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## The Sociological implications of the CPEC Project and its Impact on Internal and External migration in Gwadar, Balochistan (Pakistan)

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### ABSTRACT

*This research paper examines the sociological implications of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project on internal and external migration in Gwadar, Balochistan, Pakistan. The project, initiated in 2015 as part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), represents a noteworthy investment in infrastructure connectivity and change between China and Pakistan, offering substantial economic benefits. It also addresses critical socioeconomic challenges, mainly in Baloch Indigenous communities, by generating employment and expanding infrastructure. While this study highlights the aims of migrants, internal and external migration, and international and local socio-cultural landscapes, the result is the marginalization of the Baloch people. This research qualitative method, including semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, revealed that residents, competition for opportunities, infrastructure, socioeconomic, cultural dislocation, and labor migration disrupted traditional gender basis, intensifying social susceptibilities. Furthermore, this paper emphasizes the importance of wide-ranging policies that are the local communities in making decision processes interrelated to the CPEC.*

**Keywords:** Sociological Implication, Internal Migration, External Migration, Indigenous Baloch Community

### Introduction

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has outlined its optimistic features and disadvantages for the civilization. Positive features like the jobs discover the betterment of energy production; furthermore, advanced infrastructure is highly required in Gwadar, Balochistan. The negative aspects are mainly concerned with the unfair allocation of resources, ecological rearrangement, and the strains that grow, particularly in Balochistan. The investigation underlines that the existing studies are not sufficiently specific and do not address the issues, according to the sociological studies, to fill the gaps (Ullah et al, 2021).

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project was started in 2015 with an agreement worth USD 46 billion for rationalized transport and improved connectivity in Pakistan. Also, by 2020, only 32

out of 122 blueprint projects were finished, clearly indicating the lengthy timetable and the problem of the situation. The corrupt practices, political trust deficits, and the lack of openness, on the other hand, are the most critical issues that need to be addressed. According to the first narrative in 2015, mixed socio-economic and low-quality job formation also increases the political trust between societies. This project aimed to change Pakistan's economic issues, which were less successful than expected. Therefore, it is necessary to increase sustainable development in Gwadar, Balochistan, Pakistan (RANA, 2022).

There are some associations between internal migration and the consumption of multiplicative maternity care services among women in Pakistan. Furthermore, migration affects health issues from rural to urban areas, such as mental care, antenatal care, and delivery at health facilities. Another issue raised was the role of sociodemographic factors, including age, education, employment status, and wealth issues. While these issues affect the ruler, people's healthcare issues impact the education system. After moving to the urban cities, these people mostly face social issues in the big cities (Dadras et al, 2023).

According to the dynamics of internal migration, most focus on the relationships between migration distance and the impacts of socioeconomic aspects, such as urbanization and the Human Development Index (HDI), as well as the rule of GDP per capita. Furthermore, to address the modifiable area unit problem (MAUP), the image studio is used to analyse migration data across different nations. The stability of the distance of migration between the countries and the impacts on economic and demographic changes in the migration patterns (J et al, 2016).

Many other third-world countries have also observed the phenomenon of international and internal migration. In 1961, lifelong migrants lived in Pakistan's twelve most significant cities. Internal migration in Pakistan is based on the population census, and some were based on a sample survey that revealed the same patterns for the causes of migration in the nation. (Perveen,1993).

The impact of the issues migration faces in Pakistan, particularly focusing on labor migration inside the Gulf countries. Another issue was the rapid changes in the population growth in Pakistan, the rural communities, and the limited job opportunities abroad. The reality is that migrant workers face exploitative labor conditions, health risks, and social discrimination inside the host countries. For the needs of migrants, they have to protect their policies and enhance both countries' economies. Furthermore, the multifaceted interplay between migration, such as economic development, culture, and socio-political landscape in Pakistan (Bhattacharya, 2024).

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) started as an essential constituent of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative, aiming to improve trade and financial cooperation between the two nations. It is usual to deliver considerable communal and financial recompense to Pakistan, including job creation and widespread infrastructural development. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) includes a variety of essential schemes, including uranium production and infrastructure development, such as influencing peers, the building of Gwadar Port, and the founding of Special Economic Zones, which specialists believe will positively impact economic development. By 2030, the CPEC is expected to provide around 1.2 million service opportunities, therefore contributing to the deficiency bargain and improving the living circumstances of the general public. The primary issues are geo-strategic, composed of those related to monetary sustainability. However, the motivation towards this talented achievement is strengthening, as

the possibilities of CPEC deliver a revolutionary chance for Pakistan to readjust its cheap, therefore endorsing long-term development and financial achievement (Muhammad, 2019).

This relationship between internal movement, internal migration, and the refugee arrangements is pertinent to the countries. Internal displacement often occurs due to long-term financial migration and the influence of circumstantial factors. Furthermore, internally displaced persons (IDPs) are exclusively encountered by economic migrants and refugees. The internal people move for economic reasons. challenges due to the internal displacement of the significant societal process and the humanitarian implications. The displacement of internally migrated people faces different kinds of issues, such as cultural problems and language problems. The issues highlighted were social and economic problems (Smith, 2020).

The rural-to-urban migration in the semi-arid region of Pakistan, while focusing on the push and the factors that influence the trends of migration in Pakistan, the main issues included the lack of suitable employment, education, and health care of families, the climate issues, rural poverty and the drive of migration in the urban regions, the social network attractive for the migration in the cities. The various post-migration challenges faced by individual people, including house costs, population difficulties in finding jobs, and some improvements in living lifestyle (Siyal et al, 2019).

The concentration on internal Pakistani migration, which the author believes in monetary devolution, may solve the problem. It proposes that market promises and extraordinary joblessness rates drive emigration. The recently issued National Finance Commission (NFC) rewards have increased provincial shares, which might resolve stalemates and decrease discontent. The study demonstrates that regional limits typically remain constant, hindering inter-provincial mobility and economic growth. The suggested monetary potentials in less industrialized regions should be created to reduce polarization and ensure resource allocation. They suggest that politicians should know regional migration trends to address integration and budget allocation efficiently. To indicate that extra investigation is needed to regulate the causes and processes of bond constriction on local government budgets. (Mahmud et al, 2010).

Internal migration in Pakistan from 2010 to 2011 enhanced the sensitivity of migration patterns and determined. The issues raised by the rapid change in urbanization in developing countries include the education system and the development of health care facilities. Rapid change comes in urban cities, such as labor force migration within developing countries and their various factors, which raise education factors for the girls and migration decisions. The migrants into the non-economic groups, as well as the economic groups, come from rural to urban regions seeking better-quality prospects (Ahmad et al, 2021)

The discussion on migration, which encompasses participation as well as both foreign and domestic migrations, offers a detailed comprehension of population dynamics that are pertinent to the sociological analysis of the effects of CPEC in Gwadar, Balochistan. Given the historical context of extensive population movements in South Asia, particularly in Pakistan, migration patterns within the region have consistently held great importance. This backdrop elucidates the analysis of how CPEC projects influence the patterns of both internal and external migration in Gwadar, emphasizing the wider sociological consequences of these advancements.

### **Study Objectives**

1. To examine the social impacts of development projects on internal and external migration in Gwadar, Balochistan.
2. The purpose of this study is to investigate, with a focus on sociological aspects, how CPEC activities have affected internal and external migration trends in Gwadar, Balochistan.

### **Research Questions**

1. To examine the social impacts of development projects on internal and external migration in Gwadar, Balochistan.
2. To investigate, with a focus on sociological aspects, how CPEC activities have affected internal and external migration trends in Gwadar, Balochistan

### **Significance of the study**

Gwadar, a key port city, has become the hub for improvement, drawing in many internal and external migrants. Achievement insight into the sociological consequences of this demographic change is indispensable, as it can deliver a sympathetic view of the evolving subtleties inside local societies and their role in regulating these changes. The CPEC project can interrupt the traditional social hierarchies and power relations in Gwadar, Balochistan. The arrival of individuals from different socio-cultural backgrounds, possessing diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds and socioeconomic traits, can upset established settlements and give rise to new social structures and patterns of communication. Analysis of such sociological consequences is crucial for policymakers and local authorities to frame new measures that give rise to social harmony, assimilation, and the preservation of Baloch's traditional cultural heritage. This qualitative study and extensive fieldwork addressed the incorporation, interactions, and possible cultural exchange or tension between locals and settlers. By investigating the difficulties that arise due to in- and out-migration from Balochistan, the results help policymakers address the problems related to internal and external migration. The study provides a deep understanding of the sociological implications of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project in Gwadar, Balochistan. By exploring the effects of external and internal migration patterns, this research attempts to comprehend valuable insights for making effective policies, social creativity, and community-based development programs. These initiatives aim to meet the desires of the local population, address social cohesion, and start a sustainable development model for the local people.

### **Literature Review**

Investigates the socioeconomic empowerment of women subsequent to the rural-to-urban migration in Pakistan and the Philippines. The ancient framework of gender equality, the importance of women's experiments, and the reference to women are key to the United Nations for the purpose of addressing gender inequality. As well as to identify the push factors and lack of education and employment opportunities, as well as pull factors for better jobs and forecasts, social networks, and urban zones that drive women to migrate. The data on women's empowerment in both countries was extracted. Whereas financial factors and educational occasions are major migration drivers in the Philippines, women face more challenges in a diversity of areas in Pakistan (Ram et al, 2024).

Impacts of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) on the leading local population and its residents, Gwadar, Balochistan. The main issues highlighted both opportunities and challenges. The development and the projects have led to developments in the infrastructure and healthcare for better education. Local inhabitants face issues such as poverty, rearrangement, and skills,

resulting in the sensation of unfriendliness. The locals respected the welfare of the CPEC, but felt excluded from the development process (Ali et al, 2023).

The recommendations provide basic amenities, prioritizing local services for the defensive livelihoods in the finishing industry. The main potential demographic variations are unskilled locals replaced by educated outsiders, the marginalization of the native populations, and the local communities in the growing economy of Gwadar (Ali et al, 2023).

To complicate the association surrounding population growth and urbanization in Pakistan and to accentuate the significant implications for the advancement. Additionally, the matters demonstrated by the quick population growth are the numbers branded by the high productivity ratio and the considerable rural-urban migration, as well as infrastructure and services. Some issues in urbanization, such as commercial crises, financial problems within the urban environment, and social disparities, need to be addressed; policymakers need to solve the problems within the urban area, which are facing economic issues. circumstances and security problems. Furthermore, urban preparation should address these vicissitudes for urban development, such as the transportation system's reasonable frame system for actual environmental issues (Khan et al, 2023).

The main issues faced by Baloch, such as socio-political challenges from Pakistan and Iran, are the purpose of their struggle for equal rights amid systemic discrimination. The downgrading has led to competitively divided, aggravating tensions between the freedoms of the privileged and the unprivileged within these areas. The identities of politics that are highlighted by these ethics and the sectarian identities shape the Baloch grievances against the governments of Pakistan and Iran. In these, both countries treat the Baloch identity and push the sounds of the Baloch people in their regions. The main impacts of the Baloch conflict on state policies for ongoing conflicts in both countries. The Baloch people raise their voices in front of human rights violations to underscore the need for policies, such as the Baloch predicament in the geopolitical landscape of the region (Khan et al, 2023).

Pakistan has important problems with India, Afghanistan, and the global community. The primary reason for tautness in the Indo-Pak area is the disputed subject of Kashmir. The violence emerging along the India-Pakistan boundary, with shared indictments from both groups, is a noteworthy worry. The continuing fight in Afghanistan and India's increasing influence are exacerbating security difficulties in Pakistan. The Durand Line argument and the Afghan immigrant quandary further verify the argument. The most effective means to foster regional peace and combat terrorism is for Afghanistan and Pakistan to cooperate (Malik et al, 2021).

Examining Balochistan's complicated ancient and geopolitical countryside stemming from Pakistan's 1948 capture of the area. This examination shows that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has appeared as a central anxiety for many local matters, disapprovingly measuring its influence on national stability and economic development (Zaheer et al, 2019).

The primary clarifications of the ongoing conflict are as follows: one advocates greater autonomy for the region, another asserts that central totalitarianism overpowers local voices, and a third is driven by anti-Pakistan factions that receive international assistance. The important role foreign effects have in worsening cultural pressures and militancy in Balochistan, mainly with CPEC projects. The study aims to provide a progressive understanding of the intra-Balochistan conflict and its broader implications for Pakistan's socio-political background by examining many

standpoints. Ultimately, it promotes a comprehensive method to address the root reasons for the fight while seeing the strategic significance of CPEC (Zaheer et al, 2019).

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is an essential bilateral initiative to enhance economic integration between China and Pakistan through terrestrial infrastructure and railways. CPEC offers infrastructure advancement and economic advantages for both countries, although it encounters important challenges, especially from the Baloch conflict (Jaleel et al, 2017).

The Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) and Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) have become important intimidations, encouraging local antagonism to the scheme. A poll within the Baloch population labels the main anxieties about CPEC, with several individuals expressing fears of identity erosion, social dislocation, and undesirable financial penalties. To measure public attitude, see-through that the mainstream sees CPEC as damaging to their livelihoods (Jaleel et al, 2017).

Moreover, it highlights that security anxieties and local grievances must be resolved to pledge the project's viability. To specify that the absence of a safe situation and party-political participation with Baloch bests may cooperate with the possible compensations of CPEC. Consequently, while CPEC is seen as a conduit to wealth, internal security issues and local arrogance provide considerable impairments that must be spoken of for the scheme to attain its supreme potential (Jaleel et al, 2017).

The insinuation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the educational development in Gwadar, Balochistan. The main potential for the CPEC is to enhance educational infrastructure through the formation of higher education institutions. The main vital for the apparatus for the local youth is the skill (Erum, 2019).

Furthermore, the analysis indicates that CPEC will not create job opportunities, such as employment, to improve the economic condition of the region and address health care issues, education, housing, and transportation. The importance of education in bridging the gap between inexpert labor and employment, as well as decaying cultural conversation in regional growth (Erum, 2019).

The complex dynamic of migration and emigration in Pakistan highlighted socioeconomic issues in both rural and urban regions. The emigrants become the role models of their family members in the communities (HASAN, 2010).

The emigration process has subsidized the disintegration of extended families, and the issues of economic remittances are sometimes embezzled by the relations, causing families issues of jealousy and social strife. The political power remains concentrated among the outmoded landowning elites, notwithstanding the emergence of a more economically empowered mercantile class in the small municipalities, foremost unsatisfactory development and social encounters (HASAN, 2010).

According to the influence of remittance on households' living standards in the district of Kech, Balochistan, Pakistan, while the economic contributions to the living standards of the migrant workers, there are many economic issues related to the migrant workers and related issues, including the economic problems of families. There are many problem-related economic issues for the economy and internationally, as well as the search for economic prospects in developing regions in search of better opportunities and income for families. While the remittances knowingly enhance household standing, leading to increased expenditure on durable goods and services, and improve conditions. Furthermore, policymakers must focus on enhancing local

employment chances as long as training programs permit families to utilize remittances (Saleem et al, 2022).

The excess of urbanization and the process of urbanized people's structure also have functions in Balochistan, Pakistan. Furthermore, the urban families living in Quetta mostly face socioeconomic challenges. In addition to substantial help, the respondents aged 36-45 lack a formal educational system, indicating a gap in educational opportunities. On the other hand, one of the most significant issues was internal issues, such as altered family dynamics and functions, which led to housing shortages and poverty. In addition, implementing effective urbanization strategies, which already involve multiple stakeholders, ensures sustainable development to improve living conditions for urban families in the region (Lehri et al, 2021).

To explore the socioeconomic impacts of migration on the labor markets in Romania's Mehedinti and Doli Counties. To increase international migration pa, particularly from poorer to wealthier nations, driven by economic motives and labour market demands. To provide an in-depth analysis of the local markets to assist magnates in starting new businesses and to progress management plans for the region's socioeconomic transitions. The paramount importance of aligning cross-sectoral policies is to successfully provision provincial development and discourse on market challenges (Chiripuci et al, 2020).

To explore the social structure and the migration designs in the regions. The core issues highlighting the difficulties of property ownership and private property rights are lengthy relationship groups, organizational legations, clan consent, and organization. The significance of tribal governance as a political organization shaped the region's governance subtleties. The migration trends reveal their impacts on the ethnic balance and raise concerns about the potential of Indigenous communities. Furthermore, the assessment of ethnic nationalisms among the Baloch and Pashtuns after noting that these activities have expanded independently, as well as the confusing provincial supremacy (Gazdar, 2007).

### **Theoretical Framework**

According to Wilbur Zelinsky, social scientists are gathered by their small pile of norms toward regularity and patterns in human actions. The 'hypothesis of mobility transition' is most succinctly stated. There are accurate, systematic boundaries in the evolution of human mobility by space-time throughout history, and these safeguards are crucial to modernity. Several linked assertions that describe the hypothesis are the most important (Zelinsky, 1971). (1) Modernization always increases social and physical mobility in a society. (2) The mobility transition parallels population change and other unexplained changes in each community. (3) Spatial mobility undergoes orderly alterations in function frequency, duration, distance, periodicity, routing, migrant categories, and origin and destination classes. (4) Both social movement and material mobility are altering, and a potential migrant may choose to change his social locus or use better information movement rather than work in a local modification. (5) At an impartially high level of generalization that reduces minor spatial and temporal irregularities, mobility forms coherent patterns that advertise themselves through time as successive timeframes and outward through space as concentric parts from successful growth points (Zelinsky, 1971). The underlying spatiotemporal transition structure may be preserved and changed when an area starts its mobility change, making complete dating an excellent rank. We have curved to a binding arrangement of phases. Control over energy, things, and knowledge, both together and independently, as well as

personal mobility, a wider range of decisions for discovery and designing one's life, can indicate a community's development (Zelinsky, 1971).

This theory addresses local demographic, economic, social, and cultural changes. In the case of my research, while addressing the effects of internal and external migration caused by the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project, which induced displacement and migration both internally and externally. The local population is placed inside and outside Gwadar city, acquiring lands for development and infrastructure. This may produce internal and external dislocation. The sociological implications are that the implementation of the mega project has marginalized and displaced the local population. There is also socioeconomic and political tension in the region, including changes in the labor market and occupational impact on transitional migration in the form of living. The external Baloch local community rapidly migrated to different regions of Pakistan and outside the country. Sociological implications of migration include an increase in the different changes in Gwadar due to this project. New cultural shifts increase as migrants from different areas with different leading opportunities, such as cultural changes related to social cohesion.

### **Research Design**

The research aims to understand the sociological implications of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and the impact of internal and external migration in Gwadar, Balochistan. This research aims to understand the large number of infrastructure and economic growth inspirations on social structure, cultural identities, migration patterns, and experiences, and the impacts on both migrant populations. Focusing on the lived experiences of persons affected by the CPEC project, this study attempts to hold the many significances of financial schemes and local frameworks on migration. This study highlights Gwadar's internal and external migration. Purposive sampling will select individuals with applicable features or backgrounds. This approach ensures that the sample consists of people with complex, nuanced views on the migration consequences of CPEC. The total sample size consisted of 14 respondents, comprised of males and females. This gender balance is indispensable for obtaining diverse migrant viewpoints. To provide systematic information on the encounters, contributors were affected by numerous socioeconomic circumstances. To understand the instant and long-term effects of the CPEC project, it is anticipated to involve both current migrants and long-term residents of Gwadar. Two main methods focus groups and semi-structured interviews were used for data collection. These methods seek to promote open communication and find in-depth information from participants. Each participant was interviewed separately and semi-structured to gain an understanding of their perspectives and experiences about migration and the CPEC project. The format's flexibility allows the interviewer to focus on the study's objectives while exploring specific areas of interest in more depth. To simplify the exposed presence of opinions, interviews were conducted directly with the person within a comfortable and independent environment, such as community centers or private spaces. Interviews were audio-recorded with the participant's consent to ensure proper documentation of their responses. The interview manual, the guide arranged, is constructed on the study's objectives and will include topics such as the determinants of migration (internal and external), challenges faced throughout the migration route, and social and cultural modifications in the new environment the access to infrastructure and vital services, particularly those affected by the CPEC project.

Focus groups helped us understand the collective experiences of people transferring from different backgrounds. This strategy may improve insights from participant interaction over one-on-one interviews. Each group included six to eight people to guarantee everyone could talk. Many people helped start talks among all the participants. Community centers or schools will provide fair conversations to ensure participant comfort and openness all capture focus group audio with participant agreement. This resource covers migration with the CPEC project, including social assistance, access to needed services, cultural similarities and changes, and discrimination. Thematic analysis identified, examined, and presented data patterns. Focus group and interview audio recordings were transcribed and written down. The first coding method will use a deductive approach to categorize transcriptions using themes matching the study's goals. The inductive technique will also help data themes develop, perhaps providing unexpected insights. Focus group and semi-structured interview responses were triangulated to ensure data authenticity and dependability. This strategy helped validate explanations and determine member engagement trends.

#### **Ethical considerations**

Ethics are crucial to this study. Everyone was asked for up-to-date consent to understand the study's goals and legal rights. All data were anonymized to protect participants' identities throughout the study. Participants will also be informed that they may leave the research without penalty. Maintaining ethical standards protects participants and ensures the study benefits sociology and migration studies.

#### **Limitations of the study**

The limited sample size of 14 respondents is a significant limitation of the study since it may hinder generalizability. The subjective nature of qualitative data may induce biases in clarification. Participants' accuracy in memory recollection may be influenced by recall bias, and cultural sensitivities may cause discomfort when discussing sensitive topics. Group dynamics in focus groups may sometimes lead to the overshadowing of quieter participants by more dominant speakers. Finally, the study examines a singular time frame, neglecting the evolving socio-political dynamics and migration patterns in Gwadar.

#### **Data Collection and Analysis**

Predominantly affecting internal and external migratory patterns, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a project in Gwadar, Balochistan, Pakistan, has menacingly transformed the socioeconomic scene of the area. Economic prospects linked to CPEC and inequalities and tensions inside the local Baloch population in Gwadar drive the arrival of migrants. This study found that the diverse array of migrants, skilled laborers from numerous regions of Pakistan, and foreign workers, chiefly from China, is improving resources and services. The Baloch local community in Gwadar faces numerous socioeconomic challenges, particularly in fishing and agriculture, and feels marginalized in a quickly changing economic environment. Many Baloch locals perceive the opportunities CPEC created as disproportionately accessible to foreigners. The financial impacts on the local communities have altered employment opportunities in sectors such as construction and logistics. Most jobs have been allocated to skilled and educated workers, putting the unskilled local labor force at a disadvantage. Socioeconomic stratification has increased, creating new labor classes distinguished between affluent migrants and struggling locals. In Gwadar, the Baloch community faces many economic issues linked to the China-

Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). This project has caused significant distress for the Baloch locals living in Gwadar.

The erosion of local communities from the inflow of outside migrants is among the most urgent problems. CPEC's mostly male workforce has changed local gender dynamics. The absence of women in the workforce and society calls into question family, social, and cultural systems. Women in the community face uncertainty and unpredictability when they question gender expectations. Social effects and family dynamics are affected by these changes; population and fast growth linked to CPEC have helped to fuel more criminality, drug misuse, and human trafficking. These difficulties cause major weaknesses and have caused local people to lose power. As their country evolves, the Baloch people have become increasingly accepted and estranged. The CPEC project causes residents to fear for their social cohesiveness, cultural identity, and livelihoods. Exclusion from development breeds unhappiness and resentment among migrants, hindering their collaboration with locals. These social problems require an inclusive approach from stakeholders and representatives. CPEC initiatives must involve the local community in planning and decision-making to ensure the local community in planning and decision-making to guarantee local voices and concerns are heard. Indigenous people feel less alienated and unhappy when they experience ownership.

#### **Sociological implications of (CPEC) Gwadar**

Gwadar is a small and insignificant port town in Balochistan that has become a commercial hub courtesy of the China-Pakistan Commercial Corridor (CPEC). Although the project is likely to boost the economy and the development of good infrastructure, it has notable effects on social setups, cultural interactions, and societies of the region. A notable social impact of CPEC is that it has transformed the social hierarchy that previously prevailed in Gwadar. Previously, small-scale trade and fishing were the biggest income generators amongst the locals. But with new economic opportunities, industrial and service-based jobs have been on the rise. This change has brought a new stratification between both skilled and unskilled employees in favor of foreigners and immigrants who have technical skills. Consequently, a good number of the population feel they have been left behind in the benefits of development. The economic impact of construction work has proved both beneficial and adverse to Gwadar, although not everyone benefits economically; people and fishers in particular have had to be relocated, negatively affecting culture and tradition. Among them are socioeconomic disparity, cultural change, and tensions related to migration, all reasons why we should apply a non-discriminatory approach to development policies, which will motivate the local population to be involved and share resources equally.

#### **Respondent 1**

*Before CPEC, we lived off the sea, and we were happy. At present, there are many fishing grounds restricted due to the work of ports. We can see the advancement around us, but we are not part of it. Prices have gone up, making survival that much more difficult.*

#### **Respondent 2**

*I have come to Gwadar in search of better jobs. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has created a few working opportunities in the construction and transportation industries. However, living in this place is expensive, and the level of competition is high. However, it is better than being jobless in my hometown.*

#### **Internal and external migration**

Implementing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiatives in Gwadar, Balochistan, has resulted in a significant increase in the number of migrant laborers, both domestic and international. The sudden decrease in population has had significant sociological consequences for the local community, bringing about both difficulties and possibilities. The burden on local resources and infrastructure is a significant challenge the local populace encounters. The significant influx of migrant labor has imposed a considerable strain on the current housing, healthcare, and sanitary infrastructure in Gwadar. As a result, increased competition for limited resources has often harmed the area's original residents. The cultural inequalities between the local Baloch group and the migrant laborers have also resulted in tensions and potential violence. The migrants, who come from various ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, have brought out new cultural practices and social norms with them that deliberately conflict with the traditional way of life in Gwadar, resulting in cultural abnormality and isolation among the native population. Another issue to consider is social stratification and the aggravation of economic inequalities. The CPEC projects have provided new job scenarios but have mainly favored the proficient and educated migrant staff, frequently harming the local unskilled labor pool. This thing degrades current socioeconomic inequalities and fosters anger within the community. The arrival of migrant workers has also considerably affected the local housing market, causing a sharp increase in the demand for rental assets and real estate. Subsequently, there has been an increase in real estate values, making it progressively challenging for the indigenous population to obtain houses, especially in the areas adjacent to the CPEC project sites. Furthermore, the gender inequality caused by the predominantly male migrant labour population has raised concerns about the social and cultural consequences. The underrepresentation of women in both the employees and the community may upset established gender roles and family structures, resulting in social disharmony and heightened vulnerability for women in the local area.

Adopting a comprehensive and all-encompassing strategy to tackle these sociological difficulties that emphasize governance and community involvement is imperative. Local authorities and policymakers should collaborate closely with the Gwadar community to develop plans that

1. Guarantee fair and equal access to resources and services for residents and migrant workers.
2. Encourage cultural interchange and integration initiatives to cultivate mutual comprehension and admiration.
3. Enact strategies to safeguard the rights and sustenance of the Indigenous community, including those who are socially disadvantaged.
4. Allocate resources to improve infrastructure and social services to address the growing population's demands adequately.

Encourage the local community to participate in the planning and decision-making procedures for CPEC projects.

**R3 said**

*The respondent, named Jamil Ahmad, is 26 years old. He hails from Gwadar, the primary urban center. During the conversation, he mentioned an identity problem and increasing alienation among the Baloch people, which could weaken their social unity and collective strength. The economic advantages resulting from the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) have worsened the pre-existing socioeconomic inequalities in Gwadar. The local populace frequently perceives an inequitable distribution of opportunities and resources because of the initiative, creating a new social stratification between the local community and the more affluent non-local participants.*

**R4 said**

*The respondents indicate that internally migrated people started coming from different regions. These individuals have had a sociological impact on the local community, both economically and mentally. These people have a mental illness and make the local community sociologically ill because the local community has different kinds of issues. The Gwadar city Baloch local community is crying for their economic resources, whether male, female, or small children.*

**R5 said**

*The respondent is Jan Babi, 38, who lives in Gwadar, Baluchistan, Pakistan. The research team interviewed her on May 20. Jan Babi is a lecturer at the Government Degree College in Gwadar. She discussed details about the migrant people coming from out of the country, who are coming from other regions of Pakistan. Due to these migrations, Jan Babi stated that our culture and languages, ethnicity, and norms, as well as those of the Baloch native people, are facing issues. Another point she makes about Gwadar is that the modern world knows about Pakistan's Balochistan War Zone region. More than 5,000 people come from China and work in different parts of Gwadar. Are there any developments in Gwadar? During the rental period, the state expressed interest in the Baloch local communities in Gwadar City.*

**R6 said**

*The respondent is Bilal, a 28-year-old student and social activist who lives in Gwadar. During our interview, he discussed the China-Pakistan economic corridor project, which aims to bring Gwadar's seaport under the control of the Baloch local community. Currently, Gwadar's seaport is under Chinese control. Their local community cannot continue because all economic resources have recently been closed to the local community members. The Pakistani state oppressed the Baloch for a year because he voiced his opposition to the outsiders taking over Gwadar, Balochistan.*

**R7 said**

*The researcher interviewed a small family that the Pakistani state forcibly removed from Gwadar, Balochistan. The interview was conducted via Zoom; data is available as of May 17, 2024. This family told Gwadar about the China-Pakistan economic corridor projects that had started in Gwadar, Balochistan. At this time, we all know Pakistan's Baluchistan is a War Zone province. The Pakistani state did not want the Baloch people to live happily in their motherland; this family told us that we lost more young boys who were students in Gwadar in the government boys' degree college in Gwadar. More and more people are by the state, which wants no Baloch to live in Gwadar. Indeed, over 45% of foreigners reside in Gwadar and conduct business there. The state is pushing the local community. The state grants all those rights to the local community.*

**Impact on Local Population**

The development of the Gwadar Port and its related infrastructure, including transportation networks and energy facilities, has generated many employment prospects for the indigenous population. Consequently, there has been a rise in employment rates within industries such as construction, transportation, and logistics. The increase in investment and economic activities in Gwadar has resulted in the growth and diversification of several businesses, such as fishing, tourism, and real estate. To create new opportunities for employment and business, offering extra sources of revenue for the local population. The establishment of the Gwadar Port has improved access to vital services such as electricity, water, and healthcare, improving overall quality of life. Gwadar's swift urbanization and advancement have resulted in the establishment

of new residential areas, business complexes, and other facilities. Property values have increased, providing opportunities for the local community to participate in the real estate market. Several indigenous tribes have relocated due to the rapid advancement, as numerous projects associated with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) have resulted in land purchases. These circumstances have raised questions about the equity of resettlement and compensation procedures. Concerns exist about the equitable distribution of CPEC's economic benefits among the local population. Specific segments of the community, especially marginalized populations, may have restricted access to the opportunities generated by the project (KARIM, 2022).

**R6 said**

*Another respondent migrated from Punjab, a Pakistani region, and then internally to Gwadar, Balochistan. Another respondent is 33 years old. During the interview, along with her family members, she focused on the CPEC infrastructure constructed by Pakistani white-collar workers. People are reaping the developmental benefits of Gwadar. The local community has lost everything they owned prior to this project.*

**R7 said**

*Another respondent, who migrated from Afghanistan, came to Gwadar, Balochistan, with her husband in 2014. She is 38 years old, married, has three children, has a matric pass, and works for the Gwadar Development Authority (GDA). While she said during the interview that Pakistan provides facilities, another woman said during the interview that her husband is working with the Chinese government.*

*On the other side, her husband runs his own business in Gwadar, Balochistan. The development gives us so many benefits. We have access to a variety of amenities. Infrastructure makes our economy.*

**Social and Cultural Impacts**

The rapid inflow of workers, shareholders, and companies from different regions of Pakistan and China has had a significant impact. This rise in migration considerably changed the existing social structure and distribution of power within the local community. The migrants from diverse cultural backgrounds also bring distinct languages, habits, and religious practices with them, which have resulted in cultural conflicts and tensions with the native Baloch community. The local community is worried and aggressive, feeling their cultural identity and way of life are in danger. Many local inhabitants, especially those who are spending their livelihood on traditional industries like fishing and agriculture, have experienced a decrease in their means of making a living due to a shift in the economic environment from traditional to the most advanced, which has interrupted the community's social and economic structures, raising the sense of dislocation and marginalization from their motherland. The arrival of external individuals has also shifted the social dynamics of this local group. The rapid social and economic changes resulting from CPEC have increased anxiety within the local population regarding the possible deprivation of their distinct cultural identity and traditional way of life, and raised concerns regarding the potential effects on the Baloch people's sense of belonging and shared identity. The rapid process of urbanization and migration patterns has also resulted in an increase in social problems, including crime, drug addiction, and human trafficking. These issues have significantly impacted the local population of Gwadar, worsening their marginalization and weakness. Given the intricate social and cultural consequences, it is imperative for the CPEC project to embrace a more comprehensive and culturally attuned strategy that actively involves the local population, honors

their customs and worries, and guarantees a fair allocation of the project's advantages. Neglecting to do so could result in additional social chaos and weaken the long-term feasibility and approval of the CPEC project among Gwadar residents (Rehman et al, 2022).

Another respondent of the researcher is 40 years old and works in Gwadar, Balochistan, Pakistan.

#### **R8 said**

*Another respondent migrated from Sindh to Gwadar, Balochistan, and the first issue was the cultural identity problem after adopting a new culture within the community. After that, the problem faced by the host societies. In Gwadar, Balochistan, multicultural people live in Baloch, Pashto, Afghan, Sindhi, and Punjabi. The native or owner of this land is the Baloch. Adopting an environment made it more difficult for us to face issues. Another thing in the war zone region, mostly Baloch, are the native people of this land, and the state is forcibly migrating them. The other communities are being adjusted in Gwadar. Another reason we were facing economic and water issues in Gwadar was that social life was at a total stop for some time after we adjusted to Gwadar. Still, we are facing the problem of cultural issues in Balochistan.*

Another respondent of the researcher is 25 years old and works in Gwadar, Balochistan, Pakistan.

#### **R9 said**

*Another respondent migrated from Afghanistan to Gwadar, Balochistan. During the interview, the respondent told us that over time, we have faced so many issues, such as cultural issues and language issues. Another thing is that their culture is totally different from ours in terms of norms, traditions, values, and living conditions. In Gwadar, Balochistan, we were facing economic issues and a lack of job opportunities.*

#### **Discussion and Conclusion**

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project, launched in Gwadar, Balochistan, has significant consequences for the local population of that region. This project mainly gives rise to the migration pattern that, in turn, creates tension for the local community. The findings from this research shed light on the connection between these migration patterns and their far-reaching consequences on the Baloch population in the host country. The economic and development activities in Gwadar have attracted an influx of migrants from different regions of Balochistan, both in and outside of the country. Rapid urbanization and demographic shifts have pressured the local community's resources and infrastructure. The migrant population has disrupted the old social structures and power dynamics within society, causing the indigenous Baloch community to feel marginalized and lose their cultural identity.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has not reasonably allocated its economic gains, formed new social strata and worsened the already existing socioeconomic inequalities. This has created hatred and tensions between the local Baloch community and the wealthier non-local participants. The impact of predominantly male migrant workers on gender dynamics and the social well-being of women in their community has also raised concerns. The strategic location of Gwadar for the CPEC project is much more significant. It attracts migrants from Pakistan and Afghanistan, which has further diversified the cultural and linguistic infrastructure of the local community. CPEC provides opportunities for people from all over the world to come to invest and gain, which not only has devastating consequences on migration but also changes the entire

infrastructure of Gwadar. The entrance of migrants from other cultural backgrounds shifts the traditional culture and rapidly assimilates the cultural fabrics of the local community.

One of the most important priorities should be the development of policies that will protect the rights and livelihoods of the local Baloch community, including those who are socially disadvantaged. One possible solution to this problem is to allocate resources to develop infrastructure, housing, and social services to satisfy the requirements of a growing population. Further, it is essential for the stakeholders to actively engage the local community in the planning and decision-making processes that are associated with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). This can solve the problems and distribute the project's benefits fairly and effectively among the local Baloch community.

The disturbance caused by the CPEC project among the local community has increased the sense of being marginalized and isolated in their homeland. A change in the social fabric of the local community is due to the emergence of a new culture, which the migrants bring along with them from their place of origin. All these situations create a sense of inclusion for the host community, giving birth to worries and tension. Such concerns are due to the loss of their unique cultural heritage from their ancestors. The possible long-term impact on the Baloch people's communal sense of belonging and shared identity has raised concerns. The rapid development of urbanization and the arrival of migrants have also led to an increase in social problems such as criminal activity, drug addiction, and human trafficking. These issues have significantly harmed the local population.

### **Conclusion**

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project in Gwadar, Balochistan, has significantly impacted the Baloch local community. The consequences have been evident concerning in- and out- migration trends. These movement drifts have had far-reaching effects on the local Baloch population, and this study has provided vital insights into the complex mechanisms at play in these migration trends. The advent of different migrants around the world to collaborate and work with CPEC projects increases the marginalization of the local community. The people of Gwadar are illiterate or less educated. They spend their lives adhering to traditional norms and values; for them, things left behind by their ancestors are blessings. They spend their livelihoods fishing and farming in Gwadar port; this is all happiness. When the CPEC project was launched, it offered a considerable socioeconomic shift, and the project was open for everyone to come and work.

Over time, when workers from different areas of Pakistan, also from China, came to their homeland, it decreased job opportunities for the local people because they were unskilled and illiterate. Moreover, many families are compelled to leave their homes to acquire land for the CPEC project. Further, the accommodation of the upcoming population was another tension as it caused a demographic shift in Gwadar. The loss of cultural identity and linguistic assimilation were other factors that created a sense of marginalization of the Baloch ethnicity. These situations bring the local community to a sense of isolation or alienation and the forceful inclusion of their homeland without consent, which is another big shock for them. The unequal distribution of economic advantages brought about by the CPEC project and social stratification has worsened.

The local Baloch population views itself as excluded from the opportunities and resources created by the project. This has generated a sense of discontent among the local population,

hypothetically depressing the long-term sustainability and reception of the CPEC program in Gwadar, Balochistan. Several social issues, including criminal activity, drug misuse, and human trafficking, have become more widespread because of the rapid urbanization and social transformation that the China- Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project introduced. These challenges have excessively affected the local Baloch community, worsening their marginalization and vulnerability to the outside world. In order to handle such a situation, should the local Baloch community's equal participation in the development and implementation of projects associated with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor be ensured?

(CPEC), Stakeholders and policymakers should interact actively with the community and engage them in the overall developmental process.

To create a sense of ownership and belonging among the native community. Realizing policies that promote social cohesion, safeguard cultural properties, and ensure a realistic delivery of profits gained from this project is vital. Investment in infrastructure, social services, and community development can foster communal understanding and collaboration between the native Baloch and migrant groups. These investments can help mitigate the negative impact created earlier by locals. The results of this research highlight how important it is to have a complete hold of the intricate correlation between migratory patterns and their effects. In Gwadar and other regions impacted by large-scale infrastructure projects, this knowledge can guide the creation of more effective policies and programs for sustainable development if they can negotiate the complexities and encourage inclusive growth that is to the benefit of all people in the region, if they give priority to the demands and concerns of local communities.

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