

**RESEARCH PAPER****Chinese Work Ethics: An excellent opportunity for Pakistan through CPEC****Dr. Reema Murad**

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Corresponding Author reema.murad@umt.edu.pk**ABSTRACT**

CPEC, a game-changer megaproject has shown that Pakistan can learn a great deal from Chinese work ethics, rich history and cultural heritage that is deeply influenced by Confucianism. China has proved its economic grit through different transitions ranging from Mao's Great Leap Forward to a more open market approach in the 1990s. This study explores how Pakistan can learn from and assimilate both countries different work cultures in order to facilitate CPEC. Qualitative method is used through analyzing research articles, books, and internet sources to analyze how Chinese work ethics can influence Pakistan. Understanding Chinese work ethic can pave the way for bridging cultural divides to encourage mutual respect and understanding. There is a need to engage all stakeholders involved to achieve a deeper understanding of norms and workplace cultures in Pakistan. In order to ensure the advancement of research and development which is vital for the advancement of CPEC.

Keywords Confucianism, Game Changer, Great Leap Forward, Work Ethics**Introduction**

The last six decades have witnessed the friendship between Pakistan and China which has grown into a close and mutually beneficial strategic relationship which has primarily been shaped by shared strategic interests (US Institute of Peace, 2020).

China-Pakistan diplomatic relations were established in 1951 with Pakistan being the first Islamic nation to establish diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China. Pakistan was also China's steadfast ally during China's period of global isolation, with Pakistan acting as a bridge between China and the world. The relationship between China and Pakistan has been mutually reciprocal with China providing Pakistan with military, economic, and technical assistance with China becoming the biggest provider of armaments to Pakistan as well as Pakistan being China's third largest trading partner (Afridi & Bajoria, 2015; Mahmood, 2015; Rahim, et. al., 2018).

Mutual respect and trust has been the cornerstone which has helped China and Pakistan cultivate a comprehensive partnership in the 21st Century (CIIS, 2023). China and Pakistan released the Joint Statement on Deepening the Bilateral Comprehensive Strategic Cooperation in May 2013, during Premier Li Keqiang's visit to Pakistan. Both nations made a commitment in this Statement to increase their strategic cooperation in eight areas: international and regional cooperation, marine and aerospace, humanities, connectivity, economy and commerce, politics, defense and security, and maritime and aerospace (CIIS, 2015).

Following President Xi Jinping's historic visit to Pakistan in April 2015, both countries ties were elevated to an "an all-weather strategic cooperative partnership". CPEC is a prominent illustration of how continued diplomatic and military cooperation, together with investment ties, have strengthened this collaboration (United States Institute of Peace, 2020).

The success of the China over the past fifty years, and especially the ambitious flagship project of CPEC, demonstrates the potential for Pakistan to learn from the disciplined and diligent work ethic of China. This dedication can be observed through the Chinese implementation of CPEC (Gulrez, 2015)

Literature Review

It is imperative when discussing the Chinese economic growth miracle to discuss the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward. The Wilson Center, an American think tank points out that even though the Great Leap Forward which was started by Mao Zedong in 1958 to increase steel production, however it failed in its objective. Rather, millions of Chinese perished as a result of this economic policy, especially due to the fact that the entire workforce which was working on farmland was diverted to factories, therefore leaving unharvested crops and as a result, famine. MacFarquhar (1999) estimates that 55 million peasants died of starvation. The Cultural Revolution of 1966 which was initiated by Chairman Mao to reassert himself as the leader of the Communist Party and purge the Party of what he saw as bourgeoisie and imperialist elements, lead to further chaos, with Phillips (1999) emphasizing that the Cultural Revolution led to which led to destruction of the economy, widespread hunger and the death of 20 million people. The 1980s saw the start of improvement of the Chinese economy with the OECD (2010) highlighting in its report that by 2000, Chinese economic growth rate had increased to 12%. Arestis et al (2021) also add to this, saying that agricultural expansion helped in providing the surplus available for increased economic growth and an expanding industrial base.

Chinese work ethics according to China Today (2019), a daily Chinese newspaper, is deeply rooted in Confucianism, which consists of hard work, ethics and morality.

According to Barbsh et al, (1996) work ethics includes work discipline as well as industriousness. Khertan and Saeed (2017) point to the overall work approach in Pakistan as being laid back with less attention being paid to work being done on time. Mukhtar et al (2022) point to the need for cross culture understanding in order to understand the work culture of different countries. Javed (2021), and Muzaffar, and Khan, (2021) emphasizes that Pakistan needs to have a highly qualified human resource base and the CPEC can be pivotal in that role.

Theoretical Framework

Soft power is a concept that dates back to the early Chinese culture. Sun Tzu, a prominent Chinese military strategist who was born in 544 BC, derived his idea of soft power from Joseph Nye, the father of the term in modern international relations. Sun Tzu's main premise was that by using the concept of soft power, one might win wars without using force. Sun Tzu believed that leaders should adopt wise decisions and demonstrate moral excellence in order to promote the prosperity and security of their country. (Dost Barrech, 2020). According to experts, the current Chinese government has been following this approach, emphasizing peaceful development and win-win cooperation, especially through projects such as the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (Barrech & Khan, 2023).

The notion of soft power is also closely linked to Confucianism. Confucius philosophy is also rooted in the principles of soft power, such as promoting benevolence, harmony and obedience, Confucius believed that governance with moral force rather than physical force would win over people and have a greater impact in the long run (Barrech & Khan, 2023). Human resource development is based on three categories of theories

- Psychological theory which explores the core human aspects of developing human resources
- Economic theory emphasizes effective and efficient ways of utilizing human resources

- Systems theory explores the complex and dynamic interactions of organizations and their environments (Swanson, 2008).

Material and Methods

A qualitative and analytical method was used in this study. There were several techniques, explanatory viewpoints, and document-based content analyses used. Secondary sources were used including government publications, organizational reports, academic papers, newspapers, printed sources, documents, books, journals, periodicals, and electronic sources.

The Economic Transformation of the People's Republic of China

The beginning of October 1949 saw the declaration of the PRC ending the civil war between the Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang which began right after the Second World War (US Department of State, 2023).

When the Chinese Communist Party was first formed in 1921, it operated as a study group alongside the Nationalist Party inside the First United Front. This partnership only lasted until the "White Terror" of 1927, despite the Chinese Communists' cooperation with the Nationalist Army during the Northern Expedition of 1926–1927 to combat the warlords who were impeding the establishment of a powerful central government. The Nationalists turned against the Communists during this time, who were either murdered or expelled from the Party.

After the Chinese Civil War revived as a result of the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II, the Japanese surrendered in 1945. Mao Zedong, the chairman of the Communist Party, and Chiang Kai-shek, the leader of the Nationalist Party, convened in 1945 to hold a series of discussions regarding the establishment of a post-war government. They both believed that all Chinese political parties should have similar rights and that the military should be united. This cease-fire, however, was short-lived, and the two factions were fighting a full-fledged civil war by 1946. (Yaseen, et. al. 2017)

Up until 1949, the Civil War raged. A Communist triumph appeared more plausible as it went on. The Communist Party claimed superior military organization and substantial support from the general public. The Nationalist Government's popularity had declined due to years of incompetence and corruption (US Department of State, 2023).

China, which came after thousands of years of dynastic monarchical rule in mainland China, is the most recent political entity to hold political power. Mao Zedong (1949–1976), Hua Guofeng (1976–1978), Deng Xiaoping (1978–1989), Jiang Zemin (1989–2002), Hu Jintao (2002–2012), and Xi Jinping (2012–present) have been the main figures at the leadership (Mühlhahn, 2019).

Mao's Rule

China saw a socialist transition from a traditional peasant society under Mao Zedong's leadership, advancing toward heavy industries within a planned economy. Significant upheaval was produced across the nation by movements like the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward.

The economic reforms of the late 1970s were spearheaded by Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese leader between 1978–89. China became one of the second-biggest economies in the world under his leadership, renowned for its quick development, emphasis on high-productivity manufacturing, and use of cutting-edge technology (Fenby, 2019).

The Roots of the 'Great Leap Forward'

The defeat of the Kuomintang saw the establishment of the PRC on October 1, 1949, and the defeat of the Kuomintang leaders who retreated to Taiwan. Mao, the founder of Communist China, placed great emphasis on the class struggle system (Fenby, 2019).

China's previous system, in which tenant peasants farmed the land and gentry landlords owned the fields, was replaced by a distribution system that favored impoverished or landless peasants, significantly lowering income disparity. The Chinese land reform had an impact on over a million landlords; some chose self-imposed exile, while others faced execution. Outsiders were banished and foreign investments were confiscated (Scheidel, 2017).

Nationwide political movements centered around class struggles were initiated during this time. During the notable Anti-Rightist Campaign of 1957–1958, at least 550,000 persons were punished, mostly intellectuals and political dissidents (Teiwes & Sun, 2016).

The Chinese Communist Party then went on to create a de facto one-party state. The Sufan Movement, the Three-Anti and Five-Anti Campaigns, and the Suppression of the Counter-Revolutionaries were among the events of this era that caused a great deal of mortality in China.

Great Leap Forward

The main goal of the Great Leap Forward was to establish an industrialized communist society in place of China's rural economy. Initiated by the CCP in May 1958, a significant focus was placed on increasing steel production. However, the campaign proved to be a political failure, leading to millions of deaths across China (Wilson Center, 2021).

Mao was adamant that socialism would triumph over all other philosophies, and to this end, he launched the Great Leap Forward plan, which included mass collectivization and communally organized iron smelters to amplify steel production. The decision to divert agricultural workers to steel production, leaving crops unharvested, proved catastrophic. Mao's insistence on using community smelters over modern factories, fearing that factories would dampen enthusiasm for his policies, precipitated the failure of the Great Leap Forward and the ensuing widespread devastation (Wilson Center, 2021).

The consequences included the most lethal famine in human history, with an estimated 15 to 55 million people perishing from starvation or epidemics. Additionally, malnutrition drastically reduced birth rates (MacFarquhar, 1999).

Cultural Revolution

In May 1966, Chairman Mao initiated the Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution, aiming to reassert his authority over the Communist Party by purging elements perceived as imperialist and bourgeois.

The staggering consequences of the Cultural Revolution included a crippled economy, a decade characterized by violence, hunger, and stagnation. Death toll estimates range from several hundreds of thousands to 20 million (Phillips, 2019). The period saw widespread instances of cannibalism, and a total collapse of education and transportation systems, with China descending into a state of terror.

Following Mao's death, China embarked on an economic transformation in the following the devastation caused by the Cultural Revolution's, focusing on reforming state *ques*

To comprehend the success of China, it's essential to understand its industrialization journey.

In the early 1980s, the People's Republic of China accounted for a mere 2 percent of global GDP. This figure was inferior to any of the G7 or BRICS countries. However, it rose to become the third-largest economy in the world by 2000. Furthermore, China's GDP increased by 12% in 2009. (OECD, 2010).

In the 1980s, China emphasized research, aiming to explore new overseas markets for products made in China and to attract investment to mainland China.

During the same decade, investments increased in essential generative and associated industries, further augmenting material input. Production units were strategically placed near coastal belts, such as the Yangtze River belt, to amplify economic growth. Industrial priorities shifted from heavy to light industry, focusing on reducing poverty, diversifying economic sectors, and opening China to global trade (China Today, 2022).

Modernizing its corporate sector while upholding socialist egalitarian values was China's extraordinary accomplishment. The country moved toward efficiency in the 1980s, emphasizing its products, targeting niche markets, and then branching into mainstream markets and enterprises. Central to this strategy was research, promoting Chinese products internationally, and attracting pivotal FDI.

Between 1985 and 1997, rural incomes rose by 63% in real per capita terms (Nyberg and Rozelle, 1999). This upliftment improved living standards for China's peasants, who witnessed an annual consumption growth rate of 7.8% from 1979 to 1992. Agricultural expansion supplied the surplus vital for the burgeoning industrial base and urban population growth (Arestis et al., 2021).

The 1990s saw intensified development in the Chinese chemical and processing industry. This period also observed an upward trend in consumer spending, urbanization, and investments in infrastructure, transportation, and heavy industry.

Over the past 20 years, both heavy and light industries operated synergistically. Throughout the 1990s, China gradually transitioned to a market economy, spurring the industrialization of cities and igniting the nation's economic ascent.

China's accession to the WTO boosted its social productivity, thanks to increased exports, investments, and domestic consumption. The country evolved into a global manufacturing powerhouse. Economic globalization introduced China to advanced corporate management and business models.

Rising export earnings have generated wealth in China, bolstered by sustained foreign investments and trade surpluses. Even post the 2008 financial crisis, China pivoted towards high-quality sustainable development by tempering growth and reconfiguring its economic framework.

China's approach integrated two strategies: sending thousands abroad, mainly to developed nations, to assimilate Western economic progress and scientific advancements; and crafting a hybrid model that merged private and public sectors (Hameed, 2015).

Chinese Work Ethics

Another cornerstone of China's success is its work ethic, deeply rooted in Confucian ideology, which emphasizes morality and virtuous conduct (China Today, 2019). This

staunch belief in dedication, hard work, and commitment has propelled China's rapid economic expansion (The Express Tribune, 2016).

Pakistan can glean significant insights from China, especially in relation to China's commendable work ethics and craftsmanship.

Understanding what work ethics encompasses is vital. According to a perspective by Jack Barbash, a comprehensive definition of work ethics integrates work as a means to an end that can potentially bring the reward of material accomplishment.

Furthermore, work ethics signifies pride in high-quality workmanship, a deep-seated satisfaction derived from work, and an inherent hardworking nature. Additionally, it incorporates work discipline, underlined by the principles of deference, diligence, regularity, and industriousness (Muzaffar et. al., 2018; Barabsh et al., 1996).

Work ethics can be understood as a constellation of values, moral principles, and guidelines on professional behavior. While the dominant discourse in Pakistan gravitates towards workplace conditions, labor participation rates, and gender inequality in the workforce, labor productivity remains paramount. This metric, which gauges the output produced per input, has unfortunately been overshadowed in Pakistan.

It is critical to comprehend the idea of work ethics. Work ethics is sometimes considered a vague and abstract concept because it cannot be measured. On the other hand, material, labor and capital are considered critical for the measurement of productivity as they directly have an impact on productivity. Another aspect to note is that as these aspects of labor, capital and material are measurements that effect the direct work at hand for example industry etc. However, the work ethics are an intrinsic part of civic society shaped for thousands of years and in turn are crucial for the successful economic development and prosperity of society (Pakistan Today, 2023).

Regionally, Pakistan lags in terms of work ethics and labor productivity. Data from The International Labor Organization (ILO) illustrates this disparity: between 2000 and 2019, while China's output per person surged by 388%, India saw a growth of 177%, and Bangladesh by 109%. In stark contrast, Pakistan's growth rate was a mere 32%. As per the APO's Productivity Databook-2022, Pakistan's productivity growth rate from 2015 to 2020 was 1.6%, trailing behind China's 4.7%, India's 2.6%, and Vietnam's 5.2% (International Labor Organization, n.d; Shah, et. al., 2020).).

Several factors underpin this lag in productivity. A prime cause is the stagnant work environment marred by a pervasive lack of motivation and widespread job dissatisfaction. From the employer's perspective, employees are frequently mistreated, with office politics adding to the strain.

Regarding work ethics, a significant portion of employees and management, particularly in the public and service sectors, seem susceptible to corruption, incompetence, nepotism, and a flagrant disregard for ethical standards. Coupled with this is a glaring absence of employee motivation, stemming from the deficit in skill development, ethical grounding, and recognition. It's imperative to note that intrinsic motivation is paramount—it fosters peak productivity by mitigating workplace stress and anxiety.

Confucianism and Its Influence on Work Ethics

Confucianism has profoundly influenced Chinese work ethics. With its roots going back approximately 2000 years, this ideology remains pertinent in shaping the work culture of many East Asians, notably the Chinese and Japanese. Confucius (551-478 BC), revered as China's inaugural teacher, emphasized 'Jen' as a foundational social concept, encompassing humaneness, benevolence, reciprocity, and loyalty (Yeh and Xu, 2010). The core tenets of Confucianism underscore work ethics, interdependence, harmony, discipline, education, law, and societal stability.

Significant contrasts exist between Pakistani and Chinese work ethics. While the Chinese ethos embodies hard work, dedication, and commitment—factors contributing to their rapid economic growth—Pakistan often exudes a more laid-back approach with the prevalent notion that 'work will eventually get done' (Khertan & Saeed, 2017).

Business practices and networking differ substantially between the Chinese and Pakistanis. Challenges arise at various levels, such as cross-cultural adaptation deficits at both individual and organizational levels, resulting in project and management hurdles (Wolf, 2016; World Bank, 2020). The Chinese prioritize both professional and personal networking, understanding its value. Contrastingly, many Pakistanis lack this networking focus, complicating cross-cultural interactions (Daft & Weick, 1984). Hence, fostering cross-cultural comprehension and effective adjustment strategies is essential (Mukhtar et al., 2022).

Confucianism's principles permeate China's values, leadership practices, and guiding philosophies (Huang, 1988). This philosophy has facilitated China's economic ascent by emphasizing formal education and knowledge-centric learning—key elements in China's regional dominance (Kwan, 2011). Prominent Chinese leaders have embraced Confucian teachings (House et al. 2004, Han, 2014). For instance, 'industriousness,' a Confucian tenet, has significantly aided the East Asian economic trajectory. Within China's official discourse, terms like 'hard work,' 'harmony,' and 'peaceful coexistence' are esteemed. This philosophy's reach extends globally, with Confucius institutes established in numerous universities and seminar venues.

Human Resource Development

Human Resource Development (HRD) plays an instrumental role in the CPEC's success (Kalia, 2015). HRD encompasses individual as well as organizational training, career progression, training programs, and mobilization initiatives, all aiming to boost employee efficiency and effectiveness (Siddiq et al, 2021).

Human capital reflects the aggregate of abilities enhancing labor productivity within a specific economy. Presently, Pakistan's human capital development lags in macroeconomic evaluations. Beyond education, other pivotal factors include skillsets, physical health, and social attributes. The World Bank introduced the HCI in 2018, which ranked 157 nations based on a child's potential human capital acquisition by age 18. HCI encompasses five indicators:

- (i) Child's likelihood to survive until age 5;
- (ii) Predicted years of a child's education;
- (iii) Harmonized test scores indicating learning quality (yielding "learning-adjusted" schooling years);
- (iv) Adult survival rate up to age 60; and

(v) Percentage of non-stunted children below age 5.

Human Capital Development in Pakistan and the Implications for CPEC

In holistic terms, the Human Capital Index (HCI) offers a comprehensive perspective on a nation's human capital progress. Alarming, Pakistan ranks 134th out of 157, underperforming both regional and comparable economies. When delving into individual components, Pakistan's performance remains lackluster across the board (Table S1.1). This unfavorable position mirrors the findings of the United Nations' Human Development Index (HDI). According to the 2018 HDI, Pakistan is placed 150th out of 189 nations (State Bank of Pakistan, n.d)

On the brighter side, employment prospects brought forth by the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) have been encouraging. Nevertheless, several challenges inhibit Pakistan from fully harnessing the CPEC's potential, which will be elaborated upon in the ensuing discussion.

Upon the completion of CPEC's initial phase, the employment impact can be quantified. Data from the CPEC Center for Excellence indicates that direct employment opportunities created through various infrastructure projects numbered around 124,470 from FY15 to FY18. This figure is anticipated to swell by FY31, primarily fueled by the jobs generated through the establishment of Special Economic Zones (CPEC Center for Excellence, 2018) (State Bank of Pakistan, n.d).

Pakistan confronts several barriers that hinder its ability to capitalize on these burgeoning employment opportunities. An alarming concern is the country's educational landscape. As per the Labor Force Survey of the year 2017-18 as well as the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, a staggering 40.1% of the labor force is illiterate. Furthermore, among the literate workforce, 74.5% possess education only up to the matriculation level. A revelation from the 2016 Annual State of Education Report (ASER) discloses that roughly one in ten Class-10 students from rural areas couldn't recognize a word in Urdu or other local languages. Such statistics underscore the glaring insufficiency in basic literacy skills, a prerequisite for technical roles.

The nation's workforce is also grappling with declining productivity and diminished human capital potential, resulting in compromised technical proficiencies.

There is hope for the next phase of CPEC, especially in terms of technological developments. The goal of projects like the installation of an 820 km optical fiber line from Khunjerab to Rawalpindi is to provide hitherto disconnected areas with quick and safe internet access. The inception of Special Economic Zones is poised to foster technology transfers and spillover effects. However, historical neglect towards human capital development has placed Pakistan at a disadvantage, specially making the shift to a knowledge-based economy or 'informatization.' Pakistan is ranked lower in this category than its peers in the Belt and Road Initiative, according to an index created by the Chinese State Information Center in 2018. The year 2018's EIU's Inclusive Internet Index further corroborates this observation, ranking Pakistan 68th among 86 countries (State Information Center of China, 2023).

Pakistan is besieged by a myriad of challenges: a skill-deficient workforce, intellectual exodus, stifled entrepreneurial spirit, widespread educational inadequacies, rampant unemployment, and insurgent threats, to name a few. The prevailing Human Resource Development milieu thereby becomes a daunting impediment for CPEC's seamless realization (Asrar-ul-Haq, 2014). The scope of Human Resource Development has also broadened to encompass health, safety, cultural dynamics, and several aspects previously deemed external to HRD, each bearing significance in shaping human capital (McClean, 2016).

This underscores the nuanced differences in business methodologies between Pakistan and China.

Understanding Cultural Nuances in the CPEC Collaboration

There is no denying the seeming disparity in strategies between China and Pakistan, especially pertaining to the concept of 'trust', manifests not only in business interactions but also within the broader framework of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor.

For instance, Pakistan exhibits hesitance in individual monetary dealings, making many wary of upfront payments for goods. This has given rise to credit-based transactions where payments are deferred to a mutually agreed-upon future date. Interestingly, this practice isn't uniform across the country. In Karachi, for example, payments tend to be made upon receipt of goods, while in Lahore, many traders operate with payments still 'in the pipeline' (Business Recorder, 2016).

Pakistan has much to gain in learning from Chinese work ethics. It's essential for both China and Pakistan to grasp each other's work ethics to navigate the future trajectory of CPEC more effectively. Given their distinct cultural, religious, and lifestyle backgrounds, their 'modus operandi' naturally varies. Nevertheless, it doesn't imply that the conventional Chinese methodology can't be adjusted regarding CPEC, or that China can't glean insights from Pakistan's approach to achieving work-life balance.

Conversely, Pakistan should draw inspiration from China's exemplary work ethics, embedding a higher degree of professionalism in its CPEC dealings. China's rigorous work discipline should be acknowledged and esteemed by Pakistan. Moreover, fostering educational and cultural exchanges between these two close allies will enhance mutual comprehension. For Pakistan, the emphasis should be on equipping students with insights into business, politics, and economic practices, beyond traditional subjects (Butt, 2020; Naz, 2020).

Contrasting Western and Chinese cultural paradigms reveals a significant divergence. While Western philosophy hinges on pragmatism and individualism, Chinese culture leans on ancient wisdom spanning millennia, deeply rooted in Confucianism which emphasizes communal ties and family values.

Conclusions

Confucianism, with its profound historical roots and philosophical teachings, has undeniably shaped the work ethic observed in China. Founded on the teachings of Confucius, a philosopher and educator, this ideology emphasizes the importance of family, respect for one's elders, and the value of hard work. At its core, Confucianism advocates for a harmonious society where individuals understand and perform their roles diligently.

The emphasis on diligence, commitment, and a deep-seated respect for hierarchy and authority are principles that are deeply embedded in the Chinese societal and professional fabric. In the realm of work, these teachings translate to environments that prioritize collective success over individual achievements, fostering collaboration and mutual respect. Respect for hierarchy ensures a structured work environment, with clear roles and responsibilities, leading to efficient and harmonious operations.

For Pakistan, as it collaborates extensively with China under the ambit of CPEC, understanding this Confucian-influenced work ethic is crucial. There's a profound opportunity here: by imbibing and integrating some of these principles, Pakistan can foster a work environment that is more collaborative, harmonious, and ultimately more

productive. This cultural exchange, facilitated by shared projects under CPEC, can serve as a platform for mutual growth, understanding, and refinement of work ethics.

This article has attempted to delve into the intricate dynamics of work ethics, particularly the Chinese approach, and its implications for the collaborative endeavors under CPEC. China, with its rich history and cultural heritage incorporates work ethic that is deeply influenced by philosophical teachings, particularly Confucianism.

For Pakistan, this presents opportunities as well as challenges. As both countries work ethics are diverse, they will need to reach an understanding on how to best assimilate their work cultures in order to facilitate CPEC. Understanding and appreciating the Chinese work ethic can pave the way for smoother collaborations, bridging potential cultural divides, and fostering an environment of mutual respect and understanding.

Recommendations

Absorbing Lessons from China's Work Ethic

China's meteoric economic rise over the past few decades offers invaluable lessons. When China initiated its economic journey in the 1960s, it instituted pivotal reforms in state machinery, overhauling corporate laws and procedures pivotal for industrial productivity.

Pakistan faces a dearth of institutions specializing in Human Resource Development (Ahmed, Arshad, Mahmood, & Akhtar, 2017, p. 131). Embracing Chinese work values, especially leveraging the infrastructural foundation laid by CPEC, could be transformative for Pakistan. Despite potential cultural and linguistic differences, a growing enthusiasm for the Chinese language in Pakistan attests to the burgeoning ties between the nations (McCartney, 2020).

China's high-contextual culture contrasts with the more collective disposition of Pakistan (Naeem et al., 2018). Strengthening commercial collaboration with China entails harnessing intellectual capital through academic programs, training sessions, and workshops.

The intellectual aspect in the CPEC is particularly significant especially for Pakistan as it stands to benefit to a greater extent academically from China. This includes strong R&D knowledge as management courses, seminars as well as conferences that are aimed at bridging the knowledge gap through bringing both private and public stakeholders together. It is necessary to expand research and higher education in the fields of transportation etc.

It is also important to include the basic knowledge of CPEC in secondary and tertiary level curricula to have an indigenous pool of experts and specialists who are experts in the field of CPEC as well as China-Pakistan relations (Kazmi, 2014).

There is a need to have a professional liaison with technical experts with regards to CPEC. This requires a deeper understanding of rules, norms and work culture in organization in Pakistan that are related to corporate decision making. This in turn means assuring meritocracy and sticking to deadlines as well as and result based goal orientated work ethic (Hameed, 2015). For CPEC to rapidly develop as a cohesive Project, a strong work ethics as well as investment heavily in skill development and human resource development for Pakistan to transform itself to ensure corporate discipline and higher productivity (Hameed, 2015).

The ESP estimates that Pakistan's services sector creates 40% of jobs and contributes roughly 55% of the country's GDP. (Hameed, 2015). In order to further this the

provincial and federal governments vocational training is need to complement the services sector so as to order to ensure economic development and growth.

In order to enhance understanding of Chinese work ethics and to better enable a sense of ownership, the Chamber of Commerce should also be included in CPEC. It is crucial that, in addition to the current BOT (Build, Operate, and Transfer) paradigm, which fosters reliance and hinders transfer of technical knowledge, joint ventures must be developed.

The unprecedented three decades success of China can be learnt from. There needs to be a relaxation of banking transaction law to facilitate investment in CPEC.

Pakistan has been faced by various chronic issues is that include a colonial mindset, abuse of rule of law, low intellectual capital, weak institutions, justice and merit and lack of political instability. Feudal leadership as well as the huge disparity in the haves and the have not as well as the current economic crisis. It is extremely important if Pakistan wants to ensure its future, then there is a need to have a highly qualified human resources base and CPEC can assist in this (Javed, 2021).

For example, till now it can be seen that the significance of CPEC lies in its vital contribution in the growth of Pakistan. The most remarkable feat of CPEC till now has been in the energy sector. One of its most remarkable achievements has been in the energy sector, where the persistent energy shortages have been addressing successfully through strategic investments in a variety of energy projects, including hydropower stations and coal-fired power plants (Javed, 2021).

To fully profit from CPEC, it is imperative that the public and private sectors work together. The deficits that are present in the private as well as the public sector need to be addressed through a change in the corporate leadership and managerial style through improving the corporate culture in Pakistan.

For CPEC to be implemented effectively, federal and provincial bureaucratic structures and procedures must undergo reforms, particularly consistent improvements.

Massive reorientation of professionals which includes bureaucratic leaders, personnel and managers in the new culture to expedite the decision-making process. In an interview with the former head of Asia Studies Center, SDPI, Shakeel Ramay, who indicated that there was a need for Pakistan's "attitude" towards work culture to be enhanced in order to maximize the advantages of CPEC.

Government 'red tape' needs to also be addressed in order that there can be speedy implementation of the CPEC. Therefore, it is essential that cadres with professional and technical expertise will have to be given the green signal to implement decisions that are taken by both corporate and government. For this to occur, there needs to be a deeper understanding of rules, norms and workplace cultures in Pakistani firms that are connected to the process of determining decisions.

The institutional base should have a wider net in by both the business and government in order to ensure the advancement of skill development, education and training which is vital for the advancement of CPEC.

In this sense, corporate executives from the public and private sectors as well as think tanks that focus on the corporate, economic, and strategic aspects of Pakistan-China ties need to be engaged by government departments. The main thrust of the argument is that Pakistan must restructure its corporate sector to obtain control over decision-making procedures. The services sector in Pakistan contributes over 40% of the labor market and roughly 55% of the country's GDP, according to the ESP. Vocational training should be

implemented by the federal and provincial governments to supplement the services sector, which is a major driver of economic growth. Corporate executives and financial specialists in Pakistan should be introduced to the Chinese work culture in order to establish an interface to aid comprehension regarding Chinese work ethics. Reforms in the banking sector are required to encourage firms to engage in CPEC-related projects. Banking transaction laws must be relaxed in order to increase investment in various portfolios. Education and training should be geared toward the jobs that will be produced as a result of the massive investment. Higher education and research studies in engineering, insurance, logistics, transportation, and finance are needed. As CPEC completion times range between 15 and 20 years, this cycle should be followed in terms of skill development, training, and education in order to guarantee that Pakistan benefits fully from CPEC in the long run (Hameed, 2015).

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