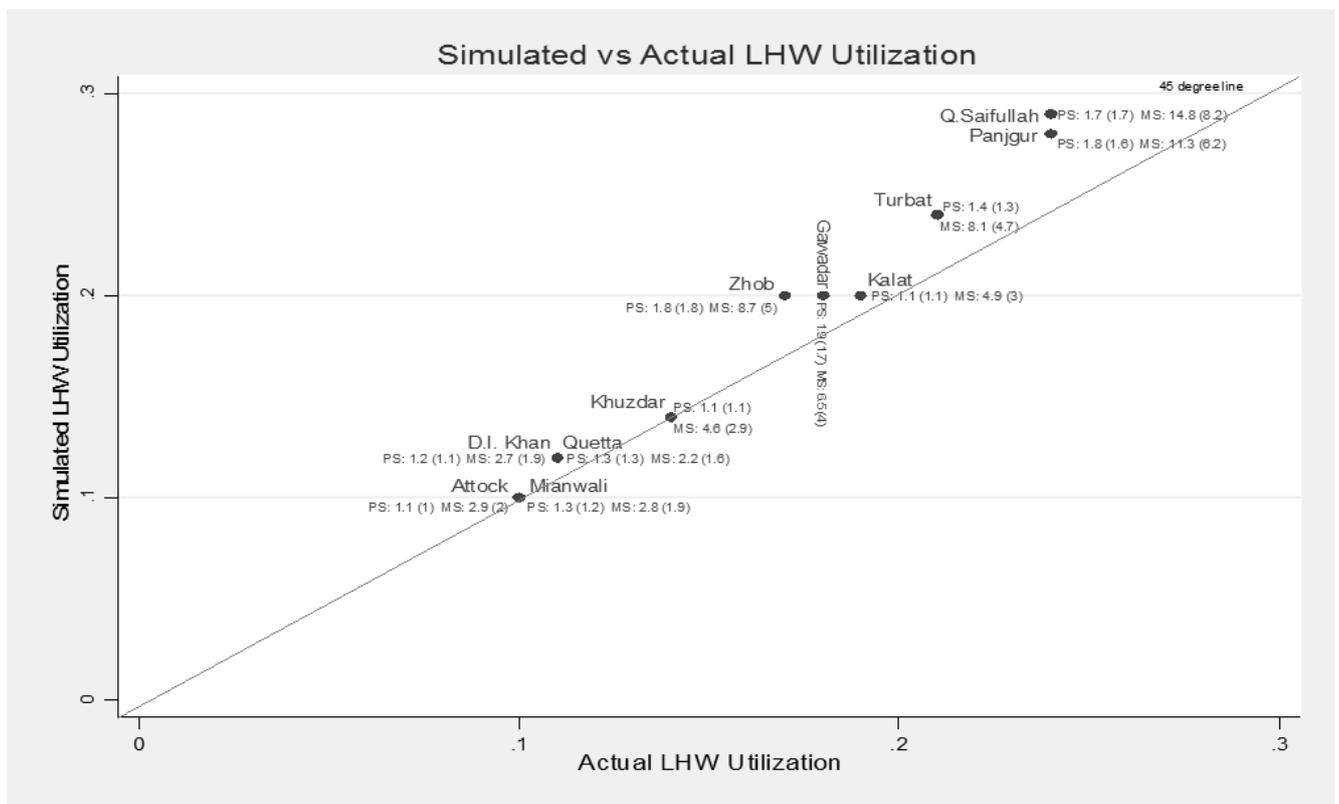


Figure 7. Simulated vs. Actual LHW Utilization



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