

## Perception of People of Baluchistan on CPEC (China Pakistan Economic Corridor)

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### Abstract:

*The present study focuses on finding the effects of the CPEC project in the region of Baluchistan with specific aim on finding the effect on the economic element in the area as well. In addition to that, the study also is an exploratory in nature which will further allow in finding the direct impact of the CPEC project in the region. The methodology that had been incorporated in the study comprised of the interview method in which a proper interview guideline was established prior to the stage of the data collection. The major findings of the study do seem to indicate that although there are a number of the long term beneficial outcome results that have been associated with the project but on the other side of the argument, there are many problems that have been encountered by local inhabitants. These issues are emotional and economic both which have been followed up through the set of recommendations as well. There were a lot of limitations of the study that had been identified and have been documented in the research document as well in order for the future researchers to be able to address them if they wish to carry out research on the similar topic. The findings of the study also imply that the people are going through emotional turmoil due to the project which needs to be addressed by the governing authorities as well. Moreover, there have been political and security issues in the region which needs to be focused more so that the people feel safe.*

**Key words:** CPEC, Baluchistan's Perception, Pakistan Economy, CPEC a joint venture, Baluchistan context, Economic Benefits, Security concerns, People displacement

## INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, a lot of development has been carried out in the remote areas of Pakistan to have the economy sustained as well as to achieve the best out of the resources that are present across the country. Many of the projects have been introduced such as the project of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) itself that helps in the growth of the country. It has been said that Pakistan and China both will benefit a lot from the project and it is expected that there will be a huge economic boom for the country. This will also allow more job openings for the Pakistani youth and it will enable the country to pay the debts back and it is expected in the long run that the project would come up with a lot of beneficial outcome results as well.

In addition to that, it is also expected that there will be industrial development in the country that will make an effective use of the raw materials that are not much utilized due to a number of reasons. One of the reasons that have been identified is the lack of approach which will be solved out by means of the CPEC. Also, it is expected that many of the security problems will be very much addressed which will make the peace keeping strategies a lot more manageable. This will also decline the rate of terrorism in the region for the fact that people will be manageable and proper check and balance strategies will be implemented.

Pakistan is rich with the natural resources which also include the sea port that could be made use of. A number of other countries will make use of this project that will give a long term benefit to the economic growth of the region. It will also enable the sea forces such as Pakistan Navy a lot stronger.

But all of these are mere assumptions and it would be seen once the project is completed and examined afterwards that whether there were benefits for the country as a whole, China, the region of Baluchistan or not? This has been known to be a huge question mark that could be linked directly with the CPEC project and it needs to be further explored which has been the reason for the present study to be conducted and scrutinized.

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a joint program that has been carried out mutual operation of the two countries, which should bring benefits to both regions in terms of economic growth with sustainable development. It was said that Pakistan and China will benefit greatly from the project and is expected to have a major economic boom for Pakistan. It also enables more jobs to young Pakistanis and allows a country to pay off debts and it is expected that in the longer term, the project presents a number of positive results as well. Moreover, it is also expected that the development of the industry in a country, which effective use of raw materials that are not widely used due to a number of reasons. There is a deployment of Pakistani forces in the area, which allows taking strict measures against all kinds of serious threats. It could be seen that no specific research has been done in the past that has addressed the issue of Balochistan in terms of CPEC project, because it is a newly developed debate and the newly launched project. The project is expected to produce significant results for the country's progress. But rational study shows that the project could not only have positive outcomes, but have some negative sides as well. Balochistan is experiencing serious problems of violence and security threats. The study aims to determine the economic impact of CPEC in Balochistan.

The China–Pakistan Economic Corridor is a combination of infrastructure projects which are under the construction throughout Pakistan. Originally their value was \$46 billion; however, the value of CPEC projects is now increased to \$54 billion. CPEC is intended to improvise the Pakistani

economy through rapid construction of modern transportation facilities, establishment of special economic zones along with an augmented power generation capacity for the population of Pakistan. (Hussain, Tom 2015)

CPEC inauguration and continuation will open up new employment opportunities for the people of Baluchistan. Gwadar is the center of CPEC plans and it is expected that such vast initial investment, people in Baluchistan will facilitate with the opportunities provided. They will also get the chance to improve their qualifications and experience, making ways for future developments. Gwadar is expected to transform into economic hub. Baluchistan can have number of economic benefits from CPEC project in long term (Dr. K, Muhammad)

Although, Baluchistan is rich in minerals but the rugged terrain and lack of infrastructure hindered with the development of this area, however, it is expected that with foreign investment and expertise, the area will soon transform, resulting in adequate supply of minerals to the whole country and beneficial exports with other nations.

The locals in Baluchistan who are running small scale and medium scale industries will find a chance to promote their goods and services to the neighboring countries. They will have more fame and value in the next country.

Gwadar will transform into economic hub, leading to thousands of opportunities for the people. There will be chances to double the economic development. Apart from the economic advantages, people will also have the chance to improvise their skills and learning through education. Young people can study in the neighboring countries and enhance their skills.

The minerals in Baluchistan which are difficult to extract because of the rugged terrain and poor population will be extracted by the Chinese engineers and highly developed machinery. This can then be used for export and transferred to the entire country resulting in gradual development of Baluchistan and the whole nation, as well.

Currently Baluchistan may not be the main beneficiary of the project the reason being low level of skills, experience and low literacy ratio of the province. But in long term if the government strategies regarding capacity building of Baluch people are carried out and well implemented the people can be lives can prosperous. There are some other issue i-e social, political, economic and security issues. To make the province develop these issues are required to be addressed by the government officials. Provincial government must be empowered in order overcome the issues and set the priorities in-line with problems. CPEC is expected to enhance employment opportunities which would in turn improve the lifestyle of the people. (Expert Opinion).

There will be eventual technical and vocational development of this sector. People will be given the education and training. They can then use those skills to participate in the process of economic transformation of Baluchistan. Employment of locals will increase their morale and motivation as the projects will be improving their own state.

The proposed construction of the new airport will cover land area of 4000 acres. This airport will allow people from Baluchistan and Gwadar to have direct access to the rest of the world. This will be the biggest airport of Pakistan and will have immense economic as well as social importance for Baluchistan. Local shops and houses will be replaced by more organized and technical shopping malls and high elite residential places. Such developments of urbanization will result in gradual modification of the outlook of local people, creating them more broad-minded and this will impact on economy of the sector greatly.

New developments will come with new challenges for provincial and federal governments. The people in Baluchistan are presently involved in mining but the rugged terrain does not allow for free development of mining sector. It is proposed that CPEC will focus on enhancing the activity of mining.

Nonetheless, this field involves a lot of risk factor for the people and the accidents may happen in mining activity at all the time.

The importance of Baluchistan has grown beyond all the boundaries but it is also a possibility that the Gwadar centric projects will be negligent of the rest of the area. The locals rightly fear that they may be made to make sacrifices but the entire economic advantages are availed by Gwadar which would be an unfair result.

The transportation facilities that will be present because of the projects will allow the foreigners to enter easily into the Baluch region; this may bring disadvantages such as unfair exploitation of poor locals or corrupt activities against Pakistan. There have been many major attacks in Baluchistan sector. An attack on 8th August resulted in the deaths of 95 people. It was found that this attack was carried out by India because India opposes the CPEC. Such violent acts have been conducted repeatedly by Indian agency RAW and Afghan forces because they aim to stop the CPEC projects. Indians believe that this project will pass through the Indian-occupied Kashmir and this cannot be tolerated by Indian government.

Arrival of the foreign engineers and architects may disturb the locals. Their arrival may also result in fewer opportunities for the local people because they are not trained and educated enough to carry out the highly technical tasks. The minor tasks such as mining and digging still remain with the poor local people. This eventually results in their belief that CPEC has the potential to snatch away their opportunities.

China Pakistan Economic Corridor has arrived into the country with major pre-occupations by the local people at both sides of the border. There are, indeed, many benefits and disadvantages associated with this project. They are to be eliminated by the government authorities and people in-charge of this project. The support and agreement of locals is direly

needed to make sure that the project goes on smoothly and ends up in fast pace. (Shahid, U. 2016)

The positive image can be built by media and awareness programs. The trainers have to make sure that they form a team of locals who will be trained for carrying out the tasks in the project. The print media can be used to remove the doubts held by people and let them know that there are many people such as Indians and Afghan-funded separatist movements who are against the project because they are aware of the advantages it may bring for the Baluchistan region. Only awareness and one-on-one training sessions will allow the leaders to have the support of local people for this project. (H. Babar, 2017)

Still, on the other hand of the argument, there are a number of other associated disadvantages that are associated with the running of the project. It has been debated that the government is focusing more on the positive dimensions and is overlooking the effects that are being caused to the local inhabitants. This is the main objective of the study and it will help in addressing the aspects that are not highlighted by other people and explain the perspective of the local residing people. Further background related to the problem along with the associated elements will be presented as follows:

### **1.1 Background**

Before having an in depth analytical discussion along with the review of the literature, it would be essential to have the deeper understanding of the concept. So, what exactly is CPEC and why has it been given so much importance over the past few years? The answer to this question is that CPEC is essentially China-Pakistan Economic Corridor which has made some of the widespread issues for the local inhabitants as well which has been the reason for identifying it as a problem. As the name suggests, it is a collaborative program that has been carried out by the mutual workings of the two countries which will cause

benefit to both the regions in terms of the economic growth along with the sustainable developments. There is a deployment of the Pakistan forces in the area that allows strict measures to be taken against any type of a serious threatening situation. This is because of the reason that many of the political and related parties (across the borders as well) are not content with running this process which might cause some troubles. And in order to take preventive measures, armed forces are deployed in the region.

A lot of developmental projects are thought to be associated with the benefits of the region as well as the nations which could also be examined through a number of case studies all across the globe. But there are a number of difficult elements and barriers that come along the way as well which act as the hedges that postpone or come in the way of the project. In the case of Baluchistan, there are security threats that seem to come along the way of the development but then again the question arise that why has not the government tried to make the region security wise stronger? Why (in general) does the region has been so much weak from the security, economic and developmental perspective that has made people to think that the project of CPEC would only cause their problems to be elevated and increased? Moreover, if the project has been thought to be carrying beneficial outcome results, are these only in the favor of the capital or the other dominant regions of the country or also for the Baluchistan as well?

This has been the major problem and argument that has been identified for the present study for which there is a need for the gap of research to be filled out and analyzed. It could be seen that no specific research that has been previously conducted talks about the issue of Baluchistan in terms of the CPEC project because it is a newly evolved debate and a newly initiated project. There is a need to directly address all of these elements and arguments that would enable the governing authorities to think of the projects from this angle and it could



most possibly go in the favor of the region's development and in addressing of the economic crisis as well.

As a result of these measures, many of the residing people feel left out for a number of reasons. There are some problems that are being encountered by the people. These problems include the following bullet points:

- It is expected that the running of CPEC will cause climatic pollution in the region which might have a long term effect in future on the people that are residing there.
- The local people claim that the developmental process will make them lose control over their resources and it will make them lose their possessions.
- In addition, it is being prospected that people will lose their land because of the execution of the developmental program.
- People might even lose their homes and lands in the process of development.

These are the major issues that have been raised and many of the political along with the tribal leaders have showed aggressive attitude and opposition against the CPEC project. This has been the reason for the current research to be carried out in order to explore the issue further and certain assumptions as well as the findings could be researched further. Further problem statement for the study will be provided in the below section:

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

It has been stated on the surface level that the execution of the program will make a long term beneficial outcome results for the overall progress of the country. However, on the other hand, the common man is not getting any beneficial outcome from it. Rather, there are a number of negative impacts that could be related to the living of individuals across the region. This is the

main objective behind this research and it will enable in uncovering a number of facts that are related to the impact of CPEC in general. However, there are a number of beneficial outcome results such as the progress and economic elevation of the country along with the initiation and running of related developmental processes. It is expected that many of the people will lose their lands that will make them lose their sense of identity.

As a consequence of these issues, many people are trying their best to oppose the program for the fact that it has a direct impact on their lives.

### **1.3 Rationale of the Study**

The present study is one of the first one the few studies in the academic field area. Since this project is not that old, not much of research has been carried out on it which makes the present study even more exclusive. Moreover, the findings of this study could be helpful in the practical implementation of the steps for the people who are being affected by it and the government could play its role in the process. Many of the aspects could be highlighted that will enable the future researchers to have the deep understanding of the subject matter and will allow more areas to be researched and explored. So, these are the major elements that suggest the importance of the study.

The basic rational of the study is also to eliminate the notion that the people merely think of the developmental project in the regions to be carrying out positive results only. However, in case of the Baluchistan, this has not been identified rather, the issues in the form of violence and the security threats have rather elevated over the period of time which has been the reason that the issue related to it needs to be raised further. The state members do not think of the problem of the region like their own (as per the assumptions and the preliminary data that has led to the present research) which needs to be counteracted.

Moreover, there are no previously conducted researches along with the theoretical model that could be related quite specifically to the case of the CPEC project in the Baluchistan which would be analyzed and explored further through the present study as well. It is also prospected that the present study could act as a pathway for the governing and the local authorities to talk about the present issue which could be analyzed and talked about further. It is also expected that the issues might get diminished over the period of time as well.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to find out how the people of Baluchistan perceive the CPEC project. Moreover, the main focus is also to find out the effects and the disadvantages that have been faced by the local people although the project of CPEC claims to be beneficial to the state on the long term time period.

The second objective is to determine how CPEC project can address the concern of people. Moreover, the present study is exploratory in nature which would allow further the problems or the issues to be recognized and the overall impact of the CPEC project will be analyzed by the point of view of the local inhabitants. The present study is also crucial to be conducted in order to fill out the literary gap that is existent in the field of academia specifically in the region of Pakistan because of the fact that the project is new and no such research has been carried out. The secondary objective of the study is also to fill out this gap which will enable the future researches to be carried out through the baseline which would be provided by the current study.

#### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

There is a specific and crucial need for the present study to be conducted in order to know Baluch people concerns about the CPEC project. Moreover, the findings of present study would

further allow the other future projects to be compared to the study in order to address the issues as well. This study is an exploratory study which would further allow the factors, issues and the elements that could be identified in the process and will also enable the people to know about the issues that could arise in the process of the developmental projects such as the CPEC itself.

Also, the issues that have been raised such as the security threats, political hatred and harmonious situation quite specifically in the case of Pakistan and it could also be examined with the scenarios of the other countries all across the globe. Hence, it could be said that the present study would further allow the academic literary researchers as well as the governing authorities to know in future that what possible issues could arise during the execution of the projects that are aimed at making the country prosperous.

The current study also enables an individual to know about the possible issues that could arise for the local inhabitants in order for the state members to gain the long term beneficial outcome results. The findings of the present study can be implemented in the other parts of the world when the region is being developed. It will also provide the set of limitations along with the barriers that the local inhabitants and the governing authorities could face in the process. This is the general scope of the study that could be explored further by the future researchers as well.

### **1.6 Organization of the Study**

The study has been further divided into a number of chapters which would further be analyzed through the chapter outline as follows:

This chapter provides the major background for carrying it out and the problems that are residing with reference to the topic that has been selected. Furthermore, it helps in having an understanding of the problem matter. The research questions

that have been identified over a period of time have also been addressed in this section.

It provides the previous literature carried out on the topic along with the major factors that contribute to establishing of the argument. Furthermore, previous literature could also assist in bridging the gap of the literature that could be addressed and fulfilled through the findings of the present study.

The methodology that has been incorporated for this study will be presented in the chapter 3 which will also identify the potential barriers and issues that are existent over the course of the execution of the research. The sampling technique along with the usage of tools in the study will also be presented in this part of the document. The justification for the sampling method along with the selection of the locale will also be highlighted in the methodology section.

This chapter presents the findings that have been brought into being out with the present research. It will further be supported as well as compared with the previous findings of the literature that could also help in generating new ideas and questions for the future studies.

This is the final chapter of the study which will conclude all of the findings and provide a summary. If necessary, the recommendations will also be presented in this part of the document which will assist the future researchers to make use of it before going to the field. The limitations of the study will as well be highlighted which will enable to have a deeper understanding of the residing situation in the area

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Not much of the research has been made available that focuses solely on the perception of people with reference to the project of CPEC, on the region of Baluchistan. It has been the reason for carrying out of the present study for the reason that it will

provide the vital data of the subject matter. Furthermore, on the other hand, this study will also provide a gateway for future researches. A number of previous and current studies that have been carried out on this topic will be presented in the following part of the document which will enable to grasp a better hold over the entire scenario with reference to the CPEC project.

Further explanation of the entire subject area with reference to the secondary resources of the data will be carried out in the following part of the document:

## **2.1 Political and Governmental Background Context**

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), is basically a 54 Billion US dollar project includes road and rail network investment project, Energy, Gwadar and industry. It is announced to be as a 'game changer' with reference to the Pakistan's economy as well as the regional cooperation. Also, it is considered to be a crucial element of the most important development plan headed by the state of China, which is also termed as the 'One Belt, One Road' (abbreviated as OBOR). The main aim of it is to connect Asia with the regions of Europe, Africa and the Middle East respectively. In addition to that, the CPEC is to a large amount linked to many hopes, benefits, as well as local and worldwide geopolitics. On the other hand, such a super project can never come devoid of the challenges and vital queries. Along with the puzzle of the possibility of its accomplishment, or else the potential influence on the regional collaboration, it looks like the fact that the CPEC expansion has made some severe negative effects on the country's conventional unhealthy civil-military affairs (Wolf, 2016).

It would be very significant to see the historical background of the project. This all started when the Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif visited Beijing for official tour and offered an institutional structure for the entire gamut of China Pakistan Economic Corridor in the November of the year 2014. At that time, there were four vital

assumptions that had been present. First, the passageway will make sure that billions of dollars of reserves in the entire region of Pakistan, together with the under-developed areas of Pakistani territory. The building of roads, bridges, along with the railway lines as well as other means of up to date transportation will be carried out all the way from the Chinese region of Xinjiang to the region of Gwadar port situated in the Makran shore of Pakistan. It will further result towards a huge step forward in the production of a massive employment chances in both of the two countries (Shaikh, Ji, & Fan, 2016).

In the year between 1950s and in 1960s, Pakistan was in the middle of the few non-Communist nations having the meaningful planned, defense, political as well as economic relations with the country of China. In spite of being an affiliate of the US supported Anti Communist alliances of Central Treaty Organisation (abbreviated as CENTO) and the South East Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO); it was observed that Pakistan resisted the force of the Western countries and continued its friendly ties with the state of China. Furthermore, Pakistan also took steps as a brigand state flanked by the United States as well as Communist China from the time period of 1969 to 1971. Hence, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is known as a well planned and fine crafted thought and scheme to set free the course of meaningful collaboration between the two neighboring regions. Also, it is carried out for the benefit of China along with the West Central region and the region residing in South Asia. Est blushed on the idea of a win-win circumstances, the strategic significance of the Pakistan-China economic corridor ought to be classified and looked at from four point of views that are: geo-political, historical, cultural and last but not least economic. Therefore, the very idea of a passage or corridor, that has been a reason of huge development in diverse parts of the planet, will take off in the region of Pakistan with the structure of a number of networks of highways, roads, power generation plants as well

as the railways. It will be carried out all the way from the region of Khunjerab, from the borders of China and Pakistan, to the harbor of Gwadar which is located in Pakistani (Ahmar, 2015).

## **2.2 Role of CPEC in the Context of Pakistan and China**

The signing of the agreements which has a worth of about 46 billion US \$ among Pakistan and China on the event of the stay of the President of Chinese Xi Jinping to the Pakistani capital Islamabad on April 20-21 in 2015 is thought to be as a landmark in the increase of relations amid Sino-Pak. The rationale behind the economic corridor is essentially to encourage the trade along with the commercial bonds by means of connectivity. Theoretically, a planned corridor refers to the subsequent features (Qureshi, 2015):

1. Political aspects will increase the process of collaboration at the multiple levels.
2. The willpower will act out to encourage the connectivity amid varied regions.
3. The establishment of trade and industry stakes will act out in order to facilitate the progression of harmony
4. Last but not least, the institution of a method will assist in supporting institutional support.

Also, another research study was carried out to explain the CPEC project by means of literary and theoretical analysis. The study helped in gaining insight to the challenges that could come out for the country through the process of the literary analysis. The findings of the study reveal the fact that there are a number of aspects involved in the instability of Pakistan's economy, state along with the society in general. These aspects include the religious extremism, political instability, terrorism as well as the economic slowing down in the region. In addition to that, the research supplied with the ideas of the policy input



that could be carried out to change the educational system in the country that could also help in addressing the issue of the political instability that resides in the country. This could also help in targeting the kinds of militant organizations in the country that are the main reason for destabilizing situation in the region. Furthermore, the research study also advocates China to employ the regional stakeholders in project of CPEC to comprehend the regional along with the trans-regional connectivity to attain the economic incorporation of the marketplace (Hussain, 2016).

Over the past few years, the two collaborative countries i.e., China as well as Pakistan, have expanded tough political, strategic and defense relations. Since the starting of this decade, both of the states have been paying a lot of importance to make their economic ties stronger that have stayed a bit shallow in the earlier period. In this consideration, the year of 2015 has turned out to be a landmark for the fact that both of the countries are determined to be in motion to the front by means of their plan to institute the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It has provided a new incentive to both of the states for make their economic relations a lot better than they are at the present moment. CPEC is basically a complete development contract which not merely institutes the economic and the strategic connection among the Pakistan and China but on the other hand, it also possesses the prospective of putting together other sub regions residing in the Asia. It could also act as a key position in enhancing the economic along with the strategic environment. But, on the other hand, for some of the regional and the extra-regional bodies, CPEC is more like an unpleasant dream that has assembles some disapproval for the most part because it has an impact on the business for some of the countries as well as it threatens the political welfare of some of the state members. In the sight of development, there have been researches that explain the root cause of the political scenario that could be explained with reference to the CPEC

project. Many of the countries such as those that are neighboring to the region of Pakistan do seem to be hesitant of the development of the region for the fact that it will make Pakistan stronger both economically as well as politically (Naseer, 2015).

Another most relatable study carried out on the CPEC establishes the fact that China requires a little, safe and low-cost trading course to the European as well as Middle Eastern countries. And that could be carried out by means of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Not only will it lower the time period of the trade, but it will also be a lot cheaper and as a result of which the bond between both of the countries will strengthen (Zhao & Yang, 2012).

Another similar study has carried out research that analyses the time difference along with the mileage that is part of the trade route of CPEC. The findings of the study do seem to indicate that there will be a lot of benefits associated with the project that could act as the means of development in both of the countries (Muhammad, 2016). Furthermore, it is an established fact that the terrorism is very much associated with the issue of poverty. The vision that could be seen through the CPEC is that it will carry out a lot of development in the region that will make a number of pathways for the development along with the strengthening of the state in general. This will address the issue of poverty that could help in decreasing the terrorism related problems in the entire region. As a result of which many of the problems will change into the developmental situations which further explains the significance of the CPEC project (Hali, Shukui, & Iqbal, 2015).

Waseem (2016) has explained the process of the project and explains it in such a way that the progression of the interaction between the people of both countries along with the friendly ties that are existent have made it possible to implement the CPEC project. Both the countries have managed to have ties that have made it possible to have a number of

beneficial outcome results. As a result of which, both the nations decided to make it even stronger and make the developmental regime that will have a positive impact for both states through carrying out of the CPEC project. The research further acknowledges the fact that the cultural exchanges regime will assist in better understanding of the events and standard in both of the regions that needs to be kept stronger and needs to be encouraged with the advancement of the time.

### **2.3 The Context of Baluchistan**

It could be observed with reference to the previous carried out researches and literature that most of it focuses entirely on the positive impact of CPEC project such as the impact of it on trade, commerce, employment rates along with the development in both countries (Ali, 2016). However, there are a few researches that focus on the public opinion along with the public resistance with reference to the CPEC project which is still under discussion. Public opinion along with the public force is one of the vital aspect that needs to be considered while implementation of any kind of project which is why, it is highlighted so much (Deling, Diren, &Tiantian, 2016). There could be two reasons associated for this argument which are:

- Since the project is still in the working phase, its impact on the inhabitants cannot be focused upon.
- When much of the work on the project is carried out and it is in its final phases, only then will the impact on the inhabitants along with the economic context could be understood.

The above mentioned reasons could be analyzed in the context. However, there are a few problems that are associated with the local inhabitants that will be carried out by means of this research. Regardless of the biggest area that is engaged by the region of Baluchistan and despite of the fact that the area is rich in natural resources, the area is still left out to be

underdeveloped as compared to the major cities and other provinces of Pakistan. Furthermore, it is about the 43 percent region of the total area of Pakistan which cannot be left out and needs to be developed that has not been like that over the past six decades. There are no proper roads along with the infrastructure in the region (Khetran, 2014). This research provides a strong basis for the dispute of the residing people against the CPEC project for the fact that no one has been giving much of an attention to the region. However, there have been a number of reasons for the lack of development along with the initiation of the progression plans in the region which Khetran (2016) has explained and those reasons are as follows:

- Tribal leaders
- Baluchi nationalists opposition

Both of these above mentioned aspects could be referred to the hurdles in the CPEC project as well. In spite of the fact of the natural resources and a huge area of the region, the region has been left out for the fact that it is far away from the capital region and when such a developmental program is carried out for the implementation of economic growth for the country, it has made an emergence of the problems. In addition, there are a number of other countries that are aggravating this hatred that is existent in the local inhabitants and are making them think about the negative impact of the CPEC. So, no single aspect or variable could be regarded to be the reason behind this opposition along with a number of other aspects involved in the entire process.

CPEC project has been talked about a lot over the past few years and as mentioned earlier, there are a number of positive outcome results that will strengthen the region of Baluchistan along with the overall performance of the entire state. No one has been focused on talking about the aspects involved in the long term effect or the short term impact on the local inhabitants which is the main objective of the present

research study. It is not being suggested that there will be solely negative impact on the local residing people however, it is being suggested through this entire research that there are two aspects that come along any type of accomplishment. The execution of the task involves the positive impact along with the disadvantages as well. Since there has been a lot of previous research being carried out on the positive aspects of the CPEC project and many have talked about the financial, development, economic benefits, decreasing poverty and so on. But on the contrary, no one talks about the negative impact which is the main reason behind carrying out of this research study.

There are a number of people who are against the notion of the CPEC project which cannot be mentioned here in the literature section for the reason that no ambiguous statement could be passed in it and there needs to be strong evidence along with the published form. This has been the primary reason for making this entire document along with the articulation of the argumentative discussion so that the negative impact with reference to the Baluchistan's local people in terms of the economic impact could be analyzed. There has been a lot of discussion on the economic boom that both of the states will accomplish but there is no investigation of the economic impact on the local region. Is there going to be an increase in the economic development in the region or will there be a negative impact? All of these questions will be addressed in the course of this entire research document.

Furthermore, this is an exploratory research which will enable a deeper understanding of the context and will also help in providing the essential features associated with the findings of the research and it is the main objective of it. Further methodology that has been made into use will be explained in the next chapter.

## 2.4 Summary

Pakistan is one of the few non-communist countries that have planned a meaningful defense, political and economic relations with China. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is essentially a multi-billion dollar project of road connectivity, rail network and energy investment project also known as the "game-changing in the context of Pakistan's economy. Moreover, CPEC is largely associated with many hopes, advantages, and local and geopolitical worldwide.

It all started when Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif visited Beijing for official tour and offered institutional structure for the entire spectrum of Pakistan China Economic Corridor in November 2014. This is also considered a key element of the major development plan to the head of state in China, it is referred to as a "One Belt, One Road" (abbreviated as OBOR). The main objective is to connect Asia with the regions in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, respectively. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is known as a well-planned and fine crafted thought and scheme to set free the course of meaningful collaboration between the two neighboring regions. Political power is increased cooperation process at several levels. Chin-Pakistan Economic Corridor was seen to further improve relations between the two traditional friends. The main objective of CPEC project is to promote trade in commercial. The results of the study show that there are many aspects involved in Pakistan's economic instability. These aspects include religious extremism, political instability, terrorism as well as the economic slowdown in the region. Over the past few years, two countries, i-e China as well as Pakistan, expanded huge political, strategic and defense relations. Many countries, such as neighboring countries of Pakistan seem to be hesitant in the development of the region and of Pakistan's economic and political betterment. Other most relatable study conducted by the CPEC states that China needs a small, safe and low-cost trading course to European as

well as Middle Eastern countries. And that could be carried out by means of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). This project is expected to overcome the problems of poverty in the country. Baluchistan has seen devoid of development as compared to other provinces of Pakistan. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor CPEC can have a positive economic impact on Balochistan in the long run. Province Widely has been ignored despite the fact that Baluchistan is rich in natural resources, it may be one of the reasons that the Baluch people were in a dispute with the center through the ages. That is why CPEC project faced some internal and external threats. This aspect is related to the political problems that might be faced by both states of China and Pakistan.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

Predominantly, the methodology that has been employed in the research is qualitative research method in which interviews were carried out from the political leaders of Baluchistan involved in CPEC project, local inhabitants of the region, local students and economists as well. In addition, during the process of data collection, it was made sure that the secondary data analysis is also carried out by the researcher for the reason that it enables in making further questions about the process along with the development of the questions. The data that was collected was carried out through small interviews with the sample. There was usage of the semi structured and short question answers were put forward to sample. Before going to the field, interview guideline was established that helped in structuring of the questions which will be asked in the interview. Further details for the applied methodology are further presented in the text below.

Description	Qualification	Age
Political Leaders involved in CPEC	Politician	45-50 years
Baluch People working in Islamabad	Varied (masters in different field)	30-35 years
Students (Islamic International University and Quaid e Azam University)	Masters level student	25-28 Years
Baluch Political personnel	Politician	40-45

### 3.1 The Process of Data Collection

After a questionnaire was designed, twenty seven interviews were carried out to gather the information about the problem area.

### 3.2 Instruments and Sources of Data

Secondary includes usage of the journals; previous conducted researches as well as the literature reviews about the CPEC project to conduct necessary information to allow evaluate the topic properly. However, unfortunately not much of the data is available about the subject area which is why the present study has been carried out. It is hoped that this research will make a good research that would enable others to extract knowledge out of it. The eligibility criterion was to gather data from those who had been in some way affected by the CPEC project. The data that was collected by using the interview guideline and description of which is mentioned in the following section:

### 3.3 Data collection- The Interview Method

As mentioned earlier, the interview method was used for the collection of data so that much of the information could be collected. It is one of the biggest benefits of the qualitative methods that it helps in the gaining of the in depth information that might not be achieved solely by means of the quantitative method for the research. For this to this reason, to have the better insight about the problems that the people are facing, the interview method was made into use by the researcher in the



field. An interview guideline was established that directly addressed the questions regarding the CPEC project and its impact on the individual's lives.

### **3.4 Sample**

The sampling technique applied for this research was through the convenient purposive sampling in which the most convenient respondents that were available for the interview were asked for the interview. The target respondents include elites, local people, students and economist. It was made sure that their consent is asked before carrying out of the interview. The participants were asked and told a brief overview along with the introduction about the research. The information that was delivered to them was carried out on their consensus, and later on the interview was conducted. The total time for the interview was on average recorded to be about 20-25 minutes in length and there was no usage of the tape recorder or any type of field photography technique because there was no need for it. The responses that were provided in the interview were analyzed by the process of thematic analysis.

The inclusion as well as the exclusion criteria will further be elaborated in the section below:

### **3.5 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

There were no specific inclusion or any type of an exclusion criteria but it was made sure that the people are mature enough for responding to the questions of the interview that had been articulated. People above 18 years old were preferred to respond for the process of the interview. This was carried out because of the reason that they are better in knowing about the CPEC project along with the positive or negative impacts of it. However, it was made sure that the respondent knows about the problem area along with a brief introduction about it for which a small interview was carried out prior to the actual interview in order to analyze whether the respondent knows

about the subject matter or not. By having this method executed, it enabled in gathering the most valid and most appropriate data that further could be analyzed.

The process of data analysis was then followed after the data collection and its description will be presented in the following part of the document:

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

The data was analyzed by means of the thematic analysis in which the responses were divided as well as categorized in the form of themes. Those themes were later on deeply analyzed by the researcher and it was made sure that a connection is established within the responses and is scrutinized.

During the conduction of research in the field, there were a number of ethical considerations that were also made into consideration which will further be explained in the upcoming passage:

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Following were some of the ethical considerations that were kept into focus and were considered to be important enough to be mentioned in the methodology section by the researcher:

- The information that was collected in the interviews was solely used for the research analysis and it was neither shared with anyone else nor was it mentioned anywhere else.
- The names were given codes and none of the names had been mentioned in the research so that the names are kept confidential and their personal information remains safe with the researcher only.
- In addition to that, if the respondent was not willing to share the information related to any sensitive topic, it was not recorded nor was the respondent forced to share the information further.

The above mentioned points were some of the key points that had been involved during the research process and the analysis was based on it. In the next chapter, the analysis of the provided responses will be carried out which will be supported with the literary evidences. However, it needs to be mentioned that no research has been previously conducted on the same topic.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

The research will be qualitative research method in which the elite's and local people's interviews were conducted which allows the interviewer to gain deep insight knowledge of the project. Total number of respondent twenty seven including both elites and local people Baluchistan working and studying in Islamabad. Secondary data will include the use of magazines; previous research carried out, as well as literature reviews in relation with CPEC project, carry out the necessary information to allow properly assessment of the issue. Eligibility criterion will be to gather data from those who were in some way involved in the project of CPEC. It will make sure that people are mature enough to respond to interview questions. Persons above 18 years are preferable to respond to the interview process. This will be done on the grounds that it is better to know about the project with positive or negative effects of it. The data will be analyzed using thematic analysis. The themes later deeply analyzed by researchers. In conducting research in this area, there will be a number of ethical considerations, which will also be ensured.

## **4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

As mentioned in the methodology section, 27 structured interviews were carried out to gain the insight about the issue relevant to the CPEC project that has been initiated and under progress in the region of Baluchistan. The respondents were

aware of the fact relevant to the CPEC project which further made the interview process even richer in data and allowed the entire data collection method a lot smoother. The overall findings were then analyzed through the thematic analysis and different themes were extracted out of the interviews that had been conducted. In addition to that, the researcher did not rely solely on the findings of the two interviews rather on the other hand; the data was also collected in the form of informal questions and answers from the local inhabitants in which the majority did not want to be displaced through this project.

Moreover, the informants were quite open to talk about this matter for the reason that it acted as the major factor in defining their futuristic situation in life. It could have an adverse impact or a pleasing outcome result (about which they are not so sure). During the process of data collection, it was tried by the researcher not to hurt anyone's personal feelings because many people were under influence and they were trying not to be judgmental about it. The major reason behind this opposing scenario is that, the area has been left without the proper resources and many of the natural resources are initiated and provided through the region of Baluchistan but ironically, on the other hand, the people themselves are suffering from the major power breakdown crisis. Not many of the resources are present and the government is generally blamed for this issue which is the reason behind blaming the CPEC project for only having beneficial outcome results for the ruler and the government authorities.

#### **4.1 Perceptions related to Economic Benefits to the 'Nation'**

In the interview process, one of the respondent's did mention that it is prospected that the CPEC project will have both short term as well as long term beneficial outcome results on the country. Not only will it increase and elevate the standing of Pakistan in the eyes of the world but on the other side of the

argument, it will also make it possible for the region to have strong political and diplomatic ties with other regions. It was surely identified that there will be economic benefits that would be gained by means of the CPEC project however; the findings also implied that the benefits will be solely related to the dominant and the powerful regions of Pakistan and not the Baluchistan itself that had been left deprived of the basic needs and requirements. This has also been identified as a fundamental element that has aggravated the feelings of the local inhabitants for the fact that it has always been the case for the region of Baluchistan province.

Furthermore, it was also implied that the benefits will not be in Baluchistan for sure and the possibility is there that the people will be more influenced and their current living standards could even get worse as compared to the ones that they are having right now. There is a possibility for the people to be displaced (which will further be discussed in the next section) and could be treated like the next region for the IDP's. Also, no statements by the government authorities are specified that talk about the settlement of the displaced people around the region. This was mentioned by the respondent who said that:

“Although the CPEC talks about the benefits to the ‘nation’ and the overall performance of the country, the government has not talked about the measures or the steps that it will incorporate to counter the problem relevant to the issues of the people that might be displaced in the process. There is not a single claim by the authoritative figures about us and the people of Baluchistan who might and most certainly will be affected by it because this always has been the case and it could be observed all around the Pakistan. We fear that this CPEC project is only going to be helpful for the people because this has also been the major element in the working of the country, either they want money to fill their own pockets or they want these kinds of projects to be functioning only for their regions to be developed and advanced”.

The above verbatim in the interview shows that the people are against this issue because of the fact that they fear the economic benefits will only be relevant and applicable to the local authorities and not the inhabitants. There were other related aspects that had been identified as the major theme for the people who would be influenced by the CPEC project and will further be discussed in detail in the following section:

#### **4.2 Negative Impact on People**

As mentioned earlier in the text, it was highlighted by all of the respondents in the process of the interview that the people and the local inhabitants will surely be affected by the process and the governing figures will not do something about it as usual because this has always been the way. Moreover, the respondents also indicated that the people are fearful about their security and their houses if they get taken away in the process of the CPEC project. The government is liable to answer for their actions and such developmental programs because of the fact that most of the people do not have more than a single house on which many of the house members are dependent upon. It is not the higher officials that will be under affect in the process but the general public will be harmed in the process. This is how; the people will possibly be influenced in the process for which the government along with the higher officials needs to ponder upon. In this research, it was also highlighted that the role of the government is very crucial in the resolution of the problems which will also be discussed in the section as follows.

#### **4.3 The Role of the Government in Resolving the Issue**

The respondents in the research and the interview process indicated their issues with the government figures who are not aware of the basic needs that the people require in the process. Furthermore, the government needs to understand the standing of the people's needs and requirements which is

mostly left without being discussed and unsettled. Following is the response of the respondent that had been recorded in the interview process:

“I personally think that the ones governing us ought to be among us and from us who do know about the needs that we require. The person who will be made authority among us and who will lead us further will also know what we go through. If the current government or the governing figures prior to the present situation is analyzed, they did not do anything to counter the problems that the Baluchis or the people of the Baluchistan is dealing with rather on the other hand, they were too selfish to fill their bellies with the money of the poor that should have been distributed and utilized to make their lives better. Also, in the CPEC project, the government needs to take all of the necessary steps to make sure that the people do get settled if their living is impacted in the process. If this cannot be done and if the people will be left deprived of their basic needs of lives then the CPEC or any other project should not be carried out because if our people are left unhappy and poor, we do not want anything on the massive levels that only helps the ones who are sitting in the authority position. I will say it again and again that the people of Baluchistan are always made to suffer and no one in the government had the audacity to address their needs. It should be done, people need to be given security and housing is they are taken away in the process or else, the project must not function”.

This response given above proves that the CPEC project is quite opposed by the local inhabitants due to the fears that they have in their minds and that need to be addressed by the government officials so that all of the population could work in peace and harmony in making the situation better. This has been identified as an issue as well as a resolution to the government figures which could also be utilized and pondered upon by them.

The proposed model that had been suggested through the present study also indicate that the governing authorities

need to be involved in the project of the development and also need to ensure the local inhabitants along with the citizens that they are most certainly working for the benefit of the nation as a whole. There is a need for this communication gap to be filled in the meantime which has also been suggested through the present study and will be discussed in the final chapter as well.

#### **4.4 Fear of Being Displaced**

The findings of the current study also indicated that the local inhabitants' fear of being displaced which had also been discussed in the above sections as well. The people have mostly associated this issue with the other areas of the country in which the local people were the ones who were affected in the process and the government did not do anything about it. The respondents kept saying that "this has always been the case and the government always does this" and so on. So, this has been identified as an issue which could be and needs to be addressed by the government figures because of the fact that they have been appointed to do so and to work for their people not themselves.

Moreover, it had also been proposed in the process of the data collection that if the displaced people or the ones who are prospected to be displaced in the process due to the incorporation of the land in the process, they need to be settled down properly through the housing schemes and the like. They should and they must be settled prior to the planning process otherwise where will they go if they are left out just like that? Hence, as a consequence, the fear of being displaced was recognized as the dominant theme in the process and had been found to carry paramount importance to be discussed in the process as well.

#### **4.5 Issues of Threats and Security to the Region**

Another big issue that has been encountered in the way of the CPEC project is the issue of the security as well as the threats



that are being given by the figures and agents who are against the development of the region and the country. It could be said because of the fact that many of the countries who are not in the favor of the development of Pakistan or China are against this project and have been threatening the country to stop this project. As a consequence, the Pakistani government and forces officials along with the collaboration of the Chinese governing authorities are making their best steps to control this situation against the possible threats.

In addition to that, it is also prospected that the challenging situation could elevate because it has a lot of benefits to the development of the region which has also been recorded in the process of the interview as well which is as follows:

“I would say that no one within the region of Pakistan is against the development and the progress of the country to be very honest. This is due to the fact that all of us and all the people that are residing in the country want to have better living standards and no one within a single household would want to destroy a house then why on earth is it possible that the country fellowmen would work against the country? I am completely of the view and I am also 100 percent sure about it that it is the outsiders who are against the Pakistani development. However, I am not saying that the CPEC project will bring no good to the region, it surely will and it is right as well. But, I do imply again and again that the people will be affected by it which needs to be focused and addressed as an issue by the government so that nothing happens against the people and the local inhabitants. The government and the armed forces is working day and night to protect us but the protection is not too much and we need to be protected from each and every angle which is the responsibility of the state. This is all I am stating and proposing in general.”

#### **4.6 Foreign Countries that are Against the CPEC Project**

Due to the beneficial and the opposite outcome results that are mostly associated with the CPEC project, on the contrary, it is

also a theory that the foreign countries that are against the development of Pakistan are basically making and initiating the hatred speech. This will allow the CPEC project to be influenced in this process and the major aim of the surrounding countries gets fulfilled through this process. In addition to that, the people were also of the view (with whom the informal discussions were carried out) that although the neighboring countries are against the development as well as the progression of Pakistan; the governmental figures need to work on it within the nation. They are not taking many steps to decrease this hatred that might end the dispute to an end and it will also allow all of the people of Pakistan to be united in making the steps towards the progress.

So, in this theme, the two major elements were identified which are as follows:

- The foreign countries that do not want Pakistan to be progressive are against the CPEC project and are making ways to disturb the harmony and peace in the region, and;
- The government need to make steps to encourage harmony in all of the regions of Pakistan in which none gets neglected from power and resources and the inter community disputes gets resolved. This will make it possible for all of the groups of people to move together towards the development (Ali, 2016).

Hence, these themes mentioned above were the primary and major contributions to the findings of the research that allowed to gain an in depth insight to the problem of the CPEC project and the factors that are surrounding it. Moreover, many of the major social, economic and political factors had been identified which could also influence the future researches and will allow the present research to act as a benchmark in finding the relations with the other relevant aspects.

#### **4.7 Emotional Issues Identified Among the People**

During the course of the research, there had also been some of the emotional attitudes and emotional issues identified in the research in which the people were not in the favor of the present project due to the reason that the region has always been neglected. Now that the government is finding beneficial outcome results through the project execution, they are not in the favor of the project to be carried out and to be functional. This issue has been identified through the present study which could also enable the future researchers to explore the region through this dimension as well.

In addition to that, the aspect of anger and hatred of the local inhabitants towards the governing authorities was also noticed in which the people who had been interviewed were of the view point that the governing authorities are not the representative of the region. Hence, they do not have the authority or they are not in the position of making the decision that such types of projects ought to be carried out. Moreover, in accordance with the researcher's personal point of view, the people themselves are not wrong in their point of view due to the fact that this had been the way for the people. This specific aspect had been identified and hence mentioned so that the themes could further be validated by means of the future researches as well.

This whole analysis do seem to indicate that the overall CPEC project possesses some of the very long lasting and advantageous long term outcome results which has been the reason for the project execution as well. The major state that will benefit in the process is also China but on the other side of the argument, Pakistan will be the main medium in the process of the trade network which gives a benefit to the country as well and this has been the reason for the elaborate focus of the governing figures on the project as well. However, on the other hand, the region of Baluchistan is surely being affected as per the findings and assumptions of the study as well for which

there have been some of the recommendations suggested as well which would further be talked about in the next chapter in order to gain the holistic insight to the situation as well.

#### 4.8 CONCLUSION

One respondent mentioned that the CPEC project will not only will this increase and enhance Pakistan's status in the eyes of the world, but on the other side, it will also make it possible for the country to have a strong political and diplomatic relations with other countries. Elites involved in the process of CPEC project are quite optimistic. They believe that Pakistan's economic prosperity is totally dependent on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and this project will lead Pakistan to a bright future. But on the other hand local people of Baluchistan and Gwadar itself are not satisfied so far the reason is they believe that Pakistan government priorities are not in line with Baluchistan issues. Some of the respondents said that they are striving to get basic necessities of life, beside this they social, economic, political and security issues. It has been highlighted by most of the respondents during the interview that the people and the local inhabitants will surely be influenced by the process and the governing authorities would not pay attention to it as usual because this has always been the way. The government needs to focus on primary issues of literacy and skills in the province so that Baluch people can participate in workforce of CPEC project, respondent added.

The results of this study also showed that the native of people of Gwadar are expected to be displaced. It happens usually during any developmental project the local people get influenced Respondents kept repeating that "it was always the case, in CPEC project and the government always does this," and so on. So it was identified as an issue that could be and need to be addressed by the government officials because, and to work for the people who are not themselves. There are

numerous countries that do not want development of Pakistan and China are opposed to this project and were threatening the country to stop this project. As a result, the Pakistani government forces and officials, along with cooperation from Chinese authorities that govern doing their best steps to control the situation against potential threats.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The findings of the study did indicate that the people do not want this project to be executed because of the 'fear' that they have about the matter and about the entire process. This could be accepted as a reality because the country does not seem to have a proper management system to address all of the issues side by side. However, in case of the CPEC project, it is the responsibility of the higher officials to deal with this matter as well if they are willing to take such drastic and bold steps to incorporate this plan. Moreover, the people are of the view in general that the CPEC project will be bringing beneficial outcome results to the other parts of Pakistan and not Baluchistan so, why is there any need for such types of programs when the region itself will not be benefitted by it? Although this type of a concluding statement could not itself be recognized as a sound thing to be stated however, it is the point of view of the public as well which had been the main objective of this study.

The main reason behind carrying out of this current research was to make sure whether this exact beneficial results are for sure going to be in case of the Baluchistan or not. The responses of the local inhabitants carried a lot of significance in the study which is the reason why that they were regarded as the most representative of the data and the population and were interviewed. This research could be taken as the primary resource for the providence of the baseline information which

could further be incorporated as well as utilized for the future researches in the same field.

A number of dimensions such as the fear of the people, the role of the government in the issue, the beneficial outcome results, the public interest, issue of the security etc. had been identified and discussed in detail in this research. Also, along with the identification of these factors and variables, it could be said that the governmental authorities are liable to respond to such queries that have been generated by the people for the fact that these are equally important as much as the progress is important for the nation on the whole.

It has also been deduced that the people will start functioning and start to encourage this project themselves if and only if their needs and requirements are met. It also needs to be made sure that the development is also related to the progression of the region as well otherwise the people are of the view that what good will the project of the CPEC will hold for them if there is no benefit for the region itself. It was also found out that the government needs to make sure to the masses that the region is not left deprived of the basic essentials like the other regions of the Pakistan and all of these problems get addressed and resolved. Hence, this was the overview of the entire research and there are a number of other related elements of the research that has been identified by the researcher and will be provided in the following section of the entire research study:

### **5.1 Recommendations**

There are a number of recommendations which will be further explained in the following points to summarize the points:

- It has been recommended through this study that the governmental authorities need to make steps to protect the local inhabitants both in terms of social and financial security.

- If the people are suspected to be displaced in the process, they need to be provided with the special programs and housing schemes that addresses this specific and vital issue that is of the paramount significance.
- There is a need for the awareness programs provided to the local people about the CPEC project in terms of the beneficial outcomes that it possesses and the people need to be made sure that their security and wealth will not be affected. These steps are the responsibility of the government authorities that has been recommended through the findings of this study that they need to be incorporated as well.
- If the interview process is also supplemented with the statistics as well as the facts and figures, it could also enhance the study and taken to the national as well as on the global level. The preliminary information will also act as strengthening the research in general.

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