

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: News Framing in Political, Strategic, and Economic Perspectives in Print Media of Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

The treatment, image, and issues related to CPEC become significant when this venture is considered a game-changer for the Pakistani economy. This study analyzes the CPEC coverage in Pakistan's highly circulated English newspaper, Daily Dawn, and The News. The quantitative content analysis technique is employed for this study from April 2015 to December 2019. This study aims to explore how news contents of selected newspapers portray the image of CPEC and the treatment of selected newspapers toward this project. The theoretical foundation of this study work under the Grunig models of Public Relations. The findings of this study reveal that both newspapers portray a positive image of CPEC. The primary focus of the news content of selected newspapers is information regarding the economic and political aspects of this project, while inadequate significance is given to strategic, social, and legal aspects. Moreover, from Grunig's models' perspective, major public relations practices worked under the public information and press agent model.

Keywords: CPEC, English Press, Image Building, Grunig Models of Public Relation

Introduction

Pakistan and China have kept up solid economic ties since the 1960s; according to these relationships, they shared sentiments of trust and fraternity. Friendship among Pakistan and China has been converted into economic ties in the last few years. The relationship of the two nations or more fortified step by step as China-Pakistan relations were additionally fortified with the Karakorum Highway (KKH) in the 1970s, which set up an interesting exchange course decade prior between the two nations. Chinese Prime Minister Mr. Li Kegang put forth an extremely noteworthy open explanation on his visit to Pakistan on May 13, 2013, saying,

“China will give you (Pakistan) every support and assistance and by helping you, we have to help ourselves.” The ongoing understanding of the type of China Pakistan Economic Corridor is an appearance of this dedication. This improvement venture is thought to be a "distinct advantage" on financial and geo-key grounds, which incorporates ventures more than \$62 (US) billion.

CPEC has turned into an awesome help for vitality-starved Pakistan, which has offered a plan to its devastating financial state. With the help of this project, Gwadar will offer life to Baluchistan, which has less priority of financial improvement. It will fill in as an entryway for comprehensive transportation of gas and oil spread from Central Asia to other nations, which have demand to meet their industry needs. The effect of media is critical on society as it helps in building general supposition and feed aggregate cognizance, in particular current issues. Pakistani media has a great part toward CPEC and has a constructive outcome of CPEC in broad daylight. Different nations as Indian and European media, have alternate perspectives concerning CPEC.

Media has an important role in producing stimulating states of mind between the populations in regards to CPEC; this part needs more specific in winning the expectation and trust of the general population, mainly when the Chinese have just advanced concerns in standing up to fear-based oppression, particularly in the most recent decade (Mesum and Israr, 2016). Hamid and Hameed (2016) investigated that Pakistani print media contents regarding CPEC revealed that both favorable and unfavorable contents appeared in the newspapers. Most content is seen as positive, but unfavorable content is also seen on the editorial part.

Grunig and Hunt created four models of Public Relations that depict the field's different management and commanding practices. These models plugin as directions to make strategies, projects, and organization's structure. These models depict the public practices of an organization that includes the public agency model, public information, two-way asymmetric model, and two-way symmetric model.

Rationales of Study

The CPEC is a \$62 billion investment. It will boost up Pakistan's current economic situation and potential to improve the living standard of about three billion people across the globe as part of the biggest Chinese vision of a grand Silk Road Economic Belt, which expands across Asia through the Middle East and connects to Europe. Pakistan is a democratic country, while China is a socialist country. The media of Pakistan is independent; we know that media is an important part of government and manipulate the minds of people, while CPEC is a big infrastructure project and a game-changer for Pakistan economics. So, it's too important to investigate newspapers' contents, especially how the English Pakistani press represents CPEC in news stories.

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Objective

To explore how Pakistan selected English newspapers represents CPEC issue in news content.

To investigate how Pakistani selected newspapers are portraying the image of CPEC issue in their news contents.

Research Questions

How do Pakistani selected newspapers represent CPEC issues in their news contents?

What are the public relations practices of Pakistani newspapers from the perspective of CPEC?

The Philosophy of One Belt One Road

China revealed to the world its vision to resuscitate the ancient Silk Road by enterprise huge infrastructure venture and adding value to ports around the Silk Road. China named it as One Belt One Road (OBOR). This scheme has two key mechanisms: one of is Silk Road Economic Belt, while the other is named as the Maritime Silk Road. Once this scheme is comprehended, it has huge economic impact on the deferent countries on its roadmap like Pakistan (Hali et al., 2015).

OBOR's strong-minded project comes at the dawn of changing global power subtleties, a key Chinese policy shift, and the predicted Asian Century. As development is ongoing on OBOR projects, cynicism and doubt have been uttered by the United States and its allies, like Japan and India, for whom the understanding of China's dream is an apparent nightmare because of their previous competitions. These anxieties and cynicism activate China's much-needed progression in boosting its naval abilities and other armed abilities of its allies. As Pakistan is vital economic and military ally of China. Chinese crusade to pursue its projects worldwide under the policy of the "One Belt One Road" that will have a marvelous effect on Pakistan and the China-Pakistan Economic (Hali et al., 2015).

The China Pakistan Economic Corridor

As roads, railways and pipelines are part of CPEC. These networks of the road not only connected Gwadar Port to western China but also improved the economic status of linked cities as well. Which not only for Pakistan but Chinese less developed cities as well like Xianjiang. This will reduce the income gap by linking developed littoral cities and provinces in China. CPEC is also helpful for China's aims of Global networking, and they open its open markets and industry for global trade. China will be importing oil from African and Middle East countries more reasonably as they are getting now, and it will be increasing its industrial output as

well. CPEC is the major part of the OBOR initiative of China; it will connect Asia, Europe, and Africa through a network of railway tracks, ports, and roads (Aneja, 2015).

According to the Express Tribune, the dynamic contribution of the leader of Pakistan, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, to determine the issues relating to the inborn political and financial issues is pivotal. All gatherings, the announcement asserted, attested their help to the CPEC, concurring that the new institutional system will have the capacity to better oblige the territorial worries in the future (Manan, 2016).

Economic ties via CPEC

CPEC isn't just a road, but it will bring a huge level of the network through railroad, pipelines, roads, fiber optics exceptional monetary zones, and so forth. It was additionally expounded that the South Asian region is considered as one of the slightest coordinated regions of the world. Furthermore, they recommended that it's the duty of the Pakistani government that they develop consensus on the CPEC route and address the apprehensions of the pretentious areas. If they are successful, it will make speedup the CPEC project to reinforce China-Pakistan relations and bring economic development to the country (Hussain & Ali, 2015).

One Belt One Road is a vital piece of a noteworthy improvement activity driven by China to connect to connect Asia with Europe, the Middle East, and Africa; the CPEC is abundantly connected to hopes and interests and, in addition, regional and worldwide geopolitics. This mega project also raises some questions regarding the plausibility of its execution (Wolf, 2016). Moreover, CPEC may start a slow move in Pakistan's territorial viewpoint. From one viewpoint, Pakistan looks at Iran as a potential accomplice to enable it to defeat its desperate vitality needs, yet but on the other side it wouldn't like to insult Saudi Arabia by getting excessively near Tehran (Shams, 2016)

Pakistan-China Bilateral Trade

China should not have guaranteed it to the two-sided relations, but it's considered with the regional and inclusive vision. China heartens the Economic Corridor projects with the help of its strong power in energy, infrastructure, and transportation with strong collaboration of China and Pakistan think tanks, educational exchange, mass media and make preparations for the complete execution of the "One Belt and One Road" initiative (Irshad et al, 2015).

China Pakistan relations are not only bound to finance and trade but also in the field of strategic corporation and diplomacy as well. High levels visits are often exchanged between both of these countries, which results in a variety of investments and agreements at the governmental level as well as private level for the progression of the bilateral relations. Pakistan and china contracted a bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in 2006, and in 2007 it came into the result. (Irshad and Xin, 2015).

Societal Aspect and Challenges of CPEC

CPEC is assuming the steppingstone part in the advancement of China's OBOR ingenuity, so affect evaluation is apparatus whereas environmental quality and social value are the outcomes. Researchers analyze, monitor, and manage both positive and negative social values. They attempt to recognize the social effects and dangers among the improvement procedure of China Pakistan Economic Corridor. According to on-ground research of the Kashi district and Gwadar region of Pakistan, different risks have been discovered, including large-scale and small-scale risks. Researchers mainly give consideration to forestalling the key measure for decreasing the negative effects and risks and creating productive outcomes for the development of the CPEC region (Zhang & Shi, 2016).

Pakistan has a strong relationship with China in terms of economics and social relation. Jilani (2017) observed that Pakistan has not only a solid economic association with china but also social relationships as well. For example, Pakistan helped China enormously to increase its network everywhere throughout the world; Pakistan air space was opened for PIA, and China Airlines made traveling easy for Chinese and Pakistani and made strong social relations. Furthermore, Pakistan likewise secured the method for China in the UN framework and assumes a noteworthy part in making China a changeless individual from UN Security Council. Because of these charming and solid relations, we will have tremendous accomplishments as CPEC.

Legal Terms and Limitations of CPEC

The purposes of amicability and struggle between the two legitimate frameworks (Pakistan and China) must be broken down with a view to connect the distinctions for the advancement of the CPEC ventures. China has an alternate lawful framework from that of Pakistan. It is a communist arrangement of equity. Its legitimate framework depends principally on the model of Civil Law. Different courts exist there, which include Local People's Courts, Supreme People's Court, Court of Final Appeal, and Courts of Special Jurisdiction for Hong Kong and Macau. The refinement between the People's Republic of China and Macau and Hong Kong ought to likewise be remembered when thoroughly drawing a lawful system for China Pakistan Economic Corridor ventures. Here is no "detachment of forces" in China, dissimilar to in Pakistan. Equity is fast in China, while it could take ages to settle on legal choices in Pakistan. One needs to perceive how Pakistan and China could connect these holes. The issue expects to encourage significance in awaken of the venue of the Exceptional Industrial Zones beneath the CPEC. State endeavors, open private organizations, and joint-endavors may. The two sides ought to choose how to take up such cases. A common assent must be drawn so that a lawful and legal cover can be given to CPEC ventures. Numerous BRI nations are under creating where monetary and legal choices take

numerous years to work out as expected. These nations should make a legitimate framework at standard with the created nations to determine such questions rapidly (Malik, 2018).

Theoretical Perspective

This model works for organizational image building and organization relationships with the audience, especially in mega projects; mass media is considered to be a bridge between policymakers and the general public. So here, media has an important role in boosting up the project and building an image of both countries in terms of Socio-Economic and political aspects, and commercial grounds as well. So International Newspapers of both countries also play a significant role in image building and representing CPEC. These newspapers highlight Organizational policies and the concerns of public interest to create a relationship between policymaker and its audience. Media of both countries represent CPEC according to the policies and interests of their country. The researcher will compare newspapers of both countries in terms of image building with the perspective of Grunig Models of Public Relations. The researcher has used Grunig's model of public relations. The researcher has found these models such as press agent/publicity, public information, a two-way asymmetric and two-way symmetric model suitable for purposed study. These four models are based on their understanding of organizational and management practice. This approach is revealed in their definition of PR, which states: "public relations activities are part of the management of communication between an organization and its publics" (Grunig and Hunt, 1984). These models are creating links between organizations and the public. Media is an important tool to build an image of an organization. News contents of the selected newspaper are creating an image and changing the perception of public-related CPEC issues.

Methodology

The researcher has used quantitative content analysis to analyze and interpret the data collection that has taken from two Pakistani newspapers, Daily Dawn and The News. All news stories related to CPEC given in these newspapers are a sample of this study from April 2015 to December 2019.

Results

This study is about analysis of leading English newspapers of Pakistan. Pakistani leading newspapers cover CPEC issues in different aspects. These issue categories in five aspects (Economic aspect, Political aspect, Social aspect, Strategic aspect, and Legal aspect). Each aspect has its components. The keyword of Economics aspects includes Infrastructure, Investment, Industry, Power Projects, Import/Export, and Employment. Political Aspects include Governance, Bilateral

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Relationships, Foreign relationships, Education, and Health Care. Keywords of Social Aspect include Culture, Norms, Language, Moral Values, Ethnicity, and Religions. Strategic Aspect includes Military, Terrorism, Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Equilibrium with India, while in Legal Aspect includes Inter-provincial coordination, Constitution, License and The Status of the region. On the basis of these components, the researcher investigated the all-news contents related to the CPEC issue during a given time period. The results deal with the descriptive representation of data taken from Daily Dawn and The News.

Table 1: Percentage of Both newspapers based on categories

Category	Daily dawn			The News		
	F	UF	N	F	UF	N
Economic aspect	81%	11%	8%	87%	3%	10%
Political aspect	63%	24%	13%	67%	15%	18%
Social aspect	50%	36%	14%	89%	6%	6%
Strategic aspect	93%	7%	0%	77%	13%	10%
Legal aspect	50%	30%	20%	50%	38%	13%

Table 1 shows the percentage of published news in Pakistani Newspapers by its categories according to the favorable, unfavorable and neutral news. Under the Economic aspect (81%) favor, (11%) unfavorable and (8%) neutral news published in Daily Dawn newspaper, while the same category in the News newspaper (87%) in favor, (3%) unfavorable and (10%) neutral news has published. Under the Political Aspect (63%) in favor, (24%) news is unfavorable and (13%) neutral news has published in Daily Dawn newspapers whereas in The News newspaper published (67%) in favor, (15%) unfavorable and (18%) neutral. Under the Social Aspect (50%) favor, (36%) unfavorable and (14%) neutral news has published in Daily Dawn, while (89%) in favor, (6%) unfavorable and (6%) neutral news has published in Chinese newspapers. Under the Strategic Aspect (93%) favor, (7%) unfavorable and (0%) neutral news has published in Daily Dawn, while (85%) in favor, (6%) unfavorable and (8%) neutral news in The News has published. Under the Legal Aspect (50%) in favor (30%) unfavorable and (20%) neutral news has published in Daily dawn, and there is (50%) favor, (38%) unfavorable, and (13%) neutral news has published in The News.

Table 2. Overall coverage of CPEC in selected Newspapers

Category	Percentage of News	
	Dawn	The News
Economic aspect	55%	44%
Political Aspect	26%	34%
Social Aspect	5%	7%
Strategic Aspect	11%	12%
Legal Aspect	3%	3%

Table 2 depicts the preference of the newspapers according to the categories. It is shown as both newspapers dominantly cover the economic aspect of the CPEC issue, (55%) news of Daily Dawn published in the economic aspect, (26%) published news is related to political aspect, (5%) news are related to social aspect, (11%) news are related to strategic aspects, while only (3%) news are related to the legal aspect. Similarly, The News also dominantly cover economic aspects of CPEC issue, (44%) news is related to economic aspects, (34%) news is related to political aspects, (7%) news is related to social aspects, (12%) news is related to strategic aspects, while only (3%) news is related to legal aspects of CPEC.

Discussion

The research work deals with the analysis of the CPEC issue in the English press of Pakistan (The News, Daily Dawn); these are the leading Newspapers and news were selected from April-2015 to December-2019. The researcher has applied the Quantitative content analysis method for the collection of the data. The researcher has investigated different news related to CPEC issues that were published in The News and Daily Dawn. The purpose behind the selection of Pakistani (The News, Daily Dawn) is the quality of written stuff, Policy of Newspapers, presentation of news popularity, and the largest circulation among the masses of both newspapers.

The first research question is “How do Pakistani selected newspapers represent CPEC issues in their news contents?”. The results of this study reveal that both newspapers dominantly cover the CPEC issues. However, both newspapers focused on the economic and political aspects. We can see that (55%) news of Daily Dawn published economic aspect and (26%) news published related

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to the political aspect. Similarly, The News published (44%) news related to economic aspects, and (34%) news is related to political aspects.

Afzal et al. (2019) explored the role of media in promoting CPEC. In their study “Examining Pakistani news media discourses about China–Pakistan Economic Corridor: A corpus-based critical discourse analysis,” they conclude that Pakistani media play an important role in promoting the CPEC issue and present a positive image of China. These contents promote the brotherhood of both countries and build a positive and friendly discourse about China. With reference to the context, both countries are playing positive image toward both nations as table 2 shows that both newspapers are covering not only economic aspect but political aspect as well. A big part of the contents of news covers the friendly relation of both countries in a positive way.

The second research question is “What are the public relations practices of Pakistani newspapers from the perspective of CPEC?”. Both newspapers significantly cover the economic and political aspects of CPEC. Zahra (2017) investigate that “Public Relations Practices in Pakistan: Considering Grunig's General Principles of Excellence” they proposed qualitative research which was based on in-depth interviews of the participant. They conclude that most participants think that the Public Relations of Pakistan relates to press agency and the public information model. And very few participants say that it is a two-way communication that is used by Pakistani organizations. Similarly, this study reveals that Pakistani newspaper is also playing a vital role in promoting CPEC in public. On the other hand, both newspapers focus on the economic aspect and give less attention to the social aspect. Another study also claims that Pakistani organizations use one-way communication and mostly focus on press agents and the public information model of PR (Mukhtar et al., 2018).

Pakistani selected newspapers cover all aspects of CPEC, but the contents of newspapers mainly focus on the economic and political aspects. There are some concerns of provinces and their public, which were not discussed in the contents of selected newspaper in detail. Also above mentioned research explores that public relations practices of Pakistani organizations work under the press agent and public information model. According to this scenario, selected newspapers of Pakistan are positively creating an image of the CPEC issue, and these practices work under the public information model of public relations.

Conclusion

This study is an analysis of the CPEC issue in the leading English press of Pakistan (Daily Dawn, The News). The researcher explored the contents of both newspapers regarding the CPEC issue. Both newspapers significantly cover the CPEC issue in their news content. The focus of both newspapers is on the economic and political aspects, while social, strategic, and legal aspects are not significantly discussed in the news content. Cumulatively these newspapers portray a

positive image of CPEC. At the same time, the public relations practices of these newspapers are worked under the publicity and public information model of PR because the main purpose of both newspapers is to provide information regarding the CPEC issue.

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