

# MANAGING LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN CONFUCIUS AND IQBAL'S LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY IN THE BACKDROP OF CPEC

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## ABSTRACT

*The progressive globalization presents numerous challenges of ethics and leadership performance by confronting organizations with complex and interdependent issues. With the initiation of CPEC, the realization of understanding the cross-culture, leadership, and management philosophies and practices emerged as one of the bottlenecks for the project team. This research paper is an attempt to analyse CPEC scenario in order to explore whether or not the Chinese thinking of Confucianism and Iqbal led Philosophy have shaped the development of leadership styles in China and Pakistan, respectively. This study not only explains and highlights different traits of leadership under a complex cross-cultural environment but also identifies the factors that determine a leader's principal style to address the challenges of today's leadership. It also examines the extent to which the mix of both traditional philosophies of Confucius and Iqbal will be successful to overcome the present and future leadership challenges.*

**Keywords:** Management, Cross-cultural leadership, Iqbal leadership philosophy, Confucius leadership, Junzi, China Pakistan Economic Corridor project (CPEC), Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

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## INTRODUCTION

The contemporary studies on leadership have mainly been from the West and that modern philosophies of leadership in management are a recently studied concept in Asia.<sup>1</sup> However, the inception of globalization presents numerous challenges of ethics and interdependent issues which gain interest in leadership styles under the cross-cultural environment. Similarly, contemporary management practices are being redefined to address new leadership challenges for managing cross-cultural teams which is an important aspect of globalization and technology.<sup>2</sup>

We are now at the dawn of a new era of global governance and challenges. Brady and Davies (2014) state that mega projects are among the most multifaceted category of projects, suggesting that they are a very different type of project to manage. The competencies and actions of the leader are shaped by changing organizational culture. Distinct factors have been involved in affecting the success of megaprojects where competencies and attitude of leadership are of vital importance. Leadership is the process through which leaders influence society to target the goals by maximizing the efforts of the community as it determines success or failure of any organization. This leadership also motivates individuals to follow the particular path desired to attain the targets.<sup>3</sup>

Since the inception of CPEC, the realization of understanding cross-cultures, leadership, and management philosophies and practices emerged as one of the bottlenecks. The varied nature of management practices and leadership methods stem from these philosophies. But unfortunately, stakeholders from both sides have never given any attention to understand leadership philosophies and practices. This research paper is an attempt to analyse the CPEC scenario keeping in view Chinese and Western theories. These theories have shaped the development of leader

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<sup>1</sup> Douglas M. Lambert, "The Eight Essential Supply Chain Management Processes," *Supply Chain Management Review* 8, no. 6 (2004): 18-26. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282851860>.

<sup>2</sup> Haroon A. Khan, *Globalization and Challenges of Public Administration* (Arkansas: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018): 5-12.

<sup>3</sup> Ebrahim Hasan Al Khajeh, "Impact of Leadership Styles on Organizational Performance, *Journal of Human Resources Management Research*, Vol. 2018 (2018), DOI: 10.5171/2018.687849.

by shaping the attributes of a true leader. It is important to highlight the importance of leadership along with the methodologies affected by ancient and contemporary leadership styles, ethical norms of business, and mode of project execution is very unique.

In the world of globalization where every country is connected with the other, researchers try to identify and measure the cultural norms through nationalities and carry out several studies to identify cultural similarities and differences. These studies conclude with the fact that Chinese culture and social norms have a strong capacity to grow interpersonal relationships among different cultures that certainly ensure harmony,<sup>4</sup> this approach is the basic conclusion of Confucianism, like benevolence, righteousness, merit, and harmony in a hierarchical structure. Therefore, Confucius's philosophy significantly dominates all cross-cultural studies where Chinese leadership is compared with Western leadership.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal is considered the most influential thinker and philosopher for his thought provoking poetry. His philosophical views also deal with modern management and subjects like leadership, HR practices, and motivation and his philosophical thoughts motivate contemporary thinkers and leaders to target the desired organizational goals. He gave a message of hope, high vision, and self-realization not only to the Muslims of the subcontinent but also to the Muslims of the whole world. This concept belongs to Confucius's philosophy.<sup>6</sup>

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Research on cross-cultural leadership style has evolved considerably and gains a lot of attention in recent years both in the

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<sup>4</sup> Franke, Richard H, Geert Hofstede, and Michael H. Bond, "Cultural Roots of Economic Performance: A Research Note," *Strategic Management Journal*, 12, (1991): 165–73, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2486647>.

<sup>5</sup> Geert Hofstede, "Culture and Organizations," *International Studies of Management & Organization* 10 (1980) 15-41, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/00208825.1980.11656300?scroll=top&needAccess=true>.

<sup>6</sup> Geert Hofstede, "A European in Asia," *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* 10, Issue no.1, (2007):16-21, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-839X.2006.00206.x>

domains of practical and theoretical aspects. However, distinguishing feature of this study is that, it analyses the impact of philosophical mix of both “Confucianism” and “Iqbal’s leadership philosophies”. This helps in exploring the outcomes achieved through the practical and managerial implications for the individuals who work in cross-cultural project environments like CPEC. Our study will be covering the impacts of “Confucianism and Iqbal’s leadership philosophies required for the execution of mega projects like “China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.” This is done by exploring the critical significance for the people who work in projects based on cross-cultural environment in a global economy. Overall, the study aims to make a comparative analysis of Confucianism and Iqbal’s Philosophy of Leadership and possible application of mix approach (both philosophies) on the projects like CPEC as a game-changer.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

In today’s globalized world, the cultural boundaries are vanishing and multinational workforces are being employed to address the cost of labour and productivity issues.<sup>7</sup> In this changing environment, knowledge and understanding of the host and foreign party culture acts as a source of influence on employee behaviours within the organization. Since this interaction introduces new elements, ethics, and traits into the workplace, this impacts the environment of the organization itself and brings new leadership challenges.<sup>8</sup>

Leadership style and culture are inter-linked as many definitions of leadership explain that it is the “interaction between the leader, the follower, and the situation”.<sup>9</sup> Particular leadership behaviour may be acceptable in one culture but can be viewed differently in another. The culture influences the expected leader’s behaviour by giving an example

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<sup>7</sup> Astrid Eisenbeib, Felix Brodbeck, “Ethical and Unethical Leadership: A Cross-Cultural and Cross-Sectoral Analysis, *Journal of Business Ethics* 122, (2014): 343–359, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1740-0>.

<sup>8</sup> Po Keung Ip, “Leadership in the Chinese Philosophical Tradition: A Critical Perspective,” *In Cultural Roots of Sustainable Management*, (2016): 33-35, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301581801>.

<sup>9</sup> Claire Hughes, “Executive Functions and Development: Emerging Themes,” *Special Issue: Executive Functions and Development: Studies of Typical and Atypical Children*, (2002): 201-2019, <https://doi.org/10.1002/icd.297>

that Pacific Islanders expect leaders to give specific instructions, but the same behaviour is not required elsewhere.<sup>10</sup> In this changed scenario, state-owned enterprises send their employees abroad to perform various duties. Therefore specific training and skills are required to work overseas and understand the requirement.

A leader today, faces numerous challenges on daily basis. The success of any project is based on teamwork guided by positivity, influence, and integrity. This leads to develop trust and stronger decision making.<sup>11</sup> Extensive literature of leadership describing traits, personality, or knowledge as leadership style is available for understanding situational variables. Leadership is the ability to inspire and achieve goals.<sup>12</sup> Since the beginning of the century many leadership styles have been proposed to capture important missing aspects beyond the dominant charismatic/transformational framework. Richardson, Millage and Lane have analysed that success or failure of a task is dependent on the leadership practices.<sup>13</sup> Some literature associates project success on management skills of expatriate leaders and domestic followers for which cross-cultural familiarization is mandatory.

Leadership styles and culture are linked to each other in more than one way. Hence many definitions of leadership explain that it is the interaction between the leader, the followers and the situation.<sup>14</sup> Cultural acts have an impact on employee's behaviour in daily personal lives

<sup>10</sup> Ying Ao, "The Impact of Cross-Cultural Communication on Foreign Managers' Leadership Style in China-Based International Organization", *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 4, (2016): 99, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication>.

<sup>11</sup> Littman J. Michael, Littman S. Ezra, "Six Ethical Leadership Strategies for Project Management Success," *Project Management Development – Practice and Perspectives*, (2017), [https://www.balticpmconference.eu/sites/default/files/image-uploads/MLittman\\_2017.pdf](https://www.balticpmconference.eu/sites/default/files/image-uploads/MLittman_2017.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> Andrew J. Durbin, "Leadership Research Findings, Practice, and Skills", Cengage Learning, Boston MA, 8 (2016): 12-29, <https://www.sprimoglass.be/sites/default/files/public/webform/leadership-research-findings>.

<sup>13</sup> Mary Brannen, Mark Peterson, "Merging without Alienating: Interventions Promoting Cross-Cultural Organizational Integration and Their Limitations," *Journal of International Business Studies*, 40 (3), (2009): 468-489, <https://doi.org/10.1057/jibs.2008.80>.

<sup>14</sup> OzlemOzdemir, "The Impacts of Different Cultures on Leadership Effectiveness", *University of Chester, United Kingdom*, (2010), <http://hdl.handle.net/10034/122106>.

which consequently influence each person's behaviour within the organization.<sup>15</sup> Leaders who work on complex, uncertain, and ambiguous global environments need skills and attributes to be effective in the future cross-cultural scenarios.

Scholars belonging to diverse cultures are approaching the issue from different perspectives and are thus enriching the subject field. The Chinese, give a different and wider meaning to the word culture. The Chinese have developed their worldview by applying the dialectical method in the realms of nature and by applying the same method to the development of human society.<sup>16</sup> The Chinese have assigned a comprehensive and decisive role to the cultural aspects of their lives. It tends to give an all-embracing cultural meaning to things and events. Due to its large population, diversity, and development, China offers so much to its neighbours. Similarly, Pakistani culture helps in identifying linkages with Arab world and Muslims at large. Understanding cross-cultural leadership effectiveness and core is imperative for both the countries to embark on CPEC Project and other initiatives. Leaders who work on complex, changing, uncertain, and ambiguous global environments are essential to MNCs' future effectiveness. MNCs are able to provide effective global leaders an opportunity to gain global competitive advantages in the future.<sup>17</sup>

## CONFUCIANISM LEADERSHIP

No other traditional philosophy has more substantial influence on Chinese people as Confucianism (551–479 BC). According to Po-Keung, Confucian school of thought (Rujia) has deeply shaped and defined Chinese culture (2016). The impact of Confucianism on leadership traits

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<sup>15</sup> Muhammad A. Khan, Laurie S. Khan, "The Role of National Cultures in Shaping the Corporate Management Cultures: A Three-country Theoretical Analysis", *Organizational Culture*, (2018), DOI:10.5772/intechopen.78051.

<sup>16</sup> Marieke de Mooij, "Comparing Dimensions of National Culture for Secondary Analysis of Consumer Behavior Data of Different Countries," *International Marketing Review*, issue no 34 (2017), <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IMR-02-2016-0047/full/html>.

<sup>17</sup> Paula M. Caligiuri, Developing Culturally Agile Global Business Leaders, *Organizational Dynamics*, Vol, 3,(2013): 175-182 <https://www.econbiz.de/Record/developing-culturally-agile-global-business-leaders-caligiuri-paula/10010166200>.

of the Chinese people is evident. Many scholars have tried to understand and identify the implications of Confucianism in various domains including economic structure, family loyalty, respect of elders, way to think, act, and make decisions for ideal government.<sup>18</sup> Ren (benevolence, kindness), Yi (be righteous), and Li (proper conduct) are three of the most important Confucian principle traits that must be present in Junzi (Noblemen) which shows the character of any leader. Ren, Li, and Yi are relevant to leadership studies in many important ways. Ren has been translated as “benevolence,” “kindness,” and “humanity”.<sup>19</sup>

In order to define Confucianism, Ren confers signature character to Confucian leadership. Three elements of Ren related to leadership include self-oriented moral character or self-control, kindness and care oriented towards others and expertise or talent. For example, when asked what Ren was, Confucius explained, “*If a ruler sets himself right, he will be followed without his command. If he does not set himself right, even his commands will not be obeyed*”.<sup>20</sup> Leaders must have ability to share his vision, be knowledgeable and have empathy. The role of a leader and his followers, a son and a family is clearly articulated in his philosophy and teaching. The Confucian leader is expected to achieve self-control and be a model for others to follow. Confucius asserted that only talented individuals with moral conduct may be selected as leaders and the leader must nurture first, teach second, and then lead.<sup>21</sup> Li is important as it means to establish and maintain human relationships and harmony. Today leadership traits, meritocracy, and fairness have gained importance as it requires the leader to be fair to the followers to maintain harmony as advocated by Confucius. Finally, Confucius regarded people as the most

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<sup>18</sup> Li Lin-Schilstra, “The Traditional Chinese Philosophies in Inter-Cultural Leadership: The case of Chinese expatriate managers in the Dutch context,” *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management*, 25(2017): 299–336. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCSM-01-2017-0001>.

<sup>19</sup> Daniel T L Shek, “Confucian virtues and Chinese adolescent development: a conceptual review,” *National Library of Medicine: National centre for Biotechnology Information*, issue no 25, vol 4(2013): 335-344, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23612532/>.

<sup>20</sup> Sujeeta Dhakhwa and Stacey Enriquez, “The Relevance of Confucian Philosophy to Modern Concepts of Leadership and Followership” *The Osprey Journal of Ideas and Inquiry*, September 14, 2008, [http://digitalcommons.unf.edu/ojii\\_volumes/5](http://digitalcommons.unf.edu/ojii_volumes/5).

<sup>21</sup> *ibid*

important element in a nation where the leader has a moral responsibility to nurture and develop it. The three elements of Ren, a self-oriented control and ethical standards, caring and benevolence are similar to western servant leadership. It is, therefore, appropriate to conclude that the Confucian principles of leadership are comprehensive and still up-to-date, however, the Confucian principles of leadership need to be empirically tested if they are to be accepted by the outside world.<sup>22</sup>

## **IQBAL'S PHILOSOPHY ON LEADERSHIP**

Allama Iqbal was a great National Poet/ Philosopher/Lawyer of the Sub Continent who contributed in the ideology of Pakistan through his spirited poetry. His first book was *IlmullIqtisad* means Science of Economics which discusses ordinary man and his life. This investigates the generation and utilization of wealth which is nothing but human creation. *Bang-e-Dara* was first poetic endeavour of Iqbal's philosophy. It focuses on behaviours, culture, and their collective efforts to achieve success through moral character, religious engagement, self-belief, courage accompanied with true leadership and integration of nations to achieve desired mutual gains.<sup>23</sup> His main work includes:

- The Reconstruction of Religious Thoughts in Islam
- *Bang-e-Dara*
- *Bal-e-Jabril*
- *Zarb-e-Kalim*
- *Javed Namah*

His concept of *Khudi* and philosophy of belief in faith and institutions led him to the concept of nation. His concept of *Khudi* and philosophy of Meer E Karwan led him to the concept of leadership perception. Dr. Iqbal clearly explained the role of leadership in the evolution and deterioration of Muslim Ummah to revive its missing position in global affairs. For this purpose, ideology was mandatory to

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<sup>22</sup> HsiuChingKo, "Cross-cultural Leadership Effectiveness: Perspectives from Non-Western Leaders," *Management and Organizational Studies*, Issue no 2 vol 4 (2015): 1-15, <https://doi.org/10.5430/mos.v2n4p1>.

<sup>23</sup> MohamedCarimo, "Islam - as the National Identity for the Formation of Pakistan: The Political Thought of Muhammad Iqbal and Abu'l'AlaMawdudi", *História (São Paulo)*, 33, (2014): 317-339. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270188667>.



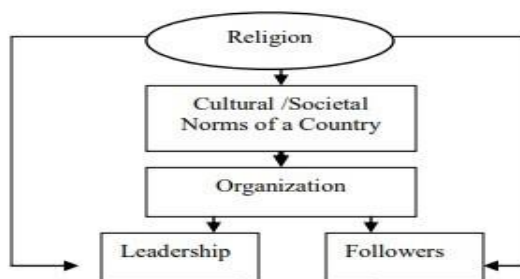
achieve desired objectives. Dr. Iqbal advocated requirements of long-term orientation, and self-realization. He defined the competencies of leadership.<sup>24</sup> Allama Iqbal promoted his leadership philosophies through his poetry and stated that vision, benevolence are key competencies that a leader must have. He highlighted that leader with such qualities can guide people accurately. When a leader has high ambition, he achieves high goals through *Khudi*, spiritual values, morality, and selflessness and how they affect the style of leadership and performance of the team.

Iqbal highlighted that a leader needs to have understanding of traditional knowledge, modern learning and deep understanding of Western philosophies. According to Iqbal, an intellectual doctrine gives meaning to all these institutions. A leader needs to be hungry for knowledge and self-reclamation and righteousness. They can only be judged from their respective ideal standards in the spirit of wholeness. Iqbal displaced traditional ethics with the modern one within the national and cultural character. He advocated that the younger generation has to have love of humanity and believed that a young visionary leader can take his nation to the sky. In his book *Bal-e-Jabreel*, he specifies that an ordinary leader/soldier has trust in sword but a true visionary Muslim leader can fight with everything without a sword. While in *Bang-e-Dara* he highlights the relationship between a true leader and his nation and concludes that a true leader is like a rooted tree that provides shelter and hope to his nation by providing courage to confront hardship.<sup>25</sup> He believes in the fact that true leaders with great minds always have a purpose while ordinary ones believe in desires to achieve something great. However, religious background is also an important aspect to envision leadership.

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<sup>24</sup> ibid

<sup>25</sup> ibid



**Figure 1: Relationship between Religion and Leadership<sup>26</sup>**

So, a visionary leader always has a dynamic and creative mind like an artist who always inspires and derives his vision. Iqbal stressed knowing oneself, integrity, purification of thoughts, and being aware of self-power. Iqbal believed in the concept of Amal (action) and accentuated the idea of one's perpetual strive and struggle to achieve whatever he wishes in life stating, "*Amal se zindagi banti hai jannat bhi jahannam bhi*" meaning "*by action life may become both heaven and hell*" which highlights his desire that youth should be more productive and reliable. Iqbal studied both Western philosophers and Muslim scholars including Mawlana Rumi.

<sup>26</sup> Chand Bibi, Allama Iqbal: The Visionary Leader of an Independent Homeland,' ' *New Horizons*, Issue no 7, vol no. (2014): 65, <https://www.thefreelibrary.com/>.

Leadership Traits of Confucius	Leadership Traits of Allama Iqbal
<i>Junzi</i> : Moral man whose nobility is that of character and not of blood. He is a man who is wise, humane and courageous.	<i>Meer e Karwan</i> : Is a Leader of a Nation who sets the goals before going ahead. A leader who not only gives direction to the nation but works hard along with the team to achieve the goals.
Benevolent	Fearless
Positive Thinker	Progressive Thinker
Continuous Learner	Continuous Learner
Ensuring morality	Creative and Integrity
Self-control & Trust worthy	Selfless and Allah Fearing
Determined & Persistent	Hardworking
Good character and the right values	High character
Integration of self and others	Ummah

**Table 1: Comparative Analysis of Leadership Traits of Confucius and Allama Iqbal<sup>27</sup>**

Confucius and Iqbal's philosophy of leadership have several common traits including positivity to confront the challenges. According to both philosophies, leadership is not always meant to make orders to subordinates, manage the workforce, schedule meetings and give opinions on yearly performances. Instead it is a difficult job for which special skills, dedication, and tolerance are required. If we evaluate leadership practices on a normal distribution bell curve of leadership behaviour, we realize that positive leadership falls on the right side of the curve while negative and bad leadership falls on the extreme left. The most recognized positive leadership involves handling things purposefully by enhancing emotional

<sup>27</sup> Adrianna Kezar, "Philosophy, Leadership, and Scholarship: Confucian Contributions to a Leadership Debate. *Leadership Review*, Issue no 4 vol 1, (2004):10-31, <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.457.603&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

positivity. The positive leader always works on capacity building of his employees instead of considering employees as a competitor. That is why they are always liked and respected by employees, have high self-awareness, are optimistic and characterized by personal integrity. Hence, positive leadership always come up with better outcomes as compared to the pessimists.<sup>28</sup>

Both philosophies also believe that good leader should always be adaptive with a hunger to learn changes. A good leader always appreciates others and is ready to learn from anyone including their subordinates. Thus, it is rightly said that the greatest learning opportunities always come from other people's experiences. The distinguishing feature between average and great leader is that, the average leader usually learns when it is necessary while good leaders try to learn things even when not required. A good leader believes in the requirement to have skills and also believes that knowledge learnt today will be utilized tomorrow. This awareness of engaging themselves in the process of learning will transform ordinary leaders to great leaders. Integrity and innovativeness also make a leader attractive in terms of his adapted policies. A true leader is always visionary, has the ability to inspire others through innovativeness and the capacity to spread positivity at the workplace.<sup>29</sup>

Confucianism and Iqbal's philosophy believes in the power of true leadership and realizes that true leadership will always bring positive outcomes by empowering their people. For this purpose, these philosophies motivate learning from the surroundings, promoting creativity with an open heart and treating every individual equally. Both philosophies promote a communal approach based on culture. This serves as a common pillar which highlights and promotes common identities. It is a compulsory condition to reproduce a single economic community.

In the context of regional connectivity both philosophers promoted integration. Iqbal highlighted the Asian Renaissance as in Javid Nama, Allama Iqbal says: "*Asia is like a human body, made of Water and Clay and the Afghan nation in that body is like the heart.*"<sup>30</sup> Confucius

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid

<sup>29</sup> Ibid

<sup>30</sup> Lt-Gen (r) Raza M Khan, "The Sick Heart of Asia," *The News International*, January 8, (2016), [https://www.thenews.com.pk/writer/lt-gen-\(r\)-raza-m-khan](https://www.thenews.com.pk/writer/lt-gen-(r)-raza-m-khan)

highlighted the importance of integration and stated “*It is a pleasure to greet a friend from afar!*” In the same spirit, one of the main pillars of Belt and Road initiative (BRI) and CPEC is people-to-people connectivity and regional integration. The One Belt One Road initiative has “connectivity” at the heart of its founding vision which is primarily about connecting regions of the world through economic belts. This facilitates people-to-people interaction through maritime silk roads.

The CPEC ventures on a comprehensive and strategic approach to strengthen and support infrastructure, agriculture, manufacturing, energy, IT, real estate, tourism, and other sectors and the timeline for completion of related projects have been identified.<sup>31</sup> While it is important for Chinese people to establish their trade and connectivity, it is equally important for Pakistan to stabilize its economy and restore peace with its current state of the economy with untapped resources and manpower, especially HR. Both China and Pakistan along with the people of the surrounding region will be able to reap the benefits of CPEC. Pakistan will get new technology, knowledge transfer, and industrial zones and parks to boost its economy and trade. In such cross-cultural feats, the cultural differences, leadership philosophy and behaviours determine the success and failure of any Project.<sup>32</sup>

The connectivity amongst people and cultures is possible through forging strong synergy and broadening extensive consultation for harmonizing policy with the view of “seeking a common ground while setting aside differences”.

## IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This study makes three major contributions to the leadership literature. First, this study found that individuals in contemporary Chinese society still consider Confucian values and Pakistani society believes in Iqbal’s leadership philosophies. This is significant in the context of CPEC

<sup>31</sup> Adeel Hussain, “Muhammad Iqbal’s Constitutionalism,” *Indian Law Review*, 2(2), 135-158, DOI: 10.1080/24730580.2018.1544023.

<sup>32</sup> Muhammad Zahid Khan, Minhas M. Khan, “China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Opportunities and Challenges,” *Strategic Studies*, 185, (2019), <http://www.issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/5->

projects where Pakistani and Chinese teams work together to achieve national, enterprise, and individual goals with a new environment for leaders and employees to adjust under successful modern leadership. This study provides insights into understanding leadership and the indigenous culture and philosophy. The findings supported the view that the Confucian and Iqbal's perspective of leadership competence differs from the Western perspective.

For Confucian and Iqbal under the Asian traditional environment, leadership competence is manifested in the morality and sincerity of the leader and the followers. This paper may also be useful in developing instruments for measuring leadership in a contemporary environment. Several limitations however, need to be addressed. Firstly, the study is limited to Pak-China environment in particular to only two leading philosophers and thinkers. This limitation may make the instrument hard to generalize all types of environments. Secondly, the limitation is the difficulty of collecting large samples of data which can further enhance the validity of the paper. The final limitation is that due to Covid pandemic restrictions data was collected online.

## **CONCLUSION**

Though both China and Pakistan are very different and separated in their ideologies and practices. The CPEC will not only help to strengthen the economies of both Pakistan and China, by solidifying their influence in the region and opening new routes, but will also bring understanding of each other's philosophies. Projects under CPEC do not belong to any specific group or party but aims to serve the whole country. The research indicates that understanding Iqbal and Confucius leadership has a positive influence on leader performance.

It helps to understand culture and leadership traits required to undertake megaprojects. Both philosophies are applicable in the contemporary era as they promote regional integration which is a mix of socio-economic philosophies based on cooperation and ethical backgrounds. This guarantees development through people-to-people connectivity which is quite evident under BRI and CPEC frameworks as both focus on components of culture which is mandatory for integration. While crafting development model for CPEC, there is a need to base it on our own cultural and national characters. There is a need to develop a

dynamic, multi-pronged approach. This is necessary in order to adopt new policy instruments and formulate structural reform for a sustainable economic momentum based on “win-win principles” through strong, fearless, noble and pragmatic leadership at all tiers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Enterprises find leadership and teamwork to be both rewarding and challenging as cross-cultural conflicts can impact the outcome and goals. A benevolent, passionate and capable leader can address these challenges. Employees who work for foreign or multicultural streams and JVs tend to like leaders who are bold and professional, and who respect and listen to the concerns of employees with empathy. Following points may help develop the desired attributes:

- Careful cultural training needs analysis should be done to ensure suitable content of training.
- In addition, the context of cross-cultural interactions, individual differences among trainees and the team diversification should also be taken into consideration.
- Cultural studies and language skills need to be developed for undertaking mega projects.
- Study of leadership philosophies and their application in management may be included in bachelor programs.
- Cross-cultural team management and conflict resolution may be included as a special subject in the Masters’ program.
- Team building exercises may be conducted through university programs.
- TV programs on Iqbal’s teaching may be shown as is being done to spread Confucius teachings in China.
- People to people, academia, and scholar’s interaction may be increased.