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CPEC in Global Media: A Corpus-Based Critical Discourse Analysis across News Cultures

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ABSTRACT

The study explores how the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has been reflected in various contexts of national and linguistic media, highlights the lack of a comparative study at a global level, and the lack of critical or negative evaluations. The study analyzes CPEC discourse using a corpus-based Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach to describe the CPEC discourse in Pakistani English and Urdu newspapers, Chinese state media, Indian national media, and International newspapers. Based on the CDA approach developed by Fairclough and the use of corpus linguistic analysis tools including AntConc, the analysis will stay upon such aspects like keywords, collocation patterns, semantic prosodies, and some general ideological structures. The findings provide clear and opposite report, with the Pakistani and Chinese media describing CPEC as a model of development, co-operation, and regional growth, the Indian media as a geopolitical and security issue, and the Western media as the problem of debt-risks, transparency, and strategic competition. Through combining multilingual and cross-national corpora, the research provides the more balanced and extensive view of global CPEC discourse, which will bring some mass contributions to the CDA, media studies, and geopolitical communication.

Keywords: CPEC, Media Representation, Cross-National Media Comparison, News Discourses.

Introduction

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is one of the development projects that have been discussed most in South Asia. The media representations of CPEC predetermine the opinion of people, shape political attitudes, and reflect national interests. However, previous studies have focused on positive portrayal of CPEC in news and editorials and also foreign opinion which creates a biased account of the real global geopolitical problem. This study fills these gaps by examining CPEC discourse across five categories of media, i.e. Pakistani English newspapers, Pakistani Urdu newspapers, Chinese media, Indian media and Western media. The study through a corpus-based CDA perspective analyzes the way in which ideology, political relations and power relations are encouraged the language used to characterize

CPEC. The media have long been playing a central role in intervening common understanding of politics, economics and international relations.

CPEC is one of the important developments in the current history of Pakistan. Being the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China, which started its operation in 2015, it represents an investment amount of more than 46 000 USD (Ritzinger, 2015; Ahmad & Hong, 2019). The project aims at connecting the Gwadar Port in Pakistan and the Kashgar in China in Xinjiang province through a massive road, rail and energy network. It is marketed as a long term engagement aimed at elevate trade, creation of employment and the infrastructural environment of Pakistan. CPEC is often referred to by political leaders as well as by media outlets as a game changer since it has the potential of turning Pakistan into a huge trading hub in the region. At the same time, the project is used to represent the strong diplomatic and economic relations between Pakistan and China, which were traditionally described as an all-weather friendship. Despite all the propagated CPEC as a source of success and development, it has raised some controversy and criticism as well. The increasing reliance of Pakistan on China, the unequal share of benefits among the provinces, the environmental impact, and the ambiguity of the agreements are subject to the concerns of the local and foreign observers. India and the United States have also expressed concern over the geopolitical nature of CPEC believing it to be a continuation of the Chinese policies of continuing its influence in South Asia. In such a complex environment, media coverage becomes a very important place in which rival ideas and power relations are expressed. A study of newspaper coverage about CPEC provides a more insightful approach to understanding how the idea of national identity, diplomacy, and ideology are being linguistically constructed in the Pakistani public discourse.

Pakistani media is a two-fold medium of information and support of national and political discourse. Since a number of citizens do not have a direct familiarity with the large-scale economic projects, their understanding is largely dependent on the media presentation. The use of lexical elements, the repetition of specific slogans and the use of emotive or metaphorical terms shape the perception of CPEC and Pakistan-China relations among the readers. As an example, the repetition of hyperbole phrases like more ocean than deep, more mountain than high, more honey than sweet, etc., create an ambiance of love and devotion between the two countries. Such linguistic patterns show not only the emotional tone of diplomacy, but also the ideological position of the media, which is likely to provide cohesion and optimism of the nation. The critical Discourse Analysis is a very useful methodological instrument that can be used to reveal these ideological constructions. The three-dimensional model of CDA, which is a text, discursive practice, and social practice by Fairclough, addresses the way in which language is working at the different levels. The history of bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and China is quite long and can be traced to the very beginning of the 1950s. Their association is often described as a singular and unbreakable one, and it is often described figuratively as Iron brothers. It provides Pakistan with a possible route of lighten its economic prospects, and at the same time it provides China with access in a strategic location at the Arabian Sea and other regional markets. CPEC has always been presented by both governments as a win-win project, and Pakistani media has repeated the story to a large extent. However, all of the positive images raise a legitimate question of potential prejudice, biasness, and the disfavor of other views.

The current research paper aims to explore how the representations of CPEC and China in the English-language newspapers in Pakistan are built using linguistic characteristics. It concentrates on powerful discursive practices, metaphorical conventions and word choices

which, overall, form the understanding of the project among the mass audience. The dataset that will support this research is a collection of articles, editorials, and reports published in three (large) English-language newspapers, namely, The Dawn, The News, and The Express Tribune, in 2015-2019. These channels have been chosen because of their national impact and editorial authority. Using corpus-based CDA, the research looks at the use of some of the key words in terms of frequency and context of usage including CPEC, game changer, friendship and development. The approach to the methodology combines both quantitative and qualitative information and thus, provides a subtle portrait of how language represents and spreads ideology. Theoretically, it makes the emerging corpus-based CDA literature richer by applying its principles towards a South Asian context of the media, which has been given relatively little scholarly attention. In practice, it explains how media language can affect the process of political cognition and foreign policy negotiation. The insights that can be gained can guide journalism and policymakers to comprehend the effect of linguistic framing on the opinion of the population and international perception.

Research Questions

1. How often do the Pakistani media discourses focus on positive framing of CPEC and what critical perceptions (do they have)?
2. What are the processes by which the Chinese, Indian, and Western media develop different stories about CPEC?
3. Which are the keywords, metaphors, and collocational patterns prevailing in every media discourse?

Significance of the Study

- Presents a multilingual and multinational analysis which has not been employed in previous studies.
- Improves geopolitical communication patterns knowledge.
- Provides policymakers with information regarding how the world sees CPEC.
- Implicates contributions to the intellectual fields of CDA, corpus linguistics and media studies.

Literature Review

Earlier studies focused more on the economic and strategic aspects of CPEC. Scholar's like Small (2015), Wolf (2019) and Pant (2017), viewed CPEC as a geopolitical project that can make China more influential in the Indian Ocean region. Such studies analyzed official reports and policy papers but did not analyze the media coverage. More recent studies have now started to take into consideration the essentials of media framing. Khan suggested in his argument that media image can influence the views of people about Chinese investment and make them trust the foreign collaboration. The results revealed that there was a strong tendency in the Pakistani media to give focus on cooperation and harmony. Khan and Liu (2018) and Afzaal et al., (2019) utilised a corpus-driven CDA tool to study the discussion of CPEC in Pakistani English newspapers. Their findings showed significantly positive description of China, in which the Chinese language is termed as being strategic friends and they often describe using metaphors like iron brothers and all weather friends. Myers (2020) and Perlez (2019) analyzed the Western media reporting and found that it tends to present CPEC as a strategic threat or as a component of the so-called debt-trap diplomacy of China. The BBC, Reuters, and The New York Times are often expected to predict issues related to transparency, instability in the region, and dependence on the economy. Simultaneously, Balasubramanyam (2018) and Sharma (2020) analysed the Indian media and found that the framing was constantly negative with the focus on security issues, territorial conflicts and

geopolitical aspirations of China. Another study is the Chinese media discourse of CPEC. The works by Sun (2019) and Li and Zhang (2020) reveal that Chinese media like global times and China daily emphasize the idea of collaboration, co-creation, and win-win. They focus on balance and collaboration, hence it is highly consistent with the official version of BRI in China. The results highlight an ideologically identifiable trend in the media reporting of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Chinese media mainly create an impression of a win-win cooperation, Indian media prioritizes the notions of threat and suspicion, Western media prioritizes the idea of geopolitical competition, and Pakistani media consider the advancement and friendship.

Ritzinger (2015) explains the reason of the Chinese government to build the corridor, claiming that the project indicates investment in Pakistan that is essentially aimed to fulfill the three goals: first, China wants to offer economic support to its long-time ally, hence, establishing trade and contact with the West with trade route that includes the sources of energy in the Middle East and the African market; second, the project is a chief project, and it is supposed to connect China with Europe through a coastal trade route; third, the project is seen as a strategic tool to expand the Chinese Reporting on the disagreement about the route and direction of the corridor, Bengali (2015) focuses on the western route, which seems to be the least expensive based on the opportunity costs. According to him, the eastern route would be prohibitively costly because of the land acquisition factors.

Previous studies like Ranjan (2015) focus on the possible opportunities that India can have to gain capitalising the corridor, whereas, the revival of the India-Pakistan peace process and the expansion and development of cooperation into other territories may bring India significant economic stability. He suggests the establishment of smaller economic corridors next to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor along the India Pakistan border and presents the idea of triple collaboration among Pakistan, China, India, Middle Eastern countries and additional European countries.

A report on Pak-China relations has discussed several factors through which both of the countries can take advantage of bilateral trade, keeping in view the interest of each other. She has given the recommendations in her report to expand these relations and argues that this corridor can help to achieve major targets in the economic sector. Thus the studies show that this corridor is one of the major milestones and most promising development stretching out economic prospects and innovations in all sectors of life. Therefore, this project requires sound management and should be handled with proficiency to gain the maximum outputs.

Current sources point to the high degree of biases and shortcomings in the media reporting of CPEC. A significant number of literature reviews that investigate Pakistani news sources show that the pattern of framing is overwhelmingly positive. In one example, Naseer et al. (2022) note that the content of large English newspapers like Dawn and The News is more inclined to discuss CPEC as an opportunity in the economy and politics, with little such discussion focusing on social, legal, or long-term strategic risks. On the other hand, there are limited comparative studies that go beyond Pakistani media yet they offer an insight. A paper by Naseer et al. (2021) compares the framing used by Daily Dawn (Pakistan) and China Daily (China) and determines that media framing in both countries is largely positive and focuses on economic growth, peace within the region and the development of infrastructure. However, this study is constrained and restricted in its areas of interest, it lacks in-depth examination of critical discourses, or even extending to Western or Indian media that might provide much negativity or even different ideological views.

In their study of the Pakistani newspapers, Noureen and Naeem (2025) use Discourse-Historical Approach of Wodak to show that future-oriented discourses justify CPEC by silencing opposing voices or any adverse possibilities.

Even across platforms, the portrayal of CPEC tends to diminish critical voices, raising concerns about ideological bias and limited diversity in discourse.

- There is limited comparative research across multiple national media (especially Western or Indian sources) most work compares only Pakistani and Chinese outlets.
- Even within comparative studies, the analysis often remains surface-level, focusing on positive framing and neglecting deeper critical perspectives.
- Although some CDA studies (e.g., using Wodak's DHA) begin to address ideological silences and power relations, more work is needed to uncover how dissenting voices like local, social, political are marginalized or excluded in media discourses.

Scholars using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) point out that media discourse is shaped by ideology, power, and national identity. Norman Fairclough's model remains the most widely used framework in media studies.

Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model also offers valuable insight, emphasizing how mental models shape how journalists and audiences interpret events. Wodak's discourse-historical approach stresses the importance of connecting media discourse with historical relations, such as Pakistan China diplomacy.

The comparative studies of various national media streams are lacking especially those of Western or Indian origins; the current research is limited in its comparability to Pakistani and Chinese media. Even in cases of comparative studies, such depth of analysis is usually superficial, with the focus on positive framing being drawn without considering more negative views of the matter. Certain Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) works including that which uses Wodak Discourse historical Analysis (DHA) have begun to question ideological silences and power relations.

Methodology

The study involves a comparative mixed-methodology incorporating corpus linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis to navigate the absence of international comparative approaches and the absence of critical or negative media discourse analysis. Previous research has been biased towards Pakistani English newspaper, highlighting the massively positive representation of CPEC by Pakistan and omitting other or hostile accounts by Chinese, Indian and Western media. The deficiencies are addressed through the current inquiry by constructing a cross-national, multilingual corpus and conducting a systematic analysis of agreeing and critical patterns of ideological expression in five sources of media: Pakistani English media, Pakistani Urdu media, Chinese State media, Indian National media and the Western International media. The approach to measure the quantitative corpus-based measures with the qualitative CDA interpretive work provides a more comprehensive and detailed view of the global CPEC discourse compared to the previous state of knowledge. It is the first methodology that has been adopted in this field to use international media corpora. Chinese texts are based on the China Daily and Global Times which provides a confined perspectives of official and semi-official political discourse in China and Indian texts that are based on the Hindu and Times of India which have a regional point of view. Western texts are based on the BBC, Reuters and Al Jazeera which combine to provide a geopolitical frame that is often analytical, critical or suspicious. Data collection rely on the creation of five independent corpora, including 50 articles, carefully selected in each, and bringing the total to 300 texts in the media. The Pakistani English corpus is made up of the articles of Dawn, The

News and The Express Tribune, selected due to their impact and credibility on policy matters nationally. The Urdu corpus of Pakistani is a compilation of Jang, Nawa-i-Waqt and Daily Express, the mass readership, and are more likely to use emotive and patriotic language. Chinese, Indian, and Western corpora contains political analyses, news reports, editorials, feature articles, and foreign-policy commentaries to give the full picture of the discourse of each nation. The study then uses the three-dimensional critical discourse analysis (CDA) as developed by Fairclough.

Data Collection

The study compiled a large, heterogeneous, multilingual data consisting of the supportive and the opposing discourses. There are five categories of media included in this study:

1. Pakistani English newspapers
2. Pakistani Urdu newspapers
3. Chinese media
4. Indian media
5. Western media

This research collected 100 media texts. The articles in the five corpora are 20 in number, thus they are balanced and allow comparison to be made fairly across the regions. Choosing the number of articles to gather in each corpus was based on the need to have sufficient quantity of material to be inserted in the computational linguistic programs to extract salient patterns like keywords, collocations, and semantic prosody.

Pakistan English Media Corpus

This corpus contains the articles of three popular newspapers:

- Dawn
- The News International
- The Express Tribune

These periodicals were chosen because of their national impact, their common use in scholarly studies, and the ability to influence the opinion of the elite. The keywords that were used to retrieve articles were CPEC, China Pakistan Economic Corridor, BRI, Gwadar, and China-Pakistan relations. Only pertinent articles published in the year 2015-24 were included. This is the time between the introduction of CPEC, initial construction, political arguments, and the follow-up reviews. It focuses on the positive effect or portrayal of CPEC.

Pakistani Urdu Media Corpus

It includes:

- Jang
- Nawa-i-Waqt
- Daily Express

These newspapers are the biggest language union of Pakistan and often use emotive, patriotic and metaphorical language. The same keywords in Urdu language, i.e. “چین پاک,” “پیک سی,” “راہداری,” and “گواہر.” These sources are rich in the Pakistani point of view, as they represent nationalistic and culturally precise discussion that is usually disregarded in English-studies.

Chinese Media Corpus

In order to provide international comparison, 50 articles were collected in Chinese state-oriented sources:

- China Daily
- Global Times

The selection of articles was done in their English versions in order to maintain comparability across corpora. The Chinese corpus is also a positive contributor of framed narratives clothed in cooperation, harmony, and the global development.

Indian Media Corpus

The corpus of the Indian media contains:

- The Hindu
- Times of India

This corpus brings in the consistent critical, negative or suspicious discourse which had not been found in Pakistani and Chinese sources and hence provides a valuable comparison point to do CDA.

Western Media Corpus

In order to incorporate wider geopolitical views, 300 texts were gathered out of:

- BBC News
- Reuters
- Al Jazeera

Western sources give analytical, and often critical reporting of CPEC and focus on debt sustainability, strategic competition, and regional instability. Such key terms as debt diplomacy, CPEC Pakistan, BRI geopolitics and China influence were used. This corpus adds to the ability of the study to make a negative or warning discourse analysis.

Findings and Discussion

The results of this comparative corpus-based Critical Discourse Analysis demonstrate the significant differences between the way that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is connected in Pakistani, Chinese, Indian, and Western media. The presence of these differences is highly indicative to identify the lack of international comparison and the lack of critical/negative discourse analysis. The study using key words, collocations, concordance lines, and discourse patterns in five corpora, which include Pakistani English, Pakistani Urdu, Chinese, Indian and Western media, declares the fact that CPEC is not perceived as a neutral economic aim but an ideologically controversial global narrative defined by national interests and geopolitical location.

Findings

Strong Positive Framing: Pakistani English and Urdu Media

The Pakistani English and Urdu corpora had a large majority of positive representations of CPEC. The most frequently used keywords include development, opportunity, progress, cooperation, strategic partnership and friendship. The patterns of collocation similar to CPEC + game changer, China + trusted friend, CPEC + investment, and China + all-weather ally prevail in both corpora.

Concordance lines:

"...CPEC is a game changer for national development..."

"...China remains our all-weather friend under CPEC..."

"...the corridor brings progress, opportunity, and prosperity..."

The Urdu media express it even more strongly with the help of emotional and poetic language, such as:

CPEC multipuran ka roshan mustaqbil (CPEC is the multi-purpose bright future of the country)
Cheen hamara azeem dost (China is our great friend).

Hamari taraqqi ka zariya (the seed of our development)

These language patterns indicate that Pakistan had a long history of diplomatic relations with China and it depicts ideological conversation that aims at strengthening national cohesion,

hope and trust. This validates the narrative of positive-only that has been discussed in the preceding literature and puts on record the need to look at it directly.

Chinese Media: Cooperation Narrative, Harmonious

Chinese media portray CPEC as the win-win project in accordance with the vision of Belt and Road Initiative of the shared destiny. The keywords that prevail in the corpus of the Chinese are win-win cooperation, mutual development, harmony, connectivity, and joint prosperity.

Collocations include:

CPEC + model of cooperation

BRI + shared future

Pakistan + reliable partner

The prosody is strongly positive and diplomatic, aligning exactly with Chinese soft-power goals.

Concordance lines:

- "...CPEC represents win-win cooperation under BRI..."
- "...China and Pakistan build a shared future through CPEC..."
- "...the project promotes harmony and joint prosperity..."

Chinese language does not discuss hot issues like security threats, political disputes or debt matters. Rather, it advances a message of an amicable growth and a prolonged alliance, aiding the Chinese diplomatic and international soft-power agenda. The results contribute to the necessity of international comparative data further because Chinese framing is quite different among other nations. They embody diplomatic, harmonious, optimistic language, showing China's soft-power strategy and its official ideological line (cooperation, stability, harmony).

Indian Media: Suspicious, Negative and Security-Framing

The worst negative CPEC coverage is in Indian media. Such keywords as threat, encirclement, sovereignty, security risk, Chinese expansion, and regional imbalance can be identified. All these words are likely to be associated with the issues of territory and Gilgit-Baltistan and the strategic competition between India and China.

Observed collocations are:

CPEC + threat to India

CPEC + violates sovereignty

China + aggressive expansion

BRI + strategic encirclement

Semantic prosody = negative + conflict-oriented.

Concordance lines:

- "...CPEC poses a threat to India..."
- "...the corridor violates sovereignty in Gilgit-Baltistan..."
- "...China's move is part of aggressive expansion..."

These results reveal that Indian media develop the concept of CPEC as a geopolitical threat and not an economic opportunity. This corpus offers the necessary negative discourse data, which directly deals with them and gives the study a critical aspect that was never a part of the previous one.

Western Media: Geopolitically Critical Framing but Analytical.

The western media including BBC, Reuters and Al Jazeera depict CPEC in a neutral though strategically inclined way. Some of the common keywords are debt, geopolitics, strategic corridor, regional tensions, Chinese influence, and competition.

Patterns portrayed in collocations include:

CPEC + debt pressure

China + global influence

Pakistan + financial risk

BRI + power competition

Semantic prosody = critical, analytical, cautious.

Concordance lines:

- "...CPEC raises debt pressure on Pakistan..."
- "...China's growing global influence through CPEC..."
- "...the project involves risks of lack of transparency..."

Western concordance patterns show a geopolitical risk and economic-skeptic perspective. Lexical focus on debt, transparency, competition displays critical evaluation rather than emotional or nationalistic framing. The Western discourse is also inclined to relate CPEC to the general story of the emergence of China as a world power, which reflects fears of economic dependence, transparency challenges, and the Chinese strategic ambitions. These results show that there is a need to incorporate Western media in order to develop a balanced comparative study.

Discussion

Concordance analysis (which is also called Key Word in Context (KWIC) analysis) is a methodical process that detects how particular lexical elements are used in text and the meaning that is then focused around them. Concordance lines indicate the patterns of representational, which enable the researcher to determine either ways (positively or negatively) or neither positive nor negative of a concept. The method identifies lexical repetitions, thus, reporting stable discourses within corpora as opposed to single-minded opinion. The technique explains power relationships that could be enshrined in language such as the classification of actors as dominant, cooperative, aggressive or vulnerable by isolating particular word choices.

Collocation analysis, however, identifies the words that often go hand in hand with a certain keyword. These common pairings bring out discursive framing and semantic links which characterize the concept under consideration. Collocates plot semantic fields (e.g., development, danger, conflict, cooperation), hence providing evidence of hegemonic narratives in the data set. Co-specific patterns also reveal institutional biases, cultural attitudes and political views, which are prevalent in the corpus.

Positive collocates like development, benefit and cooperation help to form supportive framing and negative collocates like threat, risk, and failure help to form opposition or critical framing. The cumulative emotional and ideological load of a lexical pool as reflected in semantic prosody shows whether or not the discourse is encouraging or discouraging of a certain notion.

Concordance analysis across the five corpora reveals that each national media constructs CPEC through ideologically loaded lexical environments. In the Pakistani English and Urdu corpora, concordance lines consistently foreground positive metaphors such as "CPEC is a game changer," "bright future," "trusted friend," which indicate a nationalist-development discourse that emphasizes progress and bilateral friendship. These lines display a strong positive semantic prosody that aligns with Pakistan's political interests and long-term diplomatic ties with China.

In contrast, the Chinese corpus displays concordance patterns such as "win-win cooperation," "shared future," "joint prosperity," showing a harmonious, diplomatic and stability-oriented narrative that avoids any mention of conflict or criticism. The Indian corpus, however, reveals sharply negative concordance lines, frequently using patterns like "CPEC threatens India,"

“violates sovereignty,” “aggressive expansion.” This indicates a security-oriented ideological framing grounded in territorial concerns and geopolitical rivalry. The Western corpus contains neutral-to-critical lines such as “debt pressure,” “global influence,” “lack of transparency,” demonstrating an analytical framing that links CPEC to debt diplomacy and strategic competition. Collocation patterns reinforce these findings. Pakistani collocates such as development, opportunity, progress, and friendship confirm a highly positive semantic prosody. Chinese collocates (win-win, mutual development, harmony) reveal diplomatic soft-power ideology. Indian collocates (threat, sovereignty, encirclement) expose a conflict-based narrative, while Western collocates (debt, influence, financial risk) construct a discourse of economic skepticism and geopolitical caution.

The comparison results indicate that the CPEC discourse will be formed more by the interest of the countries and the past relations of countries than by economic facts and geopolitical location. Every media system creates a narrative that is driven by ideology and discloses how the players in the world fight or validate CPEC in their own gains of strategic interests. Previously, only the Pakistani English newspapers were used in the studies, however, this one offers a cross-national analysis that makes it possible to draw a significant comparison between the countries in terms of ideology: Pakistan and China are popularizing CPEC as the token of economic development and political globalization. The CPEC is viewed as a threat, risk, and strategic rivalry by India and the Western countries.

This validates the fact that without international sources, past researches gave a partial and one sided perspective on CPEC. This study gives an international coverage that goes beyond national borders and shows how global discourses contradict each other. Previous studies have talked about CPEC most of the time in a positive way; this paper indicates that positive framing does not always apply. The Indian and Western corpora offer powerful counter-narratives that contain distrust and pessimistic views, as well as criticism. The Pakistani and Chinese discourses do not feature themes of security tensions, debt risks, and geopolitical competition but the Indian and Western discourses do.

Global Implications Ideologically, Media Systems

The results indicate that both the media systems create CPEC based on national ideology: the Pakistani and Chinese media ideologies of friendship, unity and mutual development. Indian media threat and territorial sovereignty ideology. Western media Western ideology of geopolitical prudence and global balance of power. These ideological variations make it clear that CPEC is not only an economic project, but a discursive battlefield upon which rival stories are expressed as pointers to profound political interests.

Corpus tools (keywords, collocations, concordance analysis) combined with CDA provides an effective means of unravelling the latent ideological patterns. The results show that:

Positive metaphors are repeated in Pakistan, which leads to a nationalist-development discourse. The keywords on threats used repeatedly in India create a narrative of security. Western framing focuses on the world power politics. It shows how language is applied strategically to influence the perception of people.

Implications

The following are some of the implications of this study to the field of media studies, Critical Discourse Analysis, corpus linguistics, and research on geopolitical communication. CDA is the field where the main implication lies. The current study proves that CDA becomes highly effective and accurate when used along with the corpus-linguistic methods. Other studies that had been conducted previously and were solely based on qualitative CDA were inclined to selective interpretation. This research provides more objective and systematic data on

ideological framing by combining the analysis of keywords, collocations, semantic prosody, and concordance patterns. The results show that there is a significant difference in the linguistic patterns depending on the national contexts, and the difference could not be exhaustively captured unless one considered the geopolitical relationships. The paper therefore highlights the importance of multinational CDA study on the examination of international political projects.

Conclusion

This research paper will explore how CPEC is portrayed by the Pakistani, Chinese, Indian, and Western media and, thus, will fill two main gaps in the existing literature: the lack of international comparative analysis and the critical or negative discourse perspective. A corpus based CDA helps the researcher to discover that CPEC is not an impartial economic project but a highly disputed geopolitical narrative constituted by national interests and ideological positioning, as well as diplomatic relations. The linguistic patterns of the Pakistani English and Urdu media show that the framing of CPEC is always positive. Words like progress, friendship, opportunity and development are used frequently and the metaphors used are culturally based like the iron brothers and all-weather friendship. These depictions go hand in hand with political interests of Pakistan and long-term diplomatic relations it has with China. Among the media, the Urdu ones, in particular, demonstrate a very emotionally colored language that strengthens the sense of national pride and unity. The results agree with earlier studies, but the current research will be useful in creating an insight on how these stories differ with that of other nations. Chinese media reflects CPEC as the harmonic and mutually beneficial part of the Belt and Road Initiative. Their rhetoric focuses on collaboration, mutual prosperity and non violent growth. The Chinese newspapers do not mention the security issues, risks of debts or political conflicts. This selective framing indicates more of the overall diplomatic approach of China and soft-power goals, which illustrates how the national interests influence media narratives. Indian and Western media, in turn, offer rather negative viewpoints. CPEC is often defined by Indian newspapers as a threat to national sovereignty and stability in the region and it is characterized by geopolitical competition and strategic encircling. On the same note, Western media innovators like the BBC and Reuters have concentrated on debt risks, lack of transparency and how China is increasing its influence in the world. These sources view CPEC in terms of a wider scope of international power, the anxiety about the growing influence of China across Asia and the world in general.

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