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Impact of CPEC Project on Socio-Economy of Fishery Community in Gwadar: A Case Study of Gwadar West Bay Fishery Community

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Contents

- [Introduction](#)
- [Literature Review](#)
- [Theoretical Framework](#)
- [Methodology](#)
- [Research Findings](#)
- [Boats Industries](#)
- [Donkey Carts](#)
- [Fish Exporting Companies](#)
- [Discussion](#)
- [Conclusion](#)
- [References](#)

Abstract: *The research topic highlights the CPEC Impact on the socio-economy of the fishery community in Gwadar. This study explains the local perceptions regarding its socio-economic conditions through mega projects in the native fishery community. In this research, it is explored explicitly in detail of socio-economic reasons for how local fishermen perceive the development projects and analysed the socio-economic impact of CPEC on the fishery community in Gwadar. This research is based on the qualitative research method for data collection. Meanwhile, the purposive and representative sampling techniques were used for collecting data through an open-ended interview guide. In this regard, the Risk theory is applied to the Research topic of how this theory highlights the cause and effect of the Gwadar development projects affecting the fishery community. The research incorporated multiple challenges for fishermen towards socio-economic reasons, poverty, unemployment, and social disharmonies can certainly create anxieties and disappointment instead of prosperities and happiness among native fisheries through development projects.*

Key Words: CPEC Project, Socio-economy, Fishery Community In Gwadar

JEL Classification: E32.

Introduction

The paper aims to analyse the phenomena of socio-economic problems of fishery community by CPEC in the context of Gwadar and what socio-economic circumstances and challenges local fishermen face with the emerging projects of CPEC in different ways. The CPEC is a massive economic zone in Baluchistan-Pakistan as the main part of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The socio-economic projects bring numerous positive changes wherever the development projects are regulated. According to (Perez &

Ramos, 2018), development means focusing on the people where development happens, but if the development comes, only self-interest can bring conflict between local people and investors. The United Nations agenda of 2030 states that where various mega projects like infrastructure, ports, employment, health facilitation, dams, and other fundamental rights of humans play a pivotal role in changing human lifestyle and would provide them extraordinary climate change for the use of natural resources sustainably (UN, 2017).

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The Gwadar development is situated on the coast of the Arabian Sea near the cross connection of international sea shipping and oil trade routes. The port has a facility to tie three poles apart of regions Central Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East, and could be an international hub zone for Pakistan. On the other hand, those projects comprise power plants, modern ports and railways, highways, infrastructure and building of Airports and other economic policies. China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) with different energy power plants will help the local people from economic crises and economic shortages soon ([Ijaz, 2015](#)). Pakistan assures the CPEC in this regard that it will be a game changer and skillful for the country's people in the upcoming days. On the other hand, as Pakistan expected, these projects will bring strengthening strategies for the country's economic system, and trade would be fruitful for providing opportunities to eradicate the poverty and drought in Pakistan (Engubeers, I. 2017). Additionally, the fishery community has been living in Gwadar for many years and has made it their livelihood. Fundamentally, the source of income for local people in Gwadar is the sea, which is passing their life to fulfil their basic needs. The researchers in this regard need to find out the basic cause that either the fishery community is affected only or the project affects the entire socio-economic set-up of Gwadar.

For instance, in Indonesia, there are 40,000-50,000 people who are displaced by various roads and infrastructures under Jabotabek Urban development mega projects ([Cernea, M., 2003](#)). In Ghana, approximately 1 per cent of the population of the country was displaced due to Akosombo Dam, and 80,000 people became displaced in this project ([Cernea, M., 2003](#)). The fishery community are protesting day to day to accept their demands from the project authority that banned fishermen from travelling in the sea without permission. If residents are displaced from the general population where development is going on, then it totally has chances among residents who may feel social hazards during the development. On the other hand, if residents do not compensate rightly, the social

anxiety and depression create many disasters and disharmony (Cernea, M., 1997). The study focuses on how those projects in the name of Gwadar development manipulate prevailing efforts and produce pressure over different institutions and social sectors in the name of identity, place, and authority ([Jamali, H. 2013](#)). The project of CPEC is known as a game changer by the stakeholders for the local people of Gwadar. Either CPEC projects bring any positive changes for Gwadar's fishery community, such as economic prosperities, or enhance opportunities to bring bad impacts for them? As quoted by Peralta (2013), development is modern technology, urbanisation, and industrialisation sent to the very underdeveloped and poor countries.

Literature Review

The research study analysed the Impact of the CPEC Project on the Socio-economy of the fishery community in Gwadar. Whereas the development project tends to make some people get the gains while others the pains" ([Ufford, & Giri, A. 2003](#)). The development agenda assists in the aggrandisement of foreign exchange income, but finally, the development exposes society to numerous risks ([Mensah, 2016](#)). Development relates to the basic needs of local people, but developmental encroachment deprives them of facilitation. The countries, which they are facing advanced economic growth rates, also face low-income researchers who reviewed this as a worse situation for the natives (Chenery et al. 1974). The socio-economic opportunities for local people are their fundamental rights and demands that development projects must fulfil ([Seers, D. 1972](#)). However, meaningful development does not exist while the equal distribution of resources may not be provided to native people with the development goals and strategies. According to ([Express Tribune, 2017](#)), China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is considered a game-changer for Pakistan and China. This agreement is assigned to Chinese cooperation with Pakistan so that it brings prosperity and progress to both countries. According to Tribune, displacement

is commonly used for confiscating natives' lands involuntary. It may cause the migration of victims from one region to another also (Hyndman, J. 2000). Development is a dynamic changing social change that adds up with the elite economy and devalues marginalised classes along with their cultural heritages and belongings, that is, whether the socio-economic set up of the local community. (Charter Etos, 1999). The major goal of development is to improve the living standards with the economic growth and to change the socio-economic structures as per the project's master plan (Jerome, E., Nnadozia & 2019). In this regard, CPEC allocated 1.16 to 1.60 U. S million dollars to improve the socio-economic status of the fishery community in Gwadar. This project aims to fund the fundamental facilities for the fishery community. (Niazi 2005, & Gresh 2012). Instead of the ongoing CPEC project, many teenagers are witnessed working as labourers among the fishery community in Gwadar. They are marginalised, and the poverty rate is increasing. The fundamental needs such as education, health facilities, and employment are missing and being even concentrated by the project implementors (Jahangir, R. 2018). The concept of socio-economic development has been altered into a non-economic process as the social indicators changed in 1970 through economic growth (Todaro, 1977). According to World Bank (WB), Botswana and Mauritius are good examples of multiparty political domains towards sustainable economic growth and democracy, which has an informal relationship beyond the system of economic growth (Tretty, 2005). In Indonesia, there are 40,000-50,000 people who are displaced by various roads and infrastructures under *Jabotabek* Urban development mega projects (Cernea, M. 1993). Thus, local people also appealed to secure their basic rights through a clear policy that should not affect local inhabitants particularly, and the project should be liable for fulfilling the basic needs of natives (The News, 2018). And the circumstance varies because the state's responsibility is to ensure the availability of all the fundamental needs to their normal lives, including better infrastructure, social network,

proper housing, employment, and public facilities (Liya, C. 2014).

Theoretical Framework

Theory of Risk Society

According to (Jarvis, 2008), in this theory, Ulrich Beck elaborated the "World risk society" "concept," which illustrates a chapter of development of modern development society in which the ecological, social, political and individual risks formed by the energy of innovation progressively avoid the control and defensive institutions of industrial society." According to (Shodganga1, 2019), the resources of the people of the society achieve all the advantages of development at the cost of the poor.

This risky condition results in the consequence that the upper class enjoys the whole wealth accumulation in the following class patterns to use wealth. Thus, the lower class is certainly exposed to the risk. Those nations have the wealth and resources to drive the risk away because they can obtain safety, while underprivileged nations are the simple targets of risk due to their helplessness and homelessness. Chiefly, the various underdeveloped societies move ahead of developed societies in changing their development strategies and plans in which more risks are inbuilt. In the development process provoked displacement, very poor individuals of society sacrifice their property, land, etc.

Application of Theory of Risk in the Context of Gwadar Development

In the theory of Risk, the researchers undermined to watch residents through Risk society that how Gwadar development is important to face the difficulties in the sense of mega Projects which socially, economically, politically, and ecologically have been implementing across the Gwadar through Gwadar development. The researcher shows explicitly that "risk" is a major element on behalf of class society in which classical modernity was the main problem of inequality of wealth distribution, whereas the challenges

towards modernity increased rapidly in the nomination of risk. The field researchers examined the comparison of risk theory in the context of Gwadar. Furthermore, the field researchers specified various mega projects that are part of CPEC. If local people do not provide subsidies or alternatives anywhere, it can be a risk for that society. Furthermore, using heavy pieces of machinery on the part of the local population like Tunnels, pipelines, trade routes, and commercial and industrial zones for Gwadar development caused local displacement, demolishing homes and lands and properties, which is a huge loss and risk of residents in Gwadar.

Methodology

This research is based on the qualitative research method. The study investigated the impact of CPEC on the Socio-economy of the fishery community in Gwadar. The universe of the study was tehsil Gwadar's west bay, District Gwadar, Balochistan (province in Pakistan). The target population of the research was boat makers and the fishery community working as fishermen. The sample size of the research was 30 selected from the fishery community. The interview guide schedule was incorporated into the process of research during data collection. The purposive sampling technique was used in the research process by using the purposive sampling technique considered the magnificent data and observations from the field. The thematic analysis technique was used for generating themes from data. The researcher expanded the study on a wider level, and every ethics was followed during the study.

Research Findings

Displacement

Displacement in Gwadar is both physical and economical, and the impacts of the mega project caused displacement in the name of development. The development in Gwadar induced restrictions on accessing native to their land and other natural resources such as fishing spots. The state's bilateral ties with Chinese companies are already exploiting sea

resources dramatically. The economic displacement caused by mega project encroachments where fishery community has been displaced from their market. The east bay has been banned for the fishery community for the last five years, but gradually, the economy of the fishery community is being affected in the west bay also. A major part of the west bay where native carried out their indigenous business is narrowed down, and it is limited to 10-to-15-acre land just. Similarly, many people are displaced physically from their native town, where people have been living since their ancestors' traces appeared. The *wadi door* (place in Gwadar) is the main example of displacement by the project authority. People lost their heritages, such as *the Zikri* graveyard and *Sunni* community graveyard, along with the fishery's ancient architecture and salt-making industry.

As mentioned by respondents that "*Our problems are getting bigger and bigger on East Bay (Demi Zirr) and West Bay (Paddi Zirr). As you know, that Demi Zirr side is the main source of our economy, and they are, closing it permanently for fishing within a few years once Express Way reaches Gwadar.*"

At least fifteen million people each year are forced to leave their former place of residence as a result of major development projects (Cernea M.M., 2008). *A local native said we were living in the Gwadar city beside CPEC road. When construction of the Gwadar development started to work for making Local roads, unfortunately, local people shifted from one area to another. It had ensured us that these Mega projects will compensate all of you after these encroachments, but until unless nothing provided us in the regarding of Gwadar."*

The state has declared that *Demi Zirr's* (east bay) side is a prohibited area for local people. Local people cannot go to those sites without permission to catch fish because of security reasons provided to foreign investors and Gwadar port development processes. The basic problem is being faced fishery community is not allowing them to fish, which is the ancient socio-economic source for the native. The fishery community is of the view

that they are deprived of fishing, which prompts the poverty ratio in Gwadar. According to field findings, Gwadar port only benefited the foreign investors, not the natives. Native people emphasise on eradication of poverty. They are in dire need of employment, basic right such as health and education and protesting for rehabilitation. Moreover, the government policy regarding compensating native people is unsatisfactory. As a result, they are protesting the mega project. They are protesting the impact of CPEC on the boating industry, fishery community, net and engine shops, fish exporting companies, and donkey rides. The displacement of the fishery community is causing to affect the entire chain of the socio-economic set-up of native people.

Boats Industries

The boat-making activity is attached to the fishing business. The displacement of the fishery community is affecting the *Wado* (boat makers) community which is a sub achieved caste that makes boats. The indigenous economy of boat making is a magnificent part of the fishing economy. Many of the people earn from boat making. The CEPEC project affected the boat-making industry, where people who used to make and repair boats were displaced. The west bay marine drive project forced boat making industry to be shifted out of the city. According to field data, local people complained that the fishery community is being ignored by the policymakers and project authorities. As Jamali noted that how these projects in the name of Gwadar development manipulated the prevailing efforts and produced pressure over different institutions and social sectors in the name of identity, place, and authority. ([Jamali, H. 2013](#)).

"A local native narrated that still we "Bazgars" Fishermen are going into an extreme level of condition in Gwadar. Because before, we have earned some earnings due to Gwadar (Tyaab) Sea in previous decades, but now it is very hard to go Gwadar Sea for us, and we have become a stranger solely in our city of Gwadar".

The CPEC project created a hurdle for the boat companies in the shape of displacement. The fishermen of Gwadar are switching from the wooden-made boat to fibre boats. This is happening due to the CPEC project, as native emphasised. The fibre speed boats cannot travel in deeper water as wood-made boats used to. That is what fishermen complained about less fishing. The culture of boat-making and the beauty of ships and boats being constructed on the top of the beach is missing, which is a cultural loss as well as an economic one. In China, 15000 residents of the popular city Shanghai were removed due to the various sewerage systems for the up gradation of cities. In Indonesia, there are 40,000-50 00 people who are displaced by various roads and infrastructures under *Jabotabek* Urban development mega projects (Michael M Cernea, M. 1993). Similar outcomes CPEC project is producing for the local people of Gwadar, Balochistan. The labourers are facing a lot of challenges like poverty, the crisis of health facilities, and bad education.

Net and Engine Shops

Fishing is the basic source for inhabitants, while many other individuals produce their sources of income from the fishery community. The displacing of the fishery communities is affecting the shops that sell net, engines, diesel, oil, and battery because they have a direct connection with fishing. They are many native people whose source of income is based on their cultural knowledge of net making. It is like boat making that is also the culturally transmitted knowledge that all boat captains (*nahuda*) and crews (*janshoo*) know the art of making varieties of the net. The shops of net and engine dealers are mostly situated in *Shahi Bazar* (old market) and are also threatening to be displaced. There is very less opportunity in Gwadar as the majority of people work at Gwadar Bay with personal capacity rather than the Government support. The fishermen take pieces of machinery, Oil, and Petrol for their Boats whenever they go to catch fish. Although these Crude Oil and Petrol, Gasoline shops are located at the main road west bay. Moreover, the displacement of

the fishery community also provided magnificent threats and hurdles for the economy of net, engines, diesel, oil, and battery shops whose income is dependent on fishing activities.

The poor people of Gwadar were of the view that if the CPEC project continued encroaching on the socio-economic set-up of indigenous people, then they may revolt against the development processes. They are appealing that they do not need any development but safeguard their socio-economic set-up that is based on fishing only. Because the fishery community is facing multiple challenges in the name of development, they are being ignored in the developmental policies.

Donkey Carts

The donkey carts and waste carriers are affected by the developmental encroachment because they have a connection with the fishery community. As local people narrated that *Gwadar needs job opportunities and a good lifestyle because the CPEC project is affecting the indigenous economic system and displacing the fishery community physically and economically*. Moreover, the carts are used in carrying fish to companies, waste fish to fertilising courts, carrying ice from ice factories to ships, and transporting salt. The donkey riders are the poorest people among the fishery community that are also the victim of displacement of the mega project in Gwadar. They have an income of daily wages and are dependent on fishing activities. The carrying of waste fish to fertilising courts is based on indigenous knowledge where people put the waste fish on plain land for drying them with the sun heat. When they are dried up, then they are used as fertiliser and feed for *khomini* (chicken).

Salt Industry and Ice Factory

The people of *wadhi dhoor* (place name) were displaced by a project of CPEC named port free zone area. The economy of these people is based on salt production. The mentioned work is an old fashion of people, and it has a

direct connection with a fishing activity that the salt is used for those fishes which are going rotten. The indigenous people apply salt on fish so that they should not be rotten. This is a natural process for the safety of caught fish. The fish that is dried up with salt is named *soreen maheeg* (saltish fish). This kind of fish is often transported to rural areas where the freezing facility is not available. Moreover, the salt production places are confiscated and shifted to developmental projects. As native people worriedly retorted that (*Pisara Waad me wasta "Du Wahdy Naan" bota*) salt production tolerated the expenses of two times meal.

Like salt production, the CPEC project affected and displaced ice factories in Gwadar, where thousands of local people are deprived of their private jobs and suffering from the worst poverty. More than four ice factory workers' jobs are under threat of displacement. Ice factory is also one of the biggest working companies for native people, and it has its roots in the activities of fishing. To analyse whether displacing the fishery community caused the displacement of ice factories and salt-producing industries in Gwadar.

Fish Exporting Companies

Approximately three thousand people work in fish exporting companies in Gwadar, including women working cleaning and washing fish. The fish exporting companies have a direct connection with the fishery community. The fish exporting company named *bakhaar*, is locally situated near the west bay of the sea. The fish exporting companies buy freshly caught fish from boats' owners, and then they pack them in the freezer. After cleaning, packing, and freezing fish in the companies, the companies export fish to Karachi, Iran, and other international boundaries. The developmental project of west Bay express is displacing exporting companies which results in the deprivation of many people from their jobs.

While a supervisor with the China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC) "Victor Jia" keeps himself busy with work.

"Decently, if you ask me, I cannot tell you what Gwadar is like, I have hardly experienced what it is to live in this town, and you can only do that if you meet the people freely and get accustomed to their music, their culture, their way of life, and politics."

Furthermore, after starting the displacement process, the private companies and troller mafias are looting sea resources illegally and mercilessly. The tollers are owned by private companies in China and Karachi. These ships have plastic nets and genocide the species of fish who do not care about doing the genocide of fish species. The concerned authorities are not taking any action against troller mafias despite the daily basis protests of the fishery community. Such kinds of hurdles started tensing fishery communities with the start of the CPEC project, and the socio-economic setup is declining due to the result of displacement and developmental encroachment.

Discussion

This study provides an analysis of the socio-economic impacts of the CPEC project on the fishery community in Gwadar. The study explored the present condition of native fishermen created by development projects and the challenges they are facing in their daily lives. moreover, the study focuses on how this project, in the name of developing Gwadar, manipulates prevailing efforts and produces pressure on different institutions and social sectors in the name of identity, place, and authority. [\(Jamali, H. 2013\)](#).

According to Mill, elite powers have three inter-connected major discourse organisations of society; military, politics, and economics [\(Oberschall, A. 1978\)](#). However, history showed explicitly "risk" as a major element on behalf of Class society in this risk condition, which associated all the upper class it enjoys to the whole wealth accumulations in the following class patterns to use wealth. Thus, the lower class is certainly exposed to the risk. Furthermore, it articulated that such mega projects are implemented under the Elites' National interests through the rule. Therefore, local inhabitants are numerously affected

individually and have to scapegoat development projects. [\(Baviskar, 2005\)](#). Similarly, the fishery community is being ignored in the conversation about developmental projects. Despite being the oldest dwellers, they are not given any importance in the development processes. When people protest the project, the authority assists them with a few boat engines and nets. The assistance of authority is not sustainable but based on temporal support. The local communities are missing from the policies made regarding CPEC projects. The demands of the fishery community are that they must be well trained and equipped in fishing activity. They often emphasise basic rights of education, health, climate, and water reservation that are totally ignored by project authority.

[\(Kasarda & Crenshaw, 1991\)](#) The industrialisation process always makes available economic advancement and advanced technology to provide a splendid mechanism of society and growth. On 29th December 2018, Balochistan Assembly opposition leader Sana Baloch took notice of Balochistan Assembly regarding the protest of the fishery community against the expressway. "He proposed to look forward to the environmental assessment, social assessment, and economic assessment that government before should have planned for the fishery community who are being dislocated without payback". It is a dynamic reference point and positive instrument for growth and change (The Charter Etos, 1999). Lastly, Development mega projects should be given to the first local inhabitants who have much trapped within huge crises. The positive vision is to need to justify in a better way about the local problems and Stakeholders and technical experts to make available positive attitudes towards Gwadar development. According to Cernea (2008), at least fifteen million people each year are forced to leave their former place of residence as a result of major development projects. It is estimated that large development projects such as dams, roads, and exploitation of raw materials led to the displacement of at least 300 million people between 1988 and 2008, along with natural

disasters. Moreover, Gwadar has been facing developmental displacement for the last decade under the supervision of the CPEC project.

Conclusion

The research studied its entire social phenomenon to evaluate the socio-economic impact on the Fishery community in Gwadar. The native fishermen and their grievance as they articulated in the regarding of local perspective that how native fishermen have been ignored in this development project instead of any priorities native fisheries may receive. Thus, other issues are emerging from those native people like Boat industries, Salt factories, Donkey carts and other sources are

destructured ways; therefore, fishermen understand that the entire native majority of Gwadar is moving toward a risk. While the government should introduce participating political culture among native populations, the native population may involve in throughout development project and its processes and provide alternatives to those natives who have been evicted from their cultural heritages, homes, and lands by development projects in Gwadar. The government should initiate such a kind of local economic project to involve local people more and more and economically uplift them. Both countries, China and Pakistan, should empower local citizens of Gwadar through foreign scholarships and related initiatives, and education sectors must be functionalised in a good way.

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