An Investigation Research on Dera Ismail Khan People Acceptance of CPEC: A Public Opinion Survey of District in KPK, Pakistan

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Abstract

The focal point of study was to explore the critical factors of public acceptance under the context of CPEC. In global economic environment, this billionaire project unfolded developmental and social utilities for the stakeholders that gave rise to investigate public acceptance in the current areas under the umbrella of CPEC of District Dera Ismail Khan, KPK Pakistan. Specifically, Route-1 of China Pakistan Economic Corridor is critical and the geographical positioning of Dera Ismail Khan, KPK as the conjunction between all the provinces, compels authorities to emphasize on this district. A detailed literature review in the context of project awareness was primarily grounded with public opinion survey. This study combined descriptive and inferential statistics to validate the scale and test study hypotheses. The study findings revealed positive association of CPEC awareness with public acceptance of the project. Meaning that as long as the general public holds information, there is a chance of best output by developmental projects. The proposed model and study results clarified that maximum understanding and mutual consensus is the key to win-win situation for all the stakeholders of CPEC.

Keywords

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, Awareness, Public acceptance.

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Introduction

Wüstenhagen et al., (2007) described social acceptability is the underpinning factor to position plans into reality in every phase of social development. Public acceptance works as a device shaping willingness to social and developmental actions. Public acceptability is demanding subject at global level for economic boom and mega project developments. Majority of world's leading countries capture projects of socio-economic development around their territories to sustain global position and long term economic stability. Chin's Belt and Road Initiative is a leading example of that vision to secure future generations and hold regional position. This vision gave birth to number of structural projects that have social and developmental impacts on global economy. Moreover, public willingness is a parameter to implement policies of social welfare and economic development (Ahmad & Malik, 2017). Multifaceted factors, like age, belief and attitudes integrally combine public acceptance of something beneficial to public interest. The best soil for social acceptability is linked with, public awareness, local culture, leaders and local regulations. Currently China and Pakistan have joint ventures like collaborating research centres, exchange of students, teachers, journalists, academics, and research staff. The aim of close communication between both countries is more important to cover social gap and extend social mobility. Studies highlighted the impact of CPEC on the social dimension like health, education and housing in all the districts of Pakistan. Clamming CPEC is the ultimate initiative to ensure the better life of the masses (Haq & Farooq, 2016). Literature reported significant evidence around, the lack transparency on the terms of CPEC project giving rise to number of questions like payments, labour issues, inter-provincial disparities and structural imbalance. Meaning that project plans have deviations from ground reality and public expectations and also reported by the study of Arshad and Haidong (2017) and Wolf (2016). According to Hussain (2017) these issues outline uncertainty in business and civic circles of Pakistan. In the context of CPEC existing literature sheds light on the impact of multifaceted project for the beneficiaries. So far, studies are missing in unfolding the contributing factors of public acceptance linked with CPEC because academic

literature of different scholars was theoretical, highlighted project challenges and impact in this context (Rizvi, 2017; Wolf, 2016).

Study Objectives and Research Question

This study empirically investigates CPEC awareness with regard to public acceptance. Based on the study objectives, the underline study question is drawn as, "To what extant CPEC awareness influences acceptance behaviour regarding this project" in District Dera Ismail Khan. The findings of the study will provide a road map for the concerns to bring stakeholders together and outline best map in successful implementation of this project. This study is compiled with following sections literature, methodology, findings, discussion and conclusion.

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

CPEC is critical and commonly useful endeavour that satisfies the destinations and interests of both the countries and is additionally anticipated to upgrade budgetary and economic cooperation between different territorial entertainers for regular development (Butt & Butt, 2015). This project came into existence in 2013 in the shape of written agreement between the two countries. Chinese President Jinping said in the Parliament about this project, "The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a focal point of our joint efforts to achieve common development, and we should use this economic corridor to drive our practical cooperation with focus on Gwadar Port, energy, infrastructure development, and industrial cooperation". Pakistan Strategist Research Analyst reported financing up to 80% Chinese, 5% local and 15% equity will be the part of this project. An estimated price tag of this project is US$ 55 billion that will divide $33.79 billion and $11.9 billion in energy sector and infrastructure respectively and remaining investment will be allocated to Gwadar and other projects (Rizvi, 2017). The demands for western rout via District Dera Ismail Khan reflect the people preferences as chance for socio-economic utility. In this regard, the findings of the study validated how much role awareness plays in people acceptance of CPEC in this District, identical to the main study theme.

Public Acceptance of CPEC

Public acceptance is being described as "positive attitude towards a matter at a point of time which is stated in a specific idea or in a particular behaviour including encouragement, confirmation and approbation" (Cohen et al., 2014; Kraeusel & Möst, 2012). Wolsink (2012) elaborated citizen acceptance is an outcome of behavioural reactions to situation of public positioning to innovation or technological substance. Inter-linked dimension of public acceptance is reported in literature as socio-political acceptance, market acceptance and community acceptance. Moreover, these three dimensions work differently for multidimensional stakeholders (Khorsand et al., 2015). The ground reality mapped down addition of consistent attitude of political setup, community, organizations, investors and other key actors. Van Rijnsoever et al., (2015) also supported agreed path and reaching public acceptance in different kinds of environment. Every project is meant to have economic in connection with social utility to gain roots at ground level.

According to Arshad and Haidong (2017) CPEC will be tool for regional prosperity of Pakistan in the coming era. This project is the cooperative link and a rival scheme between the two countries. In the context of CPEC being an integral part, Pakistan's position in South Asia is to gain a benchmark position. The people of Pakistan believe that with the help of this project the future of Pakistan will be immensely changed and also it will develop by leaps and bounds. With CPEC's accomplishment, Pakistan is going to be a leading country in South East Asia and favourite for the investors. There are some of the key roles and points that Pakistanis have in their mind because of this billionaire project, and why not. CEPC will structure Pakistan a targeted country for nations all over the World (Raza, 2013). Appropriate systems of feasibility studies assess domestic and global social requirements to control or eliminate the negative part of CPEC investments. Social assessment is continuing to investigate social impacts during every phase of CPEC to be assured of social mobility. However, social and economic unit serve as road map for lowest investment risk, poverty and gender discrimination that stabilized CPEC. Associated title of social and

economic stability of Pakistan changes the entire completion of the project. Moreover people of Pakistan realize the fact that China is the second homeland for the Pakistanis in world.

Trade liberalization indicated the regional economic integration (REI) and infrastructure index. Empirical results revealed infrastructure significantly and positively contributed to REI (Francois & Manchin, 2007). Moreover, economic facts generate public awareness about the whole project picture i.e. infrastructural developments endow CPEC as socio-economic hub for all regional actors, specifically the targeted areas of the Pakistan. Various studies confirmed opportunities and challenges for CPEC to be a game changing project in Pakistan. Therefore, a strong policy is required to marshal new era of socio-economic development in the region (Javaid & Umbreen, 2016). In CPEC literature, found studies reported potential social and economic impacts of this project. On other hand not even a single study investigated public acceptance of CPEC in host areas. The study of Howe et al., (2005) also reported less focus in literature surrounding the determinants of culture or public acceptability. This study covered this gap by incorporating awareness and conflict resolution with cultural values in the context CPEC public acceptance.

H_1. CPEC awareness has significant relationship with public acceptance of CPEC in the District Dera Ismail Khan KPK, Pakistan.

CPEC Awareness and Public Acceptance

Awareness accompanying normative knowledge sets up group behaviours predicted by goals, objectives, opportunities, service, favour, prior commitments etc. Normative knowledge focuses on the group norms rather individuals (Edwards et al., 2012). Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) predicted behavioural intention or behavioural control that is a combination of attitudes and norms. Under the shed of TPB, public awareness activities promote positive behavioural changes acceptable by others in social settings. Perceived behavioural control considered closer element to Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy belief concept. TPB holds that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control are direct determinants of intentions, which in turn influence behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Energy Supply: In the context of energy supply, the concept refers to wide range of secure and long term energy sources and carriers that provide energy services. These resources contain, wind, hydro, coal, oil, bio-gas, solar and geo-thermal that are expected to be affordable and environment friendly (Sims et al., 2007). There are sufficient reserves of most types of energy resources to last at least several decades at current rates of use when using efficient technologies with high energy-conversion designs. The combination of technology for exploration and effective use extends the life of energy resources even up to several decades **(**Brendow, 2004**)**. Population growth of developing economies tolerates challenges like optimum use of energy resources. The accomplishment of energy supply relies on global, national and societal conditions to have a joint venture on large scale. The method used to achieve optimum integration of heating, cooling, electricity and transport fuel provision with more efficient energy systems will vary with the region, local growth rate of energy demand, existing infrastructure and identification of all the co-benefits (Vandaele & Porter, 2015). Moreover, developing countries are incompetent in poverty reduction and improved living standards by means of affordable, adequate and reliable energy services. Investments in infrastructure, energy-supply chain and conversion technologies achieve high public agreements. The projects like CPEC help countries to run their economic machinery with mega investment in this sector. The estimate of energy consumptions will rise by 2030. This requires strategic plans to keep in touch with energy potentials.

Infrastructure Development: The concept of infrastructure indicates a driver of economic development and tool of globalization (Henckel & McKibbin, 2010: Straub, 2008). Infrastructure developments contribute towards means of quality life by worthwhile facilities like transport, communication services and energy mapping macroeconomic stability. The study of Antle (2011) reported that infrastructure development is a production function and such spending capture beyond high levels. Theses infrastructure developments work as gross national income from communication industries and transportation in the host areas. As per the guideline of Easterly and Levine (1998), infrastructure investments are economically indispensable and lead up to 0.4% to 0.7% growth rate

resulting from 1% growth of neighbouring country. Henckel and McKibbin (2010) elaborated these effects as infrastructure investments' spill-over effects. The studies of academicians added that infrastructure investments came up with transport system; hospital and access to schools having social utility (Gupta & Verhoeven, 2001; Mankiw et al., 1992). Therefore, in this regard projects like CPEC are a directional project for social moment of the community.

Employment opportunities: Employment is crucial to poverty reduction. For growth to benefit the poor, it is necessary to generate employment opportunities. According to Islam (1995) employment opportunities refer to "adequate employment to simultaneously absorb increase in the labour force and to raise total labour productivity." While employment rate is, "the proportion of the population that is employed and is measured as the percentage of the working-age population that is employed." Real wage, income level and ultimate living standards rise with the help of increased employment rate (Suryahadi et al., 2012). Block and Webb (2001) reported negativity of relationship between employment and poverty. Therefore the abundance of outcomes connects poverty reduction with increased employment opportunities leading to economic growth. This reveals that the employment opportunities can escort to poverty decline and social connectivity through increase in economic growth.

Economic Development: initially this concept was interchangeably used for output growth and per capita output. The study of Haller (20012) explained economic development as a process that generates economic and social, qualitative and cumulative changes that increase national products for longer durations. Herrick (1958) explained,

> Economic development includes improvements in material welfare, eradication of mass poverty with its correlates of illiteracy, disease and early death, changes in composition of inputs and output shifts in structure of production from agricultural to industrialization, maximization of productive employment for the masses, broader participation towards welfare.

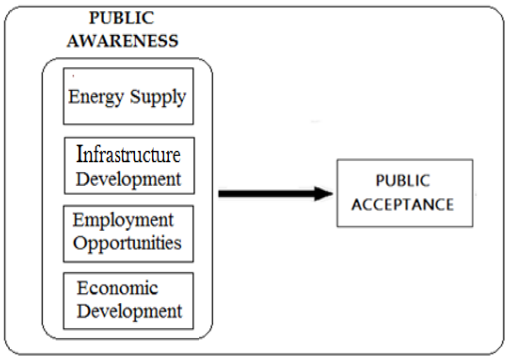
Moreover, economic development emphasizes on long terms and social elements. The problems of developing countries are the main area

of concern in economic development theories. Therefore, mega investments from different sources are required to fulfil economic needs that help countries to cope with social problems. In this regard projects like CPEC accumulate FDI and domestic investments to raise standards of life and moving towards economic transition of the country.

The study findings of Resource Unit (1997) in NWFP Pakistan reported The NCS awareness strategy is not an end in itself but generates behavioural change in communities and all other social actors. There is a special guarantee by the government of Pakistan for the payments to the Chinese companies through a special mechanism under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Finance (Siddique & Aasim, 2013). CPEC is a new addition to China-Pakistan diplomatic, social, military and economic bonding under the China's Belt and Road Initiative. This initiative will secure $40 billion of investment from China in the different sectors of Pakistan economy. CPEC is a long run economic support to Pakistan coupled with renewal of social circle, international status and emerging economic power in Asia. CPEC gained a game changing prospect in South-East Asia (Raza, 2013). CEPC is sag with bunch of development opportunities; the project contains economic incentives, social improvements, business scope, commercial gains for China, Pakistan and even the foreign investors are also willing to join this joint venture between the two emerging countries of Asia. The basic plan of this project is to create industrial zone in Pakistan that will strengthen industrial sector to be self-sustained and integral distribution of fiscal burdens. Initiatives like infrastructural development, energy projects, security plans and manufacturing investments drive long term stability for the masses (Teizzi, 2014). Therefore, CPEC is a special grant to up-lift the society and start potential activities to get rid of poverty circle. Especially, the areas like Baluchistan are going to be the active contributor in economy and community integration. Moreover the planned implementation will secure long term domestic and international outcomes with peace and stability (Butt & Butt, 2015). Literature evidences the core of an empirical investigation grouping masses under one shed of prosperity having project awareness.

H_2. Awareness has a significant influence on public acceptance of CPEC in the District Dera Ismail Khan KPK, Pakistan

Figure 1) Public awareness and acceptance follow chart



Method

Population, Sample and Data Collection

The general public as per census (1,627,132) in the Districts of Dera Ismail Khan KPK, Pakistan was the targeted population for this study. Yamane (1964) provided sample selection formula that in based on 95% confidence level which is an approved level by the scholars of social sciences. The study sample size was determined by non-probability sampling using his formula. Researchers Ajay and Micha (2014) explained sampling techniques with reference to Kish (1965) who reported the validity of sample about thirty to two hundred elements having distribution approaching normality. The normality of data verified selected sample to generalize study results with the District population.

Yamane formula;

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N\,(e^2)}$$

$$N = 1{,}627{,}132/1+1{,}627{,}132\ (0.05)^2 = 399$$

This research was based on survey method to obtain the responses in absence of a standard scale measuring CPEC acceptance leading towards self-administer questionnaire including 21-items extracted from

literature survey, expert discussion, pre-testing, Cronbach Alpha calculation and EFA, for reliability and validity of the scale.

Group discussion with field experts at Kunming University of Science Technology, China and Gomal and Qutruba Universities DI Khan, Pakistan was done. Expert recommendations items of the scale were revised, rearranged and removed. Item-19 and 21 were revised by ASEAN research expert's opinion. Pretesting of the items was done with a final questionnaire with 16-items of CPEC awareness with four dimensions and 5-items acceptance. The questionnaire included demographics and the research variables along with five point Likert scale to record the response. In this study 399 questionnaires were distributed out of which 319 were received with a response rate of 79%. At the time of data collection few of the questions were inversely reported to avoid respondent's bias, but reversed at the time of data entry to SPSS.

Data Analysis

This study is based on descriptive and multiple inferential analyses using SPSS.20 to display the descriptive profile of the respondents and testing of study hypotheses.

Factor analysis (exploratory factor analysis) is concerned with whether the covariance or correlations between a set of observed variables can be explained in terms of a smaller number of unobservable constructs known either as latent variables or common factors (Landau & Everitte, 2004). This study mainly emphasizes on correlation and regression analysis. Field (2013) reported that correlation research variables are measured simultaneously and so no cause-and-effect relationship can be established. Bivariate correlation analysis investigates between two variables about the extent and direction of relationship. Regression analysis is a way of predicting an outcome variable from one or several predictor variables.

Findings

Descriptive Statistic

Descriptive results represented demographic aspects of general public. The results indicated 75% male, 25% female with 57% of age category below 21 years, 30% of 21-30 years, 11% of 31-40 years and 2% of 41-50 years participated in the study. The academic profile contained 8% with primary level education, 36% high school, higher school 32% and 24% having university level education. The respondents (of rural area 58% and urban 42%) pointed out cultural understanding 53% positive, 25% negative and 22% showed no idea about critical thinking.

As for as the objectives of CPEC is concerned 55% answered "Yes", believed these have clear understanding at the current position of this project. While on the other side 45% answered "No" out of which having some concerns about the different aspect tactics and work packages were 9%, time schedule 4%, activity schedule 3.4%, role and responsibilities 11.6%, short term objectives 0.3% and long-term objectives 16.6%.

Items' Reliability

Reliability is a measure of consistency of items to represent a construct, usually denoted by Cronbach's alpha coefficient ranging from 0 to 1. In this study self-developed scale was used to measure study variables. Independent variable awareness was measured regarding *energy supply* 5-item scale with α=.80, *infrastructure development* 3-item with α=.77, *employment opportunities* 4-item with α=.60 and *economic development* 4-items with α=.84. Dependent variable *public acceptance* was measured by 5 items with α=.81. All of the Cronbach's alpha values are within "acceptability" range of >.8 is good and >.7 is acceptable (George & Mallery, 2003).

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

EFA is an instrument; explores the hidden factors in a survey questionnaire measuring a variable. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin is a measuring tool indicating adequacy of sample size (Kaiser, 1970). The study results

confirmed that both independent and dependent variables had sample adequacy. Awareness: energy supply (KMO=.78 & BS=538.87) infrastructure development (KMO=.70 & BS=259.79) employment opportunities (KMO=.62 & BS=151.16) and economic development (KMO= .76 & BS=608.96). Dependent variable public acceptance (KMO=.82 & BS=477.70). All of the results meet rule of thumb to be "good" (Field, 2013).

Table 1) Un-rotated Component Matrix

Var	Component 1	Var	Component 1	Var	Component 1	Var	Component 1	Var	Component 1
eng1	0.68	Inf1	0.84	emp1	0 .63	eco1	0.75	accp1	0.76
eng2	0.70	Inf2	0.83	emp2	0.64	eco2	0.90	accp2	0.76
eng3	0.74	Inf3	0.82	emp3	0.71	eco3	0.86	accp3	0.74
eng4	0.84			emp4	0.71	eco4	0.79	accp4	0.72
eng5	0.80							accp5	0.77

Energy supply: eng, Infrastructure development: inf, Employment opportunities: emp, Economic development: eco, Public acceptance: accp.

Kaiser's method is used to retain the factors having an initial Eigen value greater than "1" (Blaikie, 2003; Devaus, 2002). The results revealed that the scale of both independent and dependent variables contain a single component of each with over 1.

Principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted and the items with factor loading of greater than +0.4 were retained. The results in table#1 indicated that independent variable awareness retained 16-iteams having factor loadings > 0.4 for respective items, while dependent variable public acceptance 5-items based factor loadings > 0.4 was retained.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis#1. CPEC awareness and conflict resolution have significant relation with public acceptance of CPEC in the District Dera Ismail Khan KPK, Pakistan. H_1

Table 2) Correlation

		Energy	Infrastructure	Employment	Economic	Acceptance
Energy	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	319				
Infrastructure	Pearson Correlation	0.092	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.100				
	N	319	319			
Employment	Pearson Correlation	0.064	0.618**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.257	0.000			
	N	319	319	319		
Economic	Pearson Correlation	0.097	0.499**	0.593**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.082	0.000	0.000		
	N	319	319	319		
Acceptance	Pearson Correlation	0.143*	0.883**	0.616**	0.546**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.011	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	319	319	319	319	319
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).						
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

Correlation analysis was run to investigate the relationship of independent variable awareness and building public acceptance of CPEC in district Dera Ismail Khan. The table#2 indicated significant relation of energy supply (r=.143, p<.05), infrastructure development (r=.883**, p<.05), employment opportunities (r=.616**, p<.05) and economic development (r=.546**, p<.05) with public acceptance of CPEC. The

results also showed that conflict resolution is also a significant player of public acceptance of CPEC with positive correlation. Meaning that, as the role of awareness progresses, community acceptability of CPEC reaches maximum gain. These will be the best paths to reach total success of this billionaire project with social acceptance and utility. Here H_1 is accepted based on empirical results.

***Hypothesis#2*.** CPEC awareness has a significant influence on public acceptance of CPEC in the District Dera Ismail Khan KPK, Pakistan. H_2

Table 3) Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig
1	0.894[a]	800	0.797	0.28207	313.876	0.000
a. Predictors: (Constant), employment, energy, economic , infrastructure						

In table#3 results explained variance in public acceptance by the awareness. The R^2=0.80 explained 80% of variance in public acceptance is due to CPEC awareness. The results also portrayed significant prediction of study model with overall F(4, 314)=313.876, p<.05.

Table 4) Coefficients [a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	0.379	0.122		3.099	0.002		
Energy	0.041	0.019	0.055	2.185	0.030	0.988	1.013
Infrastructure	0.722	0.030	0.784	23.841	0.000	0.589	1.698
Economic	0.099	0.028	0.114	3.550	0.000	0.617	1.620
Employment	0.058	0.034	0.060	1.702	0.090	0.509	1.963
a. Dependent Variable: public acceptance							

Table#4 explains significant beta scores by the facets of awareness. These results reveal significant influence of each facet: energy supply (β=0.05, p<0.05), infrastructure development (β=0.78, p<0.05) and economic development (β=0.11, p<0.05). Here the results explain that cognitive style has 0.469 beta value which means that it has 46.9% influence on leadership effectiveness. These results confirmed the

percentage influence of energy supply 5%, infrastructure development 78% and economic development 11% on public acceptance of CPEC, while there found an insignificant influence of employment opportunities (β=0.06, p>0.05). The tolerance value is below .10 or .20 and variance inflation factor 5 or 10 and above represents multicollinearity problem O'Brien (2007). Here all the values of tolerance (.98, .61, .58 & .50) are well above .10 or .20 and VIR (1.96, 1.69, 1.62 & 1.01) are below 5 or 10. Here multiple regressions don't show multicollinearity problem. Here majority of the results revealed predictive power of awareness in relation to CPEC acceptance. Therefore, H_2 is accepted based on results.

Discussion

CPEC is the basic need of the time for China and Pakistan to take a leading role in global economy, because the future generations oblige a secure environment in terms of resources, collaborations and strong economic bonding based on geographical positioning and opening up gates to the neighbouring countries. This project gained attention of almost all the countries in the world because of its geographical pose and economic competition. Belt and Road Intuitive has a vision to join Central Asian countries, especially Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and also boundaries with Afghanistan to an economic hub and more especially neighbouring countries (Butt & Butt, 2015; Ians, 2015). While some of the countries especially India and United States of America are in term objectives of the project (Jacob, 2017). There are multifactor creating opposition of this project based on economic war as well geo-political situation of the region. CPEC is helping hand for Pakistan's economy to uplift different sectors and utilize natural resources with maximum conversion and export potential at global circle. This study was based on public survey in District Dera Ismail Khan to interpret public acceptance about China's role under the implementation of CPEC as a game changing project in Pakistan. Based on quantitative approach, the results of correlation analysis revealed positive correlation of energy supply, infrastructure development, employment opportunities and economic development with CPEC public acceptance in study area. The results were found in line with the findings about structural developments (Hussain, 2015). The study findings

proved CPEC will come up with increase in Pakistan's GDP, triumph over energy short fall, infrastructural development that will open up a new gate toward prosperity. Meaning that, more and more awareness is the foundation towards public acceptance, better implementation and fruitful results for associated parties. Knowing these facts people of Pakistan will incline towards Chain's enduring role in economic crisis. The results portray the real picture of project awareness about the economic aspects on the perception of the general public in line with the findings (Siddique & Asim, 2013). The findings elaborated significant influence of awareness to be a healthy player over all the phases of CPEC (Ahmad & Malik, 2017), but there was found insignificant influence of employment opportunities resulted from this project. This reflects the basic understanding that came to the minds of respondents that this project is not limited to just job creation. This project has broader objectives and different priorities at the moment to deal with economic crises of the country.

Conclusion

The study findings came up with broader results to understand prevailing parameters of CPEC public acceptance in District Dera Ismail Khan, KPK Pakistan. The study added to the literature of CPEC acceptance by synthesize concept from theory of planned behaviour. This study also provided a scale along with empirical investigation of social and economic aspects. This study was based on hypotheses to meet the objectives. Empirical analysis of survey data clearly supported study objectives relating the relationship of awareness and developing public acceptance of CPEC. It was clear from the findings that awareness of potential benefits associated with this billionaire project are critical to have win-win situation during all phases of the project. Findings revealed that personnel understanding and consensus is a base for public behaviour towards the implementation of mega project with social impact. All of the study objectives achieved are based on empirical analysis, expressing the role of awareness in developing public behaviour to accept a project like CPEC for economic development and social utility of the masses. The study at hand came-up with important points of interest of the masses, whole heartedly accepting CPEC, largely to the

extent of infrastructure and economic development, while expecting smooth ground of belief and expectations. Based on study findings it is recommended for the concerned authorities to come up with a strategy of maximum information transmission with strong authoritative actions. On the other side academic practitioners should unfold other factors of interest to extend proposed model and also investigate the moderating role, cultural values in relation to awareness and other variables of project acceptance. Future studies can extend sample size to have more in depth analysis about the different aspects of the topic.

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