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China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Role of Teachers in Career Counseling of Students at Higher Education Level

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ABSTRACT

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a blessing for Pakistan and China. China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) appears as a major 'Prosperity Tool' which can help Pakistan to overcome its economic problems. CPEC has been researched up till now in various trade and commerce fields but its most important linkage with education was hard to find. This study was aimed to identify the role of university teachers in developing awareness and providing guidance and counseling to their students regarding career opportunities existing in the projects of CPEC. All the teachers of public and private universities of city Lahore were the population of the study. A sample of 150 teachers was selected randomly from different departments of two public and two private universities of city Lahore. A self-developed and validated instrument was used to identify the role of teachers. Reliability index (Chronbach Alpha) of the instrument was $\alpha = .82$. Results showed that teachers were playing their role to make students aware of the CPEC projects. They were also providing counseling informally to their students at higher education level regarding the career opportunities existing in the CPEC projects. There was no significant difference found in the role of teachers in providing career counseling to their students at higher education level about CPEC projects with respect to their gender, residential area, type of university, designation and years of working experience. It was recommended that universities should arrange seminars, workshops, conferences, panel discussions and brainstorming sessions for the sensitization of their faculty members so that they could create awareness among their students regarding CPEC and take measures for their career counseling.



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1. Introduction

Pakistan and China are committed and very old allies. Their strong diplomatic relationship has laid the foundations for standing by each other through all thick and thin and working for their national well-being and benefits. Pakistan is located at the intersection of South Asia, West Asia, Central Asia and Western China. Pakistan's geographical position makes it strategically significant for world trade which provides the shortest way to China towards Europe and Middle East and plays an important role in boosting economy (Arshad, & Haidong, 2017). To meet her energy needs, China is greatly dependent on Middle Eastern states. At present, Pakistan and China have an agreement on building an economic corridor with a huge investment. This is for the first time in Chinese history that it has invested in a foreign country so generously. With China Pakistan Economic Corridor and Gwadar port being functional the shipping cost would be reduced and delivery time for China to reach Middle East and beyond will be reduced (Javed, 2016). Through physical roads and railways and oil and gas pipelines, the economy and trade will be increased, regional integration will be strengthened, transport and communication infrastructure will be expanded and energy shortage will be overcome (Mishra, 2016).

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a dream trade vision of China towards the accomplishment of its philosophy of expanding peace and harmony. By and large it is so far China's biggest trade investment abroad. Central Asia and the Middle East will be at the shortest distance to China through CPEC, where Gwadar is offering strategic access to Chinese containers in the Middle East, Gulf, Africa, and Europe through the Indian Ocean (Ali & Qazi, 2018). More precisely it will also magnify China's lookout role towards the deeper sea limits beyond Iran which is less than an hour's distance from Gwadar enhancing China's crucial influence towards its Western Borders. This project has a strong military commitment as well on the Pakistani side.

CPEC is not only a network of roads, highways, railway network but it's a combine package of different projects including long including rail-road network from Kasghar to Gwadar the construction of 12-13 special economic zone along with the corridor and transport, communication sector energy sector investment energy sector and industry sector to people to people cooperation that will fulfill the energy and other requirement of Pakistan (Arshad, & Haidong, 2017; Ali, Ali, Ali, Raza, & Niazi, 2018). Initially the cost of this project was estimated 18-20 billion dollars then it increased to 32 billion dollars and then now the total investment is \$ 46 billion. Total Investment of China is about \$ 46 billion. The breakup of CPEC projects portfolio investment is given in following table.

Table 1: The Breakup of CPEC Projects Portfolio Investment

Name of Projects	Cost Us \$ Million
Energy Priority Projects	33728
Infrastructure	11636
Gwadar Projects	792.6
Other Projects	44
	46.2006

Both the countries are eyeing towards their interest, Chawla, (2017). Towards the Pakistani side, this project worth \$46 Bn is to build or upgrade a whole new system to preserve financial and industrial framework while towards the Chinese side it is approaching the world through trade from the closest land and sea route. Whereas, highlighting the significance of CPEC he further comments that the CPEC, was introduced in 2014 and is seen as a "game-changer" which can advantage both Pakistan and China. A major advantage to China through CPEC is access to the Arabian Sea. Apart from this, Gwadar Harbour and the Gwadar- Kashgar gas pipeline that will connect Bay of Bengal to Yunnan Area in China through Myanmar are key perspectives of CPEC that can offer assistance to China to overcome its Malacca Problem (Rakisits, 2019).

The project which is initiated with the collaboration of both the countries, brings with it a huge infrastructure, interconnecting roads/ railway routes, sophisticated communication system, unfinished gas supplies, cluster of industries, trade and commerce and a variety of power generation projects and technological advances (Aftab, 2016; Kanwal, Chong, & Pitafi, 2019). CPEC will boom the Chinese trade, expected to expand all over the globe and by adopting the route through Gwadar it will save a lot of automobile and shipment cost with a safe and shorter route replacing the straits of Malacca (Ali, 2015; Ali, Mi, Shah, Shah, Khan, Ullah, & Bibi, 2018). Gwadar Harbour is

considered one of China's major strategic step abroad, aiming to "assist China's civilian and Army activities" within the region. CPEC is not only benefitting China in security issues but it is also to the financial wellbeing of northwest China. No other project of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) "has the prospects to revive the economy of its [China's] far-flung and restive Xinjiang province." Lessening separatist opinions in Xinjiang may be a need that China trusts CPEC can offer through financial advancement (Menhas, Mahmood, Tanchangya, Safdar, & Hussain, 2019; Ramachandran, 2015; Syed & Tariq, 2018).

To achieve technological and economic efficiency we need an education that must be practically oriented and should specify a rightful place for every person in society. Brighter education reaps brighter future (Burki, Ali, & Burki, 2019). The nations who understood the importance of education thirty years ago are amongst the developed countries of the world today. This means that education has to play a crucial part in the times to come. The sooner we realize it better it will be for us (Maekae, 2013). Afolabi and Loto (2012) while explaining the above mentioned facts state that each and every person acquires not the 'available' but the 'needed' education. Therefore, the place they occupy in the society is the rightful place for them. Today's ascendancy of nations over the other nations is measured through the economic yardstick. Policies are guided by the major 'prosperity tool' and rankings are awarded to the nations who achieve their economic goals in a specific time frame under any type of circumstances.

Afolabi and Loto (2012) while explaining state that a well-conceived and enunciated educational reform caters to each and every individual of any country. It ensures that no manpower is wasted to provide for sufficient labor and each individual possesses his or her legitimate position to improve the development of the society. The development of a country critically depends on its human capital as confirmed from global consensus that human resource needs to be capitalized for the national development of a country (Farooq, Gul, & Khan, 2018). While considering human capital as a strategically important component of development, the role of women as an important component of human capital is also needed to harvest the benefits that come from socio-economic development and progressive economies (Ahmad, et al., 2017; Magsi, 2016). Gender participation and equality are proven key drivers for prosperity. Minimizing gender disparity increases output and economic growth thus, economic development shows a strong and positive correlation with women empowerment in a society. The evidence also suggests that women participation has led to improved governance and economic benefits. Education could be a pivotal factor in any country. Being a major tool in human capital advancement, it plays a basic part in long-term efficiency and development at both miniaturized scale and large scale levels (Kingdom, Orji, & Job, 2013). It is the education that supplies the required labor for national development and improvement.

2. Rationale of the Study

The education system of any country plays the role of a backbone for her social, political, economic, moral, and cultural uplift. Teachers being the builders of a nation owe the duty of guiding new generations about new trends, issues, prospects and opportunities to secure their future and make them successful members of the society. Keeping in view the highly crucial importance of the CPEC for Pakistan, it was hypothesized that the role of teachers in providing awareness, guidance and counseling about their career spurt should be explored, gaps be identified and necessary measures be taken to enable students at higher education level to take maximum benefit of the projects initiated under the umbrella of China Pakistan Economic Corridor.

2.1 Objectives of the Study

The study was conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To explore the role of teachers to create awareness about the projects of CPEC among students at higher education level.
2. To identify the role of teachers in providing counseling to students at higher education level about the projects of CPEC.
3. To give recommendations to teachers and their respective departments to make the students well aware of the potential benefits of CPEC at higher education level.

2.2 Hypotheses of the Study

Following assumptions were made to achieve the objectives of the study:

- H₁:** There is a significant difference between the role of male and female teachers in providing career counseling to students at higher education level about the CPEC projects.
- H₂:** There is a significant difference in the role of teachers in providing career counseling to students at higher education level about CPEC projects on the basis of their area.
- H₃:** There is a significant difference in the role of teachers in providing career counseling to students about CPEC projects on the basis of their universities.
- H₄:** There is a significant difference in the role of teachers in providing career counseling to students at higher education level about CPEC projects on the basis of their designation.
- H₅:** There is a significant difference in the role of teachers in providing career counseling to students at higher education level about CPEC projects on the basis of their experience.

3. Methodology

This quantitative study based on a descriptive research design. Population included all the teachers working in the public and private universities of city Lahore in Pakistan. A sample of 150 teachers was selected randomly from different departments of two public and two private universities of city Lahore. Only 149 faculty members (74 males and 75 females) participated. Self-developed and validated instrument was used to identify the role of teachers in providing awareness and counseling to students about CPEC projects. The instrument of the study was a questionnaire containing 36 statements on five point Likert type scale which was validated by a panel of three experts in the field. The reliability index (Cronbach Alpha) was $\alpha = .82$. Researchers personally collected data from the faculty members after obtaining their consent. Descriptive (mean & standard deviation) and inferential statistical techniques (independent sample t-test & one-way ANOVA) were applied. The details are given in data analysis.

4. Data Analysis

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Variables of the Study

Variables	Category	N	Total
Gender	Male	74	149
	Female	75	
Universities	University of the Punjab	49	149
	University of Education	42	
	Government College University	38	
	University of Lahore	20	
Designation	Professor	13	149
	Associate Professor	36	
	Assistant Professor	28	
	Lecturer	72	
Experiences in years	5-10	64	149
	11-15	49	
	16-20	13	
	21-25	9	
	26-30	14	
Area	Lahore	97	149
	Sialkot	8	
	Chonian	16	
	Raheem yar khan	9	
	Behawal Nagar	3	
	D. G. Khan	7	
	Gujrat	6	
	Bahawal Pur	3	

Table presented the demographical information of participants in this study. The details showed that 74 faculty members were male and 75 were female. Forty-nine faculty members belonged to the University of the Punjab, forty-

two were the faculty members of University of Education, thirty-eight were in GC University and rest of the participants were faculty members of the University of Lahore. The details regarding the designation of the respondents are also given in which thirteen were professors, thirty six associate professors, and twenty eight were assistant professors and rest of the majority participants were lecturer. According to experience of the participants having in their field, majority of them were falling in 5-10 years of experience category, forty-nine were in 11-15 years category, thirteen participants were in 16-20 years category, a few of faculty members were in 21-25 years of experience category and rest of the participants were falling in 26-30 category. The information about the residential area of respondents was also given. Most of the respondents were living in the area of Lahore, sixteen respondents belonged to Chonian, nine respondents were from Raheem yar khan, seven participants were from D. G. Khan and rest of the faculty members belonged to the area of Gujrat and Bahawal Pur.

Table 3: The role of Teachers to Create Awareness and Providing Counseling to Students at Higher Education Level about CPEC Projects

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Awareness	3.54	.57
Career Counseling	3.32	.89

Results in the table showed the mean scores for the role of teachers to create awareness among students ($M=3.54$, $SD=.57$) and providing them career counseling ($M=3.32$, $SD=.89$) about the CPEC Projects. It was concluded that the teachers were making efforts and playing their role to make students aware of the importance of CPEC projects. They were also providing career counseling to students regarding the benefits of CPEC projects at higher education level.

Table 4: Independent Sample t-test to Identify Mean Difference between the Role of Male and Female Teachers in Providing Career Counseling to Students about the CPEC Projects

Variables	<i>N</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i> - value	Sig.
Male	74	148	21.81	1.35	.179
Female	75		20.63		

Table indicated the results of independent sample t-test to identify the mean difference between the role of male and female teachers in providing career counseling to students about the CPEC projects. Table values depicted the mean difference between the awareness of male ($M = 21.81$) and female ($M = 20.63$) was not statistically significant $t(148) = 1.351$, $p = .179$. So, on the basis of these results research hypothesis that " there is a significant difference between the role of male and female teachers in providing career counseling to students at higher education level about the CPEC projects." is rejected. It was concluded that both male and female teachers were playing similar role in providing career counseling to students at higher education level about the CPEC projects. In this way, students at university level will be able to get career opportunities existing in the projects of CPEC.

Table 5: ANOVA to Identify Mean Difference in the Role of Teachers in Providing Career Counseling to Students at Higher Education Level about CPEC Projects on the basis of their Area

Variable	<i>N</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Area	149	7	.45	.871

Table illustrated the results of ANOVA to identify mean difference in the role of teachers in providing career counseling to students at higher education level about CPEC projects on the basis of their area. It is evident that the difference is not significant in the role of teachers residing in different areas $F(7) = .447$, $p = .871$. On the basis of these results the research hypothesis that " there is a significant difference in the role of teachers in providing career counseling to students at higher education level about CPEC projects on the basis of their area." is rejected and it was concluded that teachers living in different areas like Lahore, Sialkot, Chonian , Raheem yar khan, Bahawal Nagar, D. G. Khan, Gujrat, and Bahawal Pur were playing similar role in the counseling of their students about different career opportunities in CPEC projects.

Table 6: ANOVA to Identify Mean Difference in the Role of Teachers in Providing Career Counseling to Students about CPEC Projects on the basis of their Universities

Variable	<i>N</i>	<i>df.</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Universities	149	4	2.18	.074

Table presented the results of ANOVA to identify mean difference in the role of teachers in providing career counseling to students about CPEC projects on the basis of their universities. It is evident that mean difference is not statistically significant in the role of teachers teaching in different universities $F(4) = 2.183, p = .074$. On the basis of these results the research hypothesis that "there is a significant difference in the role of teachers in providing career counseling to students about CPEC projects on the basis of their universities." is rejected. It was concluded that faculty members working in the University of the Punjab, University of Education, Government College University and University of Lahore were making efforts and playing similar role in providing counseling to their students about different career opportunities in CPEC projects.

Table 7: ANOVA to Identify Mean Difference in the Role of Teachers in Providing Career Counseling to Students about CPEC Projects on the Basis of their Designation

Variable	<i>N</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Designation	149	3	1.76	.157

Table depicted the results of ANOVA to identify mean difference in the role of teachers working on different designation in providing career counseling to students at higher education level about CPEC projects. It is apparent that mean difference is not statistically significant in the role of teachers serving in different teaching designations $F(3) = 1.76, p = .157$. On the basis of these results the research hypothesis that "there is a significant difference in the role of teachers in providing career counseling to students at higher education level about CPEC projects on the basis of their designation." is rejected. It was concluded that lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors, and professors were playing similar role in the counseling of their students about different career opportunities in CPEC projects.

Table 8: ANOVA to Identify Mean Difference in the Role of Teachers in Providing Career Counseling to Students about CPEC Projects on the basis of their Years of Experience

Variable	<i>N</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Experience	149	4	.35	.842

Table illustrated the results of ANOVA to identify mean difference in the role of teachers in providing career counseling to students at higher education level about CPEC projects on the basis of their years of experience. It is evident that the difference is not significant in the role of teachers due to their length of service $F(4) = .35, p = .842$. On the basis of these results the research hypothesis that "there is a significant difference in the role of teachers in providing career counseling to students at higher education level about CPEC projects on the basis of their experience." is rejected. It was concluded that teachers falling in the 5 to 10 years of experience category, 11 to 15 years, 16 to 20 years, 21 to 25 years and 26-30 years of experience category were playing similar role in the counseling of their students about different career opportunities in CPEC projects.

5. Conclusion

This study proposed to investigate the role of university teachers in developing awareness and providing counseling to their students regarding career opportunities existing in the projects of C-PEC. It was concluded that the teachers were making efforts and playing their roles to make students aware of the importance of CPEC projects. They were also providing career counseling to students regarding the benefits of CPEC projects at higher education level. Both male and female teachers were playing similar roles in providing career counseling to students at higher education level about the CPEC projects. In this way, students at university level will be able to get career opportunities existing in the projects of CPEC. Results also revealed that teachers living in different areas like Lahore, Sialkot, Chonian, Raheem yar khan, Behawal Nagar, D. G. Khan, Gujrat, and Bahawal Pur were playing similar roles in the counseling of their students at higher education level about different career opportunities in CPEC projects. Furthermore, faculty members working in the University of the Punjab, University of Education, Government College University and University of

Lahore were making efforts and playing similar role in providing counseling to their students about different career opportunities existing in the projects of CPEC. It was also observed that lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors, and professors were also not different in playing their roles regarding the counseling of their students about different career opportunities in CPEC projects. Teachers falling in the 5 to 10 years of experience category, 11 to 15 years, 16 to 20 years, 21 to 25 years and 26-30 years of experience category were also playing similar role in the counseling of their students about different career opportunities existing in the CPEC projects.

6. Recommendations

The following recommendations were made on the basis of major findings:

1. The universities should arrange seminars, workshops, conferences, panel discussions and brainstorming sessions for the sensitization of their faculty members so that they could create awareness among their students regarding CPEC and take measures for their career counseling.
2. Literature on CPEC in the form of booklets, pamphlets, banners should be disseminated for the awareness and career counseling of students.
3. A campaign on social media such as on Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter etc. can enhance the information about CPEC.
4. Teachers should arrange counseling sessions to make students aware of the benefits and opportunities existing in the different projects of CPEC for them and for their country.

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