

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BY SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSIONS IN CONNECTION WITH CHINA PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

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## ARTICLE DETAILS

## Article History:

Received 17 November 2021

Accepted 20 December 2021

Available online 23 December 2021

## ABSTRACT

It is a blessing for Pakistan's economy, an umbrella project China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a great opening for Pakistan as well as a game-changer in three aspects: social, environmental, and for its future economy. Both countries are depending upon the achievement of this mega project and have been trying to proper implementation as they attained numerous benefits from this creativity. In the context of this, this paper emphasizes how to unite sustainable development features socio-economic and environmental factors and count vital speculations. To explore sustainable development, this study enlightens, converse, and distinguishes the social outlooks via socio-economic and environmental dimensions in connection with this corridor. The submission thoroughly clarifies sustainable development economics linked with CPEC from local to the national level and explains the prerequisites development bond between China-Pakistan. The paper has been followed by a previous literature review demonstrating an address on the sustainability standard, impulsive governance, and allied special concerns. The theoretic viewpoints existing in the extent literature are used to scrutinize three significant sustainability initiatives. Social-economic range and, tactical importance has emphasized a combined awareness and are coming up with new approaches of leading corporators to come in the central Asia marketplaces. Hence, giving a contribution to the advanced development, exploitation, and utilization of effective economic chances, dominating the race for the comprehensive commercial markets. Concluding the study assimilates sustainability relating to the outline of the CPEC projects and delivers an excess of understanding. Recommendations are offered for development to the investors and administrators of community and private corporations concerning commitment, enactment, and integration of the sustainability approach in Pakistan.

## KEYWORDS

Sustainable development, CPEC, Sustainability

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The term sustainable development was reported by to encounter the requirements of the current beyond conciliating the capability of coming next generations to chance their necessities (Brundtland et al., 1987). The continuous inter and mutual connections between regions, countries, and cultures by the socio-economic system have frequently progressed and human living standards are advanced. A group researchers reported that in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, different aspects i.e., religion, migration, capital flows, work, free trade, development in technology have positively indicated development and growth pattern in technical, economic, and cultural viewpoints (Coulibaly et al., 2018). Sustainability and sustainable development are interchangeable terms; however sustainable development states that the transformation process to achieve the sustainable targets (Weingaertner and Moberg, 2014).

The ability to sustain describes a final output attainable on time. Sustainability mingles the whole procedure of sustainable development (Marcuse, 1998). In the connected regions, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is topmost in many concerned interests. From the past 1960s, the Pakistan and China tie has enhanced and frequently, both

countries are availing from concrete relations in different sectors. In 1972, this bond was tenable after the creation of the Karakoram route. The corridor is major progress of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in the context of regional and district level development and will keep a positively essential position in the future (Irshad et al., 2015). Pakistan-China trade and cooperation have been developing very fast since mid of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Both countries took initiative to enhance integration and agreed to free trade in 2006. These trade deals cover five main sectors, multi-billion dollars schemes, contribution in human capital investment, trade promotion, set-up of different energy infrastructures, politically aware, and man-to-man conversation schemes. The BRI led to many noteworthy socio-economic effects on the growth of Pakistan.

Moreover, the CPEC vision, to run more effectively intercommunication, mode of conveying and transportation as well as to expand consolidation at the international market without delay, and make industrialization competitiveness more advanced. Furthermore, over the industrialization sector, chances of opportunities, employment will be greatly enlarged in Pakistan (Naz et al., 2018). Indeed, with an extensive study of the social importance of sustainability in literature, there is a big gap to contemplate

## Quick Response Code



## Access this article online

Website:  
[www.egnes.com.my](http://www.egnes.com.my)

DOI:  
10.26480/egnes.01.2022.06.09

the suggestion and elucidation of sustainable development. Therefore, this study revising and opening the tree that how social and economic sustainability is conceivable via vantage point of the sustainable development of the corridor including social, economic, and environmental sustainability in both countries. The study covering intellectual, research, and an integrative relating to the CPEC and explaining punitive attention of the development and make it conceivable for both China-Pakistan to start the project more competently and excellently. The script realizes the concept of communal and social sustainability to identify the fundamentals of interdisciplinary areas that assist in the explanation and implication of sustainability.

It displays that economic sustainable development relies on social and environmental sustainability. Hence, the economic sustainable development projecting via social-environmental sustainability, to make it distinctive in economic sustainability, the auditors employed and to uphold capitals from past decades. They give permits to traders and merchants to have a clear and practical interpretation of deals and also expand powers without decreasing their capacity to accelerate exchange (Goodland, 1995). Environmental sustainability endures the comprehensive life support system forever. The source extents of universal ecosystems bring water-air-energy and nutrition, the foodstuffs including wastes and trash. There is a huge amount of these sources including sink bulks but limited. Sustainability needs to be sustained these sources and bulks rather than disregarded. Having concern for the well-being of human life is the basic principle of humanity's exploration for environmental and ecological sustainability. A person's life relies upon different species including plant-breeding, nutrition, and its security, oxygen without air pollution, protection and safety cover, waste acclimation, and additional environment sustain facilities (Goodland, 1995). Keeping in view, this interpretation not only focuses on the sustainability of the CPEC project but also on the interaction of socio-economic and environmental sustainability that make available a deeper understanding of the CPEC project.

## 2. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Although social development should go bring together, Pakistan's development in recent decades has not given paid attention to balanced social development, primarily the reason behind it is the high level of population growth. aftermath, many social and economic clues do not meet the significant level of economic success, averaging 4% per year. Considering this issue, sustainable development goals are a key priority for the country. Policies, agendas, proposals for sustainable development in Pakistan with remarkable goals and a positive timeline have been excessive. So far, the country has suffered severe delays in the implementation of development projects due to inadequate oversight and errors in project review (Kakakhel, 2011). Socio-economic and environmental sustainability extents are combined to frame sustainable development (Goodland, 1995).

The United Nations (UN), a universal global organization, implement sustainable progress as the managing excellence standard for economic, social, and environmental development, meets its needs without compromise, and promotes the fair allocation of natural resources, costs, and benefits of moderate and economic stability between the countries (Carroll, 1995). Sustainability ultimatum not only the protection of natural resources but also the provision of economic relief to current and future generations. Sustainability is known as a key status and standard of control for an existing civilization that has a growing moral connotation of existing and imminent groups (Atlas, 2016). Three elementary dimensions (social-economic & environmental) have been engaged and signed as sustainability provisions to consider human betterment, economic growth, capital, and natural resources (Anwar, 2011). This study explores sustainability considering three key indicators economic, social, and environmental sustainability in Pakistan concerning CPEC and a thorough discussion of the essential objects of sustainable development.

### 2.1 Economic Sustainable Development

A sustainable economy offers a high amount of general well-being with practically minimal resources and environmental damage. The overall demand for natural resources should be less than the natural renewable supply of sources (biocapacity) for economic stability. Economic sustainability is inseparably related to both environmental and social sustainability. Economic sustainability is associated with socio-environmental sustainability and confirmed limits to growth. According to a study, if natural resources are used beyond the limits, they will not be economically sustainable, and society depend on this phenomenon that drove progress in the past (Meadows et al., 1972). The corridor is an integration of various potential sectors, i.e., roads and subway, railway lines, transportation, infrastructure, and industrial development projects.

Trade delivery to and from China through CPEC has been reduced in time by 30 days. CPEC reduced shipping costs and avoidance of disputed routes: Taiwan, India, Indonesia, Philippines, and Vietnam (Chowdery, 2015). The Karakorum known as the K-2 highway, is a primary part of the corridor's project and is the only single land route between Pakistan and Kashgar city (China), and is likely to significantly increase traffic after the construction of the CPEC (Sareen, 2016). It is concluded that the CPEC project facilitates efficient, time-saving, and cost-effective trade and promotes the road and railways network in terms of transportation and conveyance, which is increasingly linked to China. Refers in addition, CPEC promotes the launch of various services and enhances trade competitiveness, which is important for economic growth (Naz et al., 2018).

CPEC has directly promoted the agricultural sector as this sector is generally the largest source of employment and income in the country. This sector is considered the backbone of less economic regions and countries. CPEC is expected to further strengthen the agricultural sector in Pakistan. Thus, CPEC proved as an effective turning point economically, and a key point in accelerating growth and productivity, and reducing poverty. Due to this mega project, Pakistan became a great economic hub in central and south Asia. It boosts economic growth in developing infrastructure, providing jobs and business to the people, and boosting power generation projects. That is substantial for Pak-China, and neighbouring countries (Ali et al., 2017). Pakistan is considered one of the top tourist destinations in the world. Unfortunately, some of the challenges are hindering this industry including lack of coordination among countries to promote tourism, weak or poor roads, and railway connectivity, safety issues and security problems, no developed infrastructure, no plan for leisure industry framework, low publicizing/marketing, and low administration efficiency have affected the travel business.

Pakistan is nature's lover's dream. It is for beyond from the countries. Protecting the natural environment, through the management of ongoing projects. Pakistan is becoming successful in this industry and making laudable improvements in tourist destinations. The corridor will find a quick solution to its problems by enlightening the people and their position. Various unique economic zones have been formed in different areas of CPEC road via KPK, Gilgit-Baltistan formerly northern areas, Punjab, Sindh, and Baluchistan. Table 1 explains outlines of a plan that will ultimately put forward, success to the projects of potential multinational shareholders and make possible Pakistan's economic development, including in neighbouring countries Iran, India, and Afghanistan. If the expected results are achieved through this corridor, these neighbouring countries may agree to participate in the projects of CPEC. Therefore, this would reduce incredulity among countries, especially in South Asia.

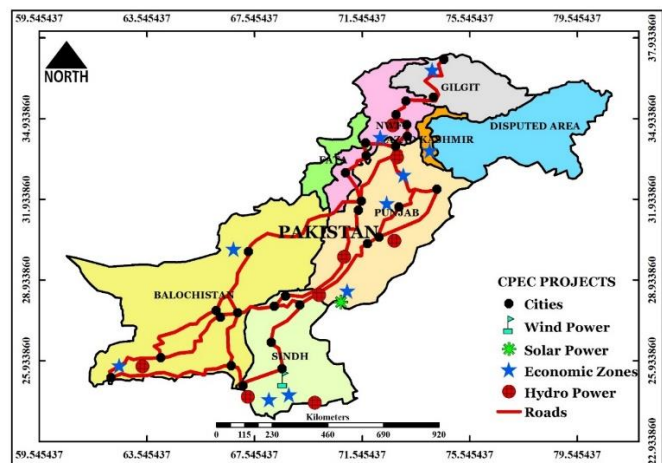


Figure 1: CPEC National Highway Network and CPEC projects in Pakistan

### 2.2 Social Sustainable Development

In recent decades, social progress and growth in Pakistan have not been stable, mainly due to high levels of population growth. Social indicators do not go with significant levels of economic growth in Pakistan. They give averaging 4 percent per year in the country. Hence, these make the SDGs of key importance for the country. In 2014, The human development index (HDI) reported that from 187<sup>th</sup> countries, Pakistan ranks 146<sup>th</sup> in South Asia with the lowest social indicators (HDR, 2015). These indicators have adverse impacts on labor force efficiency and sustainable development potential. Pakistan is facing the most severe challenges are the fulfilment of primary education and public expenses on health. While in some areas, there is also slight growth and progress of gender gaps in education, health, and employment.

But the governmental statistics claimed a reduction in poverty and vulnerability in the rural population due to severe crises in the agricultural sector. There is a dire need that the public sector should extend social security and shelter for the poverty-stricken and enhance excellence in the education and health sector. Pakistan's economic growth has been remarkable in past, despite it being delayed because of unfavourable weather conditions, natural disasters, division of the country and war with the neighbour and with terrorist activities, and also due to variability in politics in the region. Economic growth was driven by agricultural productivity and industrial growth, investment in urban areas, and grants from foreign governments. Pakistan suffers from social, economic, and environmental problems due to the unproductive management of physical as well as human resources. Sustainable ideas are probably the only alternative to expunge these problems.

### 2.3 Environmental Sustainable Development

Climate change has become a major concern in Pakistan. Water-Air-Soil pollution is widespread. The efforts at the reversal of forests diminution, mangroves and, lakes are insufficient. A group researchers reported that the cost of environmental degradation in Pakistan is not less than 60 percent of the GDP and this cost heavily impacts on poorest (Martin et al., 2006). Only environmental sustainable conditions for social sustainability can be managed by strong civil society and organized public engagement. Cultural uniqueness, public oneness, decorum, sociability, assortment, mortification, patience, devotion institution, multiplicity, and broadly recognized standards. Following the social capital elements to measure carefully but crucial for social sustainability. Many human capital assets i.e., health, nutrition, and individual education are accepted as components of economic development (Goodland, 1995). The ground fact is that the institutions related to the environment are poorly managed, lack consideration, failure, no coordination, inefficient funds for the institutions, mismanaged, and poor staff. These arrangements are unable to monitor the natural resources and the increasing risks of pollution (Kakakhel, 2011). Concluding, the biggest challenge for sustainable development in Pakistan.

## 3. CHINA PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (CPEC)

Li Keqiang, the Chinese prime minister, first expressed his desire for the CPEC during his visit to Pakistan in 2013. The aim was to connect Kashgar in western China with the Arabian seaport of Gawadar in Baluchistan province, which was later formally approved in July 2013 when the Pakistan prime minister visited Beijing, China (Ibrahim, 2017). The amount for the construction of CPEC was \$46 billion for a final agreement. The corridor stretched over 2700km from Gawadar to Kashgar and is expected to complete in 15 years through different phases firstly 2015-2020, 2020-2025, and 2025-230 respectively. The entire region is expected to be reshaped and integrated into three parts namely i. central Asia, ii. the middle east, and iii. Africa; the named the Silk Road Initiative or (BRI) Belt and Road Initiative. This initiative, a gambit corridor is a game-changer to make the region and country economically viable and business-friendly.

Numerous large-scale investments are being made in infrastructure, energy (electricity, gas, and other power stations), and industrial growth such as (steel mill, economic zones, parks, minerals processing) projects, which are looking forward as well as to accelerating the country's targeted economic growth. The CPEC project consists of various systems of infrastructure such as road and rail networks and pipelines. The government has determined to represent three alternative highways, the western route, which is passing through Baluchistan and KPK, the eastern route between Sindh and Punjab province, and the central route through the whole of Pakistan represented in Figure 1 (Zulfikar, 2016). Additional transportation plans included the edifice of various railway tracks, even though the progression of current tracks has already begun.

### 3.1 Expectations of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

CPEC is the most all-embracing project between Pakistan and China (Haraguchi et al., 2019). It is not a solo mission; it is the nexus of numerous numbers of schemes between the neighbouring countries. Previously, Pakistan did not grow in resources and was facing many problems such as economic crises, increasing graph of taxes, foreign charges, deficiency in resources, corruption among the political leaders, etc. These issues have stimulated the authorities of the country. Therefore, Pakistan's government is improving the current problems and situation by exploiting native resources (Tarofder et al., 2019). Therefore, with the coming of the CPEC project, it is well-thought-out that new hope for secure the future of the country.

China Pakistan Economic Corridor will influence the economic development of Pakistan through various networks. Firstly, this will

reduce Pakistan-China trade costs and routes and changes transportation modes. Second, it would reduce trade in economic collaboration with China, the world's largest traditional nation. This will not only improve the competitiveness of existing companies but also upsurge exportations. The corridor will link the northern areas with Rawalpindi district, Peshawar district, and Lahore district. This will support to increase in agricultural exports, mainly these commodities/goods transported by air because of their uncertain nature.

### 3.2 Benefits for China via China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

To access Europe for trade purposes via central Asia, this corridor is much more advantageous for China. It will also protect the silk road and also a nonviolent route for maritime trade and business through the Indian ocean and south China sea. The corridor will connect approximately half of the world's population with China. The progress of Gawadar port will consent to Chinese naval war at the submarine and merchant ships to evade the Malacca strait and allow Beijing country to monitor the United States and Indian maritime movements in the Indian ocean.

### 3.3 Future Scenarios of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

Infrastructure investment under the corridor will boost Pakistan's economic progress through various stations. Foremost, the subject will reduce the trade rate between China-Pakistan and make modifications to transportation modes. In addition, it will improve economic and productive collaboration with China, the world's largest trading nation. This will give a boost to trade and employment within Pakistan (Pakistan observer). The corridor project will make available a road and rail network system for inclusion in remote manufacturing zones at Karachi and Gawadar port. Improved connectivity will reduce conveyance costs and reduce transportation time. In addition, increases the competition between existing companies and exports (Baig and Feng, 2016). CPEC will also help in increasing product exports particularly fruits-vegetables which are farmed in the northern regions of Pakistan and due to lack of good communication, most of them cannot be carried. The corridor will connect the northern areas with Rawalpindi-Peshawar, and Lahore districts which will increase agricultural commodities to export. The air route is followed for the transportation of these goods because of its unsafe nature. Transportation through CPEC will vary (Rodriguez et al., 2017). After the completion of the project, a maximum part of the trade with China among other countries will be transported by land. Although shipping is reasonably economical, road transport is inexpensive, and development in Pakistan will be expanded by building infrastructure. The economic zones and parks in cities along with the CPEC route will boost the labor market, and quick development of infrastructure will be improved, Real estate of Pakistan and the construction sector, followed by Baluchistan, KPK and Gilgit Baltistan will have a significant role in the progress of remote areas.

## 4. CONCLUSION

This study looked at the sustainable development by social, environmental, and economic effects on the prosperity of the citizens, entrepreneurs, managers of both countries. The corridors are crucial for the planning and development managers, clients, consumers, administrators because they play a role in socio-economic and environmental development in the country. Given this importance, The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor will upgrade tourism, trade, and development routes in Pakistan and China. The silk road link between Kashgar and the Gawadar seaport will be fully operative up to 2016, focusing on trade, energy, and development in Pakistan, directly or indirectly, especially in remote areas. The government of Pakistan should pay more attention to the tourism industry in Pakistan. This country is fully attractive, has beauty and different climatic conditions, and yet at the same time, it can become the center of attention of Chinese business tourists. The beauty of Pakistan includes the Arabian sea, desert, Indus valley civilization, ancient oldest Buddhist civilization, historical citadels, Himalayas, K-2, and various attractive valleys. These all make Pakistan the world's best and greatest tourist destination. Due to lack of travel and leisure industry framework, low branding, marketing, and construed the greatest importance given to travel and tourism sector. Economic zones will boost the opportunities and economic growth in the country by utilizing local resources and ensuring equal opportunities for local people in all areas in Pakistan. These economic zones will lessen the rural migration towards urban areas and will also reduce the menace of pollution in urban areas on a sustainable basis. Socio-economic and environmental indicators will be given priority for implementation and investment in renewable energy, climate-resilient agriculture, water sector, and eco-tourism for sustainable development. Furthermore, China is generating its electrical energy grid to use more renewable energy. Electric buses are becoming the norm in many cities in China. However,

China needs to increase its assurance to using renewable energy in the belt and road initiative, including its flagship CPEC.

## RECOMMENDATION

The government makes such efforts because the next generation will have access to such resources without compromising the desires of the existing ones. These efforts should be a separate and specialized modern recognition to improve all kinds of resources and assets, i.e., human effort and environmentally friendly assets. At the regional, national, state, and global levels, there is an urgent need for a sustainable development strategy. Furthermore, further research should be the focus on gradual, efficient, and productive issues related to human, industrial assets, which are the key indicators of sustainable development and their achievement in Pakistan.

## DECLARATION

All authors affirmed that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript. Besides, the ethical issues, including plagiarism, informed consent, misconduct, data assembled and/or falsification, double publication or submission, and redundancy have been completely observed by the authors.

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