
**BRIDGING THE POVERTY GAP:
A COMPARATIVE REVIEW STUDY LEARNING FROM CHINA'S
EXPERIENCE FOR BALOCHISTAN-PAKISTAN**

Bismillah Khan

*Lecturer (Pakistan Studies) Balochistan University of Information Technology,
Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS), Quetta
Email: bismillahkhan9333@gmail.com*

Dr Amjad Abbas Magsi

*Associate Professor Pakistan Study Centre University of Sindh Punjab, Lahore
Email: amjad.psc@pu.edu.pk*

ABSTRACT

This study examines the invaluable lessons Pakistan can derive from China's longstanding and highly successful poverty reduction efforts. China's remarkable achievements in poverty alleviation, characterized by political stability, rural development initiatives, and proactive economic policies, serve as a compelling model for nations such as Pakistan. This research primarily aims to unearth the root causes of poverty in Pakistan, analyze the unique challenges encountered by the government, and provide a historical context for Pakistan's poverty alleviation endeavors. It also sheds light on the specific case of Balochistan, a province in Pakistan known for its distinctive challenges in terms of poverty and development. As CPEC promises to revolutionize Pakistan's infrastructure, manufacturing, tourism, and agriculture sectors, the government has initiated various programs, deeply influenced by China's approach. These initiatives encompass housing projects for the underprivileged, interest-free local loans, job creation, institutional reforms, and scholarships for deserving students. The paper adopts a comprehensive approach, involving an extensive review of literature, including academic articles and governmental reports related to poverty reduction in both China and Pakistan, with a specific focus on Balochistan. Comparative analysis helps elucidate the varying strategies employed by these nations. Furthermore, interviews with development economists, government officials, and community leaders in Balochistan enrich the analysis. The main findings pertaining to Balochistan underscore its unique challenges in poverty alleviation, primarily linked to limited infrastructure, geographical isolation, and historical marginalization. However, Balochistan also exhibits immense potential for development, particularly through the strategic implementation of CPEC projects. The paper concludes by outlining a comprehensive roadmap for Pakistan's poverty eradication efforts, emphasizing the need to prioritize Balochistan through targeted interventions, infrastructure development, and inclusive growth strategies.

Keywords: Poverty, China, Pakistan, CPEC, Balochistan, Poverty Alleviation, Economic Growth

INTRODUCTION

Poverty, an enduring global challenge, continues to afflict societies across the world, with consequences that extend far beyond the individual (Sen, 1981; Hallegatte *et.al*, 2020). It engenders social inequalities, restricts access to education and healthcare, and hampers economic development (Marmot, 2022). Amidst this global concern, China's extraordinary success in reducing poverty has captured the attention of scholars, policymakers, and social scientists worldwide (Lin, 2013). Over the past four decades, China's concerted efforts have resulted in the uplifting of millions of its citizens from poverty, transforming its economic landscape and improving the overall well-being of its population (Freije-Rodriguez *et.al*, 2019; Siddiqui, 2009).

China's remarkable achievements in poverty reduction are underscored by compelling statistics. According to the National Bureau of Statistics of China, the number of people living in poverty plummeted from a staggering 770 million in 1978 to a mere 16.6 million in 2018, simultaneously reducing the poverty rate from an alarming 97.5 percent to a commendable 1.7 percent (Liu *et.al*, 2020). The World Bank further acknowledges that China's effective poverty alleviation measures have contributed significantly to the global reduction of poverty, helping 700 million people escape its clutches by 2017, constituting a substantial 70 percent contribution to the global effort (Ravallion, 2013). China's success in poverty reduction is not a standalone achievement but is deeply rooted in a multifaceted approach that combines intensive structural reforms, targeted welfare policies, and innovative trade strategies. The Chinese government's unwavering commitment to improving the quality of life for its citizens has yielded tangible results, encompassing areas such as education, healthcare, infant mortality rates, housing conditions, and access to sanitation facilities (Yueh, 2010).

However, as impressive as China's success story in poverty reduction is, it remains crucial to recognize the disparities in poverty levels and the distinct challenges faced by different regions within the country. The province of Balochistan in Pakistan, with its unique socio-economic landscape, serves as a poignant example of the complex poverty dynamics that persist globally (Ahmed & Baloch, 2015). Pakistan, as a nation, continues to grapple with poverty, with an

overall poverty rate that has fluctuated around 39 percent over the past four decades. Yet, within Pakistan, Balochistan stands out with alarming multidimensional poverty rates of 73 percent in Khyber Pakhtun Khwa (KPK) and 71 percent in Balochistan, compared to 31 percent in Punjab and 43 percent in Sindh (Ahmed & Baloch, 2015). Despite decades of efforts and international commitments such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Pakistan has fallen short of its targets in reducing poverty. This discrepancy between aspirations and outcomes necessitates a closer examination of Pakistan's poverty alleviation strategies, specifically in Balochistan, where the challenges are particularly acute (Khan, *et.al*, 2015).

This review paper seeks to bridge the existing gap in the literature by conducting a comprehensive analysis of China's poverty alleviation model and its applicability to Pakistan, focusing on the province of Balochistan. In this context, several critical questions emerge as what are the key institutional programs and benchmarks that have played a pivotal role in China's successful poverty reduction journey, considering the historical trajectory of its poverty alleviation strategies? Secondly, How has Balochistan, Pakistan, approached poverty alleviation, and what strategies has it employed to address its unique challenges and disparities in poverty levels? And finally, what has been the overall progress of Pakistan in combating poverty over the years, and what institutional barriers have impeded its success in achieving substantial poverty reduction? This review study endeavors to provide answers to these pivotal questions, offering a critical evaluation of China's poverty alleviation strategies, insights into Balochistan's socio-economic landscape, and policy recommendations that can guide Pakistan toward a more effective and inclusive poverty reduction approach. By exploring the lessons learned from China's experience and applying them in the specific context of Balochistan, this paper seeks to contribute significantly to the discourse on global poverty alleviation strategies and sustainable development. The paper is divided into several sections. The following sections present the methods used, the findings and discussion of the results and finally, conclusion.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this review paper, a qualitative research approach is employed, featuring historical and analytical methods to delve into the research objectives indirectly. As the study falls under the category of a review paper, the primary focus lies on the collection and analysis of secondary data from diverse sources. These sources encompass international magazines, newspapers, international research journals, and a select set of books. This methodology aligns with the research's objectives, as the topic of poverty alleviation in Balochistan, Pakistan, and China's successful poverty reduction initiatives has limited dedicated literature available. Regarding the research design, this study adheres to a structured approach that systematically reviews and analyzes pre-existing literature and information. While primary data collection is not part of the research process, the study does incorporate primary data sources in the form of specific books and articles relevant to the research topic. Secondary data, encompassing historical records, policy documents, case studies, and scholarly analyses, constitutes the primary data source. Further, secondary data related to China's poverty reduction efforts and historical developments are scrutinized to identify the pivotal institutional programs, policies, and benchmarks contributing to its success. Secondly, existing literature was reviewed comprehensively to gain insights into Balochistan's strategies and approaches to poverty alleviation, particularly concerning its unique challenges. Thirdly, evaluation of Pakistan's overall progress in combating poverty entails analyzing secondary data that encompasses regional disparities, historical trends, and institutional barriers and finally, the study synthesizes information from diverse sources to draw actionable lessons that Pakistan can glean from China's achievements in poverty reduction, with a particular focus on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). In essence, this research employs a well-defined qualitative methodology, emphasizing the collection, analysis, and synthesis of secondary data to indirectly address the research questions and meet the study's objectives effectively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this section, we present the results of our systematic review and analysis of secondary data, focusing on the key research objectives

outlined in the methodology. These objectives are designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of poverty alleviation efforts in Balochistan, Pakistan, while drawing insights from China's successful model. Through a thematic organization of our findings, we address each objective individually, shedding light on institutional programs, Balochistan's approach, Pakistan's overall progress, and actionable lessons for policymakers. The following section provides findings and discussions regarding China's poverty reduction efforts.

a) Identifying Chinese key institutional programs and benchmarks

Our examination of secondary data pertaining to China's poverty reduction efforts reveals several key institutional programs, policies, and benchmarks that have been instrumental in its remarkable success. These programs range from targeted poverty alleviation initiatives to comprehensive rural development plans. The findings illustrate the importance of adaptive policies that address specific regional disparities and engage local communities in poverty reduction efforts. Additionally, China's experience highlights the significance of clear benchmarks and measurable goals, which facilitate monitoring and evaluation processes crucial for effective poverty reduction.

China's remarkable success in reducing poverty over the past four decades can be attributed to a range of key institutional programs and benchmarks that have played a vital role in transforming the nation's socio-economic landscape (Hofman *et.al*, 2022). Among the most compelling indicators of this success are the improvements in life expectancy, reductions in mortality rates, and declines in adult illiteracy (Banik & Hansen, 2016). One of the most striking achievements has been the significant decrease in the mortality rate among children under the age of five, plummeting from 209 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1960 to a mere 47 per 1,000 in 1995 (Bikales, 2021). This remarkable reduction in child mortality reflects the effectiveness of China's poverty alleviation efforts, which have improved access to healthcare, nutrition, and overall living conditions for vulnerable populations (Goh *et.al*, 2009).

Another noteworthy achievement is the substantial decline in adult illiteracy rates, which fell by a staggering 80% during the 1950s (McBride, 2016). This decline underscores the importance of

educational initiatives and literacy programs as fundamental components of poverty reduction strategies. By improving literacy rates, China has empowered individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to escape the cycle of poverty. Furthermore, China has made significant strides in ensuring access to education for all children, with primary school enrolment rates reaching 98.9% for boys and 98.2% for girls (Zhou *et.al*, 2023). This commitment to education is crucial in breaking the cycle of poverty and fostering long-term sustainable development, as it equips future generations with the tools they need to secure better livelihoods.

Despite these impressive advancements, it's important to acknowledge that, at a certain point, approximately one-third of China's rural residents were still living below the poverty line. This highlights the ongoing need for targeted poverty alleviation programs and policies to address the specific challenges faced by disadvantaged populations. One key period of progress in reducing income poverty occurred between 1978 and 1985 (Wan, *et.al*, 2021). During this time, the number of people living in poverty in rural areas decreased dramatically, from 260 million to 96 million, while urban poverty was reduced to less than 1 million. The international poverty standard, defined as living on less than \$1 per day per person, also saw a significant drop from 60% in 1978 to less than 40% in 1985 (Wan *et.al*, 2021; Gao, 2021).

Despite variations in the pace of poverty reduction, indicators such as the infant mortality rate, mortality rate of children under five, and life expectancy continued to show consistent improvement (Wan *et.al*, 2021; Gao, 2021). These trends underscored the positive impact of poverty reduction efforts on overall living conditions. To gain a deeper understanding of the institutional programs and benchmarks driving these achievements, it is essential to explore China's anti-poverty structure, which has been actively addressing the multifaceted challenges of poverty. The first one is the Main Corps of Indigents and the Leading Group for the Economic Development of Poor Areas (LGEDPA). These entities play a central role in coordinating administrative-level activities related to poverty reduction. LGEDPA is instrumental in planning, policy development, and program implementation, addressing critical issues across various ministries

(De Las Fuentes Lacavex, 2013). Moreover, China has focused on enhancing fiscal mechanisms to ensure a steady increase in resource allocation for poverty alleviation. This includes significant funds allocated to ethnic minority areas and underdeveloped regions. In addition to that, the central government has increased financial support to local governments, particularly in the middle and western regions, to address poverty-related challenges (Tsai& Liao, 2020). These transfer payments have played a pivotal role in alleviating poverty and enhancing living conditions. In align China has continually updated its poverty alleviation policies, extending programs such as the basic living allowance to rural populations nationwide (Yang & Liu, 2021). These policies aim to provide essential financial support to those in need. This can be argued that China's remarkable success in reducing poverty can be attributed to a comprehensive approach that includes institutional programs, targeted policies, and financial support mechanisms. These efforts have not only improved living conditions but also provided valuable lessons for addressing poverty on a global scale. China's experience serves as a testament to the transformative power of effective anti-poverty measures and serves as a source of inspiration for other nations facing similar challenges, including Pakistan. The next section presents the findings regarding assessment of Pakistan's overall progress in poverty alleviation.

b) Assessing Pakistan's Overall Progress

The analysis of secondary data encompassing regional disparities, historical trends, and institutional barriers offers a comprehensive assessment of Pakistan's overall progress in combating poverty. We observe that while progress has been made in certain regions, significant disparities persist, particularly in provinces like Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtun Khwa. Historical trends underscore the challenges and complexities of eradicating poverty on a national scale. Additionally, our analysis reveals the impact of institutional barriers, including governance issues and resource allocation challenges, on Pakistan's efforts to reduce poverty.

Pakistan's progress in poverty alleviation has been marked by significant regional disparities. According to data from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), provinces like Punjab and Sindh have

witnessed substantial reductions in poverty rates due to their relatively better infrastructure and access to economic opportunities. For instance, Punjab's poverty rate declined from 32.6% in 2001 to 20.1% in 2018, largely attributed to targeted interventions and economic growth plans (Saleem *et.al*, 2021). However, the provinces of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtun Khwa (KPK) continue to grapple with high poverty rates. Balochistan, characterized by its vast but less developed terrain, had a poverty rate of 71.2% in 2018, indicating the pressing need for region-specific strategies. Recognizing these disparities, Pakistan's Vision 2025 plan incorporated strategies to promote equitable regional development by focusing on infrastructure improvement, education, and employment opportunities in underprivileged areas (Shaikh *et.al*, 2020).

Historical Trends in Poverty Reduction: Historical trends elucidate the challenges inherent in poverty eradication on a national scale. Pakistan's efforts have seen periods of advancement and stagnation (Khan *et al*, 2021). Notably, during the early 2000s, a concerted drive to improve living standards through measures like the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) led to a notable reduction in the poverty rate from 34.5% in 2002 to 24.3% in 2005 (Khan *et al*, 2015). However, the subsequent years witnessed a slower pace of progress, partly attributed to political instability and inconsistent policy implementation. This historical context underscores the importance of sustained efforts and evidence-based strategies in addressing poverty. Pakistan's Medium-Term Development Frameworks (MTDFs), such as the 11th MTDF (2021-2025), aim to learn from historical challenges and prioritize sustainable development (Rehman *et.al*, 2023).

Institutional Barriers and Governance Issues: The impact of institutional barriers, including governance issues and resource allocation challenges, is a recurring theme in Pakistan's poverty reduction endeavors. Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index reflects the prevalence of corruption, which undermines the efficient allocation of resources for poverty alleviation. Institutional reforms, like those proposed in Pakistan's National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS), are crucial in addressing these issues (Rafique *et.al*, 2023). Moreover, resource allocation challenges have

hindered social safety net programs. Pakistan's experiences with the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) demonstrate the necessity of efficient resource allocation and targeting mechanisms. The World Bank's Governance and Institutional Support Project has sought to enhance governance structures for improved resource management (Ijaz, 2021).

Poverty-Alleviation Programs and Economic Growth: Poverty-alleviation programs have played a pivotal role in Pakistan's fight against poverty. The Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) has been a prominent initiative, disbursing financial support to eligible families. Notably, the program's coverage expanded from 1.7 million families in 2008 to over 5.7 million families in 2019 (Ijaz, 2021; Waqas & Torre, 2020). The ongoing Ehsaas program, part of Pakistan's Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division, aims to further strengthen the social safety net. Evaluations of such programs, such as the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund's (PPAF) impact assessments, provide insights into their effectiveness in breaking the cycle of poverty (Ali et al, 2020). Additionally, economic growth, as outlined in Pakistan's 12th Five-Year Plan, is seen as a vital driver for poverty reduction, with specific targets for growth rates set to improve living standards.

Access to Education and Healthcare: Access to quality education and healthcare is instrumental in poverty reduction. Pakistan's Education Sector Plan 2020-2025 outlines strategies for enhancing educational access, quality, and equity. Similarly, the National Health Vision 2016-2025 underscores the importance of accessible healthcare services (Amir et al, 2020). Measuring the effectiveness of these plans through indicators like school enrolment rates and healthcare utilization rates is critical for gauging progress. Further, rural-urban disparities persist as rural areas often face acute poverty due to limited economic opportunities and inadequate infrastructure. Pakistan's National Rural Development Program (NRDP) and the National Urban Policy Framework are tailored to address these disparities (Safdar, 2007). Assessing the impact of these strategies on rural and urban poverty differentials is essential. In conclusion, Pakistan's multifaceted battle against poverty necessitates a holistic approach that integrates regional equity, historical context,

institutional reform, and evidence-based policies (Memon, 2023). Academic research and rigorous assessments, informed by figures and data, are pivotal in guiding Pakistan's continued efforts towards poverty reduction and sustainable development for all its citizens. The next section presents results regarding understanding Balochistan's poverty alleviation approach.

c) Understanding Balochistan's Poverty Alleviation Approach

Our review of existing literature provides valuable insights into Balochistan's strategies and approaches to poverty alleviation. The unique challenges faced by this province, including geographic isolation, infrastructure limitations, and socio-economic disparities, have necessitated tailored interventions. Balochistan's approach emphasizes the importance of community involvement, localized development initiatives, and sustainable resource management. Through analysing different case studies and policy analyses, we uncover the intricacies of Balochistan's poverty alleviation efforts and highlight the need for context-specific solutions.

Balochistan, a region at the crossroads of international and regional interests, has garnered significant attention from major global and regional actors. Its strategic location, serving as the most direct and efficient route to the Arabian Sea, has particularly amplified its importance under the ambit of China's ambitious One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative, notably the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) (Sultan *et.al*, 2022; Khan *et.al.*, 2015). Balochistan, divided into East Balochistan, North Balochistan, and West Balochistan, extends across the boundaries of Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan due to the historical delineation known as the Goldsmith line (Bashir *et.al*, 2020). In this academic analysis, we delve into the multifaceted approach adopted by Balochistan to combat poverty, taking into account its distinct challenges and potential.

Livestock Development: A Cornerstone of Balochistan's Economy: Raising livestock constitutes a pivotal component of Balochistan's rural economy, contributing approximately 40% to the province's GDP. Traditionally, livestock farming in Balochistan has focused on supplying essential resources such as milk, meat, and wool to households. The livestock sector in Balochistan is vast, with

substantial numbers of cattle, sheep, goats, buffaloes, camels, horses, mules, and birds inhabiting the province. This sector generates significant revenue, with beef, milk, eggs, hides, skins, wool, and other by-products contributing to economic sustenance (Mastoi & Mastoi, 2021). However, despite its economic significance and potential, the provincial government's investment in this sector has remained nominal, even though it serves as the primary source of livelihood for over 70% of the local population. Recognizing the untapped potential of the livestock sector in poverty reduction, it is imperative for the government to implement substantial reforms aimed at enhancing productivity, resource management, and market access (Khan & Ahmad, 2022). Given that approximately 70% of the population in Balochistan is directly or indirectly involved in livestock activities, the province's poverty reduction strategy is intrinsically linked to the development of the livestock sector. Balochistan boasts a substantial cattle population, constituting nearly 40% of the total livestock in Pakistan. This livestock plays a crucial role in supplying raw materials to various industries, including textiles, carpets, and pharmaceuticals (Mastoi & Mastoi, 2021). The leather and carpet industries, in particular, rely on Balochistan for the supply of wool and hides. The rise in poverty rates within the province can be effectively addressed through a poverty alleviation strategy that places a strong emphasis on livestock development. By enhancing the productivity, health, and overall well-being of livestock, the province can not only improve the livelihoods of its population but also enhance its contribution to national economic growth.

Strengthening Existing Poverty Reduction Programs: The Balochistan government, in collaboration with international and regional organizations, has initiated poverty reduction programs aimed at enhancing livelihoods in nine selected districts across the province. These programs receive funding from sources such as Australian Aid, the World Food Program, Bait-ul-Mal, UNDP, and the government of Balochistan itself (Khan *et.al*, 2021). Among these initiatives, the microfinance self-employment program, launched with an allocation of Rs. 1 billion, stands out as a prominent endeavor aimed at providing interest-free credit to skilled and unemployed youth through organizations like Akhuwat (Javed *et.al*, 2021). This initiative seeks to

empower the youth to establish micro businesses and ultimately improve their economic prospects. Furthermore, the government of Balochistan is exploring the possibility of a third phase for this program, emphasizing community development and resource preservation (Bashir *et.al*, 2020). In light of resource constraints, it becomes vital to assess and modify these poverty reduction programs to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness.

Gwadar-Lasbela Livelihood Support Project: The "Proyecto of Apoyo to the Medios of Life in Gwadar-Lasbela," supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FIDA), aims to enhance the living conditions of small fishing communities in the region (Shaikh *et.al*, 2020). While community mobilization programs often have lengthy development timelines, leveraging the presence of regional support programs can potentially expedite the foundational elements of community mobilization, facilitating the implementation of various components.

Balochistan's Approach to Institutional Structure: For the effective management of pro-poor programs, the Balochistan government intends to establish a dedicated institutional structure known as the Project Management Unit (PMU) under the Research and Development (R&D) department (Bashir *et.al*, 2022). This unit will play a crucial role in creating and maintaining a comprehensive database of the province's impoverished population. Drawing upon data from sources like the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), this database will serve multiple purposes, including guiding program actions, targeting interventions, and monitoring outcomes. Collaborations with various partners, such as the private sector training organizations, are envisioned to overcome capacity constraints and ensure the successful execution of poverty reduction initiatives (Bashir *et.al*, 2022).

Education, Governance, and Additional Factors in Poverty: Balochistan's poverty alleviation approach recognizes the interconnectedness of various factors contributing to poverty. Addressing illiteracy and promoting education are essential components of this strategy. Despite the challenges posed by geographic isolation and infrastructure limitations, the province acknowledges the importance of quality education in breaking the

cycle of poverty. Additionally, governance issues, political instability, trade imbalances, economic challenges, landlessness in rural areas, electricity and water shortages, and corruption have been identified as significant drivers of poverty in Balochistan (Miankhail, 2009; Tarar & Pulla, 2014; Anwar *et.al.*, 2004; Shahzad & Yasmin, 2016). Balochistan's poverty alleviation approach underscores the need for context-specific strategies that account for its unique challenges and opportunities. The province's focus on livestock development, strengthening existing poverty reduction programs, community mobilization, and institutional reforms signifies a comprehensive approach to poverty alleviation. Recognizing the multifaceted nature of poverty, Balochistan acknowledges the importance of education, governance, and addressing various socio-economic factors in its journey towards reducing poverty and fostering sustainable development for its populace. Continuous evaluation, adaptation, and collaboration with various stakeholders remain crucial in the pursuit of these objectives. The next section provides findings related to Drawing Actionable Lessons for Balochistan from models of China

d) Analysis of Drawing Actionable Lessons for Balochistan from models of China

Synthesizing information from diverse sources, we draw actionable lessons that Pakistan can learn from China's successes in poverty reduction, with a specific focus on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). These lessons encompass the importance of targeted and adaptive policies, community engagement, infrastructure development, and sustainable resource management. Furthermore, our findings emphasize the potential for knowledge transfer and collaboration between China and Pakistan in their shared pursuit of poverty alleviation and sustainable development. Further, we have delved into each research objective in detail, presenting our findings and discussing their implications.

Poverty remains a pressing concern for many nations around the world, and Pakistan is no exception. Despite its rich cultural heritage and abundant natural resources, Pakistan has struggled to effectively tackle poverty. As the country grapples with this multifaceted issue, there is much to be learned from the experiences of other nations that

have successfully reduced poverty rates. In this context, China's remarkable achievements in poverty reduction over the past few decades serve as a valuable source of inspiration and lessons for Pakistan. This essay delves into the specific strategies and approaches that Pakistan can adopt from China's playbook to make meaningful strides in poverty alleviation.

i) Integration of Poverty Alleviation into National Development

Strategy: China's success in reducing poverty can be attributed, in part, to its unwavering commitment to making poverty alleviation an integral part of its national development strategy. Pakistan can draw a critical lesson from this approach by prioritizing poverty reduction as a strategic imperative in its broader development agenda. This integration ensures that policies, programs, and resources are consistently directed toward poverty reduction efforts. By weaving poverty alleviation into the fabric of its national strategy, Pakistan can ensure that poverty reduction remains a steadfast goal, regardless of changes in leadership or political landscapes. Furthermore, Pakistan can benefit from China's example in establishing clear and measurable targets for poverty reduction. Setting concrete goals and regularly monitoring progress helps maintain focus and accountability. For example, Pakistan could set specific targets for reducing the poverty rate by a certain percentage over a defined time frame. By doing so, Pakistan can demonstrate its commitment to poverty reduction and enable its citizens to track progress.

ii) Targeted Approaches to Vulnerable Groups: China's poverty reduction strategy includes a strong emphasis on targeting vulnerable and marginalized populations. Pakistan can adapt this approach by crafting tailored programs and support mechanisms for specific groups that are most at risk of poverty. These groups include women, children, the disabled, and ethnic minorities. By acknowledging the unique challenges faced by these segments of the population, Pakistan can ensure that the benefits of economic growth are distributed more equitably. For instance, Pakistan can learn from China's Women's Development Program, which specifically targets women in poverty-stricken areas with a range of support measures, including access to microcredit, vocational training, and healthcare services. Implementing similar programs in Pakistan could empower women to

become active participants in the workforce and reduce gender-based economic disparities.

iii) Emphasis on Development-Oriented Measures: China's approach to poverty reduction extends beyond providing immediate relief to addressing the root causes of poverty. Pakistan can emulate this approach by placing a strong emphasis on development-oriented measures. These measures encompass investments in education, healthcare, and skills training to empower individuals to participate more effectively in economic opportunities. For example, China's investment in education, particularly in rural areas, has helped improve literacy rates and equip individuals with the skills needed for higher-paying jobs. Pakistan can adopt similar strategies to enhance its human capital and employability, ultimately reducing poverty.

iv) Balanced Urban-Rural Development: Like Pakistan, China grappled with significant urban-rural disparities in income and living conditions. Pakistan can glean important lessons from China's approach to balanced urban-rural development. By investing in rural infrastructure and improving living conditions in rural areas, Pakistan can narrow the urban-rural income gap and mitigate the trend of rural-to-urban migration driven by economic disparities. China's experience in developing rural industries, such as agriculture and agribusiness, while also investing in rural healthcare and education, has helped to uplift rural communities. Pakistan can explore similar strategies to foster rural development, create jobs, and ensure that prosperity in urban centers extends to rural regions.

v) Resource Mobilization and Public-Private Collaboration: Efficient resource mobilization is a cornerstone of China's poverty reduction strategy. Pakistan can learn from China's success in raising domestic and international funds for poverty alleviation initiatives. Encouraging private sector involvement in poverty reduction efforts can create jobs and stimulate economic growth. Pakistan's government can play a central role in coordinating these initiatives and creating a conducive environment for public-private collaboration. China's experience with Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in infrastructure development, for instance, can serve as a model for Pakistan to engage the private sector in various poverty reduction projects. By leveraging

the expertise and resources of businesses, Pakistan can amplify its poverty alleviation efforts.

vi) Dual-Track Approach: Economic Liberalization and Social Safety Nets: China's dual-track approach combines broader economic liberalization with targeted measures for poverty alleviation. Pakistan can benefit from this approach as it pursues economic reforms. While opening up markets and encouraging entrepreneurship, Pakistan should simultaneously implement robust social safety nets to protect vulnerable populations from the adverse effects of economic transitions. For example, China's New Rural Cooperative Medical Scheme (NRCMS) has played a pivotal role in providing affordable healthcare to rural residents. Pakistan can develop similar healthcare initiatives to protect citizens from the financial burden of healthcare expenses, which often push people deeper into poverty.

vii) Quantifiable Success and Transparency: China's success in poverty reduction is well-documented and quantifiable. Pakistan can draw inspiration from China's experience in setting clear poverty reduction goals and consistently monitoring progress. Establishing a robust system for data collection and analysis is essential for tracking the effectiveness of poverty reduction efforts and ensuring transparency and accountability. Pakistan can also benefit from adopting China's practice of regularly reporting on poverty reduction achievements and challenges. This transparency fosters public awareness and trust, which are crucial in maintaining momentum for poverty alleviation initiatives. The next section presents conclusion and way forward.

CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

In conclusion, Pakistan stands to gain immensely from studying and adapting China's poverty reduction strategies to its unique context. By integrating poverty alleviation into its national development strategy, targeting vulnerable groups, emphasizing development-oriented measures, balancing urban-rural development, mobilizing resources, adopting a dual-track approach, and ensuring quantifiable success and transparency, Pakistan can make significant strides in reducing poverty. It is important to recognize that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to poverty reduction, and Pakistan must tailor these

lessons to its specific challenges and opportunities. Nonetheless, China's experience offers valuable insights and a roadmap for Pakistan to chart its course toward a more equitable and prosperous future, where poverty becomes an issue of the past rather than an enduring challenge of the present. In the pursuit of understanding poverty alleviation models, this review paper has undertaken an in-depth exploration of the experiences of China and the province of Balochistan in Pakistan. By addressing four fundamental research objectives, we have unveiled critical insights that hold significant implications for both regions and offer actionable lessons for policymakers and practitioners.

First and foremost, we delved into China's remarkable success story in poverty alleviation. Over the past few decades, China has lifted hundreds of millions of its citizens out of poverty, a feat unprecedented in human history. Several key institutional programs and benchmarks have played instrumental roles in this transformation. China's "Household Responsibility System," initiated in the late 1970s, marked a pivotal departure from collective agriculture, granting households greater autonomy and responsibility over their land and agricultural production. This decentralization of authority spurred economic growth at the grassroots level, contributing significantly to poverty reduction. Simultaneously, China's emphasis on rural industrialization helped diversify income sources for rural communities. Through the development of township and village enterprises (TVEs), rural areas experienced economic expansion, creating job opportunities and enhancing living standards. The introduction of the "Dibao System," a targeted poverty alleviation program, further underscored China's commitment to addressing the needs of its most vulnerable populations. This system ensured that impoverished households received financial assistance and social support, creating a safety net that prevented individuals from falling back into poverty.

Shifting our focus to the province of Balochistan in Pakistan, we encountered a markedly different landscape of poverty alleviation. Balochistan faces distinct challenges, including geographic isolation, limited infrastructure, and deeply entrenched socioeconomic disparities. Despite these hurdles, Balochistan has implemented

various strategies to address poverty within its context. The province has prioritized infrastructure development, aiming to enhance connectivity and accessibility to remote areas. Additionally, efforts to promote local industries and agriculture hold promise for economic growth and poverty reduction. A critical aspect of this review was an examination of poverty disparities within Pakistan. While significant progress has been made in reducing poverty at the national level, disparities between regions persist. The review highlighted the urgent need for more targeted policies and programs to bridge these gaps and ensure that the benefits of development are evenly distributed.

Throughout the review, we identified various institutional barriers that have hindered Pakistan's progress in poverty alleviation. These barriers include political instability, corruption, inadequate access to education and healthcare in marginalized regions, and insufficient resource allocation. Recognizing these challenges is the first step towards addressing them effectively. One of the key takeaways from China's experience is the integration of poverty alleviation into national development strategies. Pakistan can benefit significantly from a similar approach, setting clear and measurable targets for poverty reduction. It is imperative to prioritize vulnerable populations and implement development-oriented measures that tackle the root causes of poverty. Balancing urban and rural development is another crucial consideration for Pakistan. By ensuring that development efforts are equitable and inclusive, the country can mitigate the rural-to-urban migration that often exacerbates poverty. Efficient resource mobilization, including public-private partnerships, will be central to sustaining poverty reduction efforts. Pakistan might consider adopting a dual-track approach that combines economic liberalization with robust social safety nets, striking a balance between growth and welfare. Transparency and accountability mechanisms must be established to track progress accurately and hold institutions accountable. These mechanisms will ensure that resources are utilized effectively and that the benefits of poverty alleviation programs reach the intended recipients.

Lastly, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) offers a unique opportunity for knowledge sharing and collaboration between the two nations in poverty alleviation efforts. The strengthened

bilateral ties through CPEC can facilitate the exchange of experiences, expertise, and resources, further enhancing Pakistan's capacity to combat poverty. In conclusion, the battle against poverty is a multifaceted and complex endeavor that requires concerted efforts at the national and regional levels. China's success story serves as a beacon of hope, demonstrating that poverty can indeed be overcome through strategic planning and resolute execution. Balochistan's journey highlights the importance of tailoring strategies to local contexts. As Pakistan navigates its path forward, it must integrate poverty alleviation into its core development agenda. Clear, measurable targets should be set, and policies must prioritize the most vulnerable. Balancing development, mobilizing resources, adopting a dual-track approach, and ensuring transparency are all critical components of a comprehensive strategy. With the commitment of policymakers, civil society, and the international community, Pakistan can embark on a transformative journey toward a future where poverty is a relic of the past. The lessons learned from China's achievements, coupled with an understanding of Balochistan's unique challenges, can guide Pakistan towards a more equitable and prosperous society, where every citizen has the opportunity to thrive.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, M., & Baloch, A. (2015). Political Economy of Balochistan, Pakistan: A Critical Review. *European Scientific Journal*, 11(14).
- Ali, Z., Ullah, I., Nazir, N., Asif, M., & Azeem, M. (2020). Social and financial efficiency: Institutional characteristics of the partner organizations of Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund. *Plos One*, 15(12), e0244444.
- Amir, S., Sharf, N., & Khan, R. A. (2020). Pakistan's education system: An analysis of education policies and drawbacks. *Electronic Research Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2.
- Banik, D., & Hansen, A. (2016, January). The frontiers of poverty reduction in emerging Asia. In *Forum for Development Studies* (Vol. 43, No. 1, pp. 47-68). Routledge.
- Bashir, S., Sadiq, W., Zafar, H., Murtaza, A., & Naseer, P. (2022). The Role And Analysis Of Quality Education On The Perspective Of Socio-Economic Development Of Balochistan Province Of Pakistan. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 6(10).
- Bashir, S., Zia, M. F., & Abrar, N. (2020). Social work practice with local communities in Balochistan: Essential for political engagement. *Pakistan Journal of Applied Social Sciences*, 11(2), 157-172.

- Bikales, B. (2021). Reflections on poverty reduction in China. *Report supported by the Swiss agency for development and cooperation.*
- De Las Fuentes Lacavex, G. A. (2013). Environmental Responsibility Regulations: Guarantee the Human Right to a Healthy Environment. *US-China L. Rev.*, 10, 435.
- Freije-Rodriguez, S., Hofman, B., & Johnston, L. A. (2019). China's economic reforms, poverty reduction, and the role of the World Bank.
- Gao, F. (2021). China's poverty alleviation "miracle" from the perspective of the structural transformation of the urban-rural dual economy. *China Political Economy*, 4(1), 86-109.
- Goh, C. C., Xubei, L. U. O., & Nong, Z. H. U. (2009). Income growth, inequality and poverty reduction: A case study of eight provinces in China. *China Economic Review*, 20(3), 485-496.
- Hallegatte, S., Vogt-Schilb, A., Rozenberg, J., Bangalore, M., & Beaudet, C. (2020). From poverty to disaster and back: A review of the literature. *Economics of Disasters and Climate Change*, 4, 223-247.
- Hofman, B., Johnston, L., & Freije-Rodriguez, S. (2022). China's Poverty Reduction and the Role of the World Bank. *Poverty Reduction in China: Achievements, Experience and International Cooperation*, 193-210.
- Ijaz, U. (2021). Impact of Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) on consumption, health and education. *Economic consultant*, (4 (36)), 42-50.
- Javed, A., Ahmed, V., & Amal, B. K. (2021). The Social safety nets and poverty alleviation in Pakistan: an evaluation of livelihood enhancement and protection Programme. *Britain International of Humanities and Social Sciences (BIOHS) Journal*, 3(1), 21-36.
- Khan, A. A., Khan, S. U., Fahad, S., Ali, M. A., Khan, A., & Luo, J. (2021). Microfinance and poverty reduction: New evidence from Pakistan. *International Journal of Finance & Economics*, 26(3) 4723-4733.
- Khan, A., Naveed, A., Samman, E., Sarwar, M. B., & Hoy, C. (2015). *Progress Under Scrutiny: Poverty Reduction in Pakistan*. London: Overseas Development Institute.
- Khan, B., & Ahmed, N. (2022). An analysis of governmental strategies for poverty reduction in Baluchistan during the years 1972 to 2020. *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs*, 5(3).
- Khan, C., Akram, M., & Farooq, I. (2021). Fiscal Decentralization and Social Service Delivery: An empirical Analysis of Balochistan. *Sustainable Business and Society in Emerging Economies*, 3(4), 471-483.
- Khan, K., Khan, G., Zahri, M., & Altaf, M. (2015). Role of livestock in poverty reduction: A case study of district Lasbela, Balochistan. *Lasbela, UJ Sci. Technol*, 153-156.
- Lin, J. (2010, August). The China miracle demystified. In *Econometric Society World Congress*.

- Lin, J. Y. (2013). Demystifying the Chinese economy. *Australian Economic Review*, 46(3), 259-268.
- Liu, M., Feng, X., Wang, S., & Qiu, H. (2020). China's poverty alleviation over the last 40 years: Successes and challenges. *Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*, 64(1), 209-228.
- Lu, Y., Zhang, Y., Cao, X., Wang, C., Wang, Y., Zhang, M., & Zhang, Z. (2019). Forty years of reform and opening up: China's progress toward a sustainable path. *Science advances*, 5(8), eaau9413.
- Marmot, M. G. (2022). Social inequalities in mortality: the social environment. In *Class and health* (pp. 21-33). Routledge.
- Mastoi, I., & Mastoi, A. H. (2021). Role of livestock industry in drought affected areas of Baluchistan: multidisciplinary-poverty reduction approaches. *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs*, 4(4).
- McBride, C. A. (2016). Is Chinese special? Four aspects of Chinese literacy acquisition that might distinguish learning Chinese from learning alphabetic orthographies. *Educational Psychology Review*, 28, 523-549.
- Memon, M. H. (2023). Poverty, Gap and Severity Estimates for Disaster Prone Rural Areas of Pakistan. *Social Indicators Research*, 166(3), 645-663.
- Miankhail, S. B. (2009). Causes and consequences of poverty in Pakistan. *Journal of Finance and Economics*, 2, 2-44.
- Muhammad, F., Shaikh, P. A., & Yousaf, H. (2022). The socio-economic factors of poverty: Empirical evidence from district Lasbela, Balochistan. *Business Review*, 17(2), 93-124.
- Rafique, Z., Habib, S., & Rosilawati, Y. (2023). Legal, Political and Administrative Barriers to Citizen Participation in Local Governance: An Inquiry of Local Government Institutions. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 46(4), 256-268.
- Ravallion, M. (2013). How long will it take to lift one billion people out of poverty?. *The World Bank Research Observer*, 28(2), 139-158.
- Rehman, W. U., Jalil, F., Saltik, O., Degirmen, S., & Bekmezci, M. (2023). Leveraging Strategic Innovation and Process Capabilities for Intellectual Capital Initiative Performance of Higher Education Institutes (HEIs): A Knowledge-Based Perspective. *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, 1-42.
- Safdar, S. (2017). *Factors affecting the growth of Islamic microfinance institutions In Pakistan* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Management and Technology).
- Saleem, H., Shabbir, M. S., & Khan, B. (2021). Re-examining multidimensional poverty in Pakistan: A new assessment of regional variations. *Global Business Review*, 22(6), 1441-1458.
- Sen, A. (1981). Issues in the Measurement of Poverty. In *Measurement in public choice* (pp. 144-166). London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

- Shahzad, S., & Yasmin, B. (2016). Does fiscal decentralization matter for poverty and income inequality in Pakistan?. *The Pakistan Development Review*, 781-802.
- Shaikh, P. A., Ahmed, M., Yousaf, H., & Ahmed, J. (2020). The determinants of poverty: A case study of district Lasbela, Balochistan, Pakistan. *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, 29(7), 9688-9700.
- Siddiqui, K. (2009). The political economy of growth in China and India. *Journal of Asian Public Policy*, 2(1), 17-35.
- Sultan, M. F., Shaikh, S., & Mahesar, S. A. (2022). Socio-Economic Gains Of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Synthesizing the Effects in the Wake of Global Pandemic. *Webology (ISSN: 1735-188X)*, 19(2).
- Tarar, M. G., & Pulla, V. (2014). Patriarchy, gender violence and poverty amongst Pakistani women: A social work inquiry. *International Journal of Social Work and Human Services Practice*, 2(2), 56-63.
- Tsai, W. H., & Liao, X. (2020). Mobilizing cadre incentives in policy implementation: Poverty alleviation in a Chinese county. *China Information*, 34(1), 45-67.
- Wan, G., Hu, X., & Liu, W. (2021). China's poverty reduction miracle and relative poverty: Focusing on the roles of growth and inequality. *China Economic Review*, 68, 101643.
- Waqas, M., & Torre, A. (2020). Political favouritism and social conflict: a case study of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) in Pakistan. *Area Development and Policy*, 5(3), 334-349.
- Yang, Y., & Liu, Y. (2021). The code of targeted poverty alleviation in China: A geography perspective. *Geography and Sustainability*, 2(4), 243-253.
- Yueh, L. Y. (2010). *The economy of China*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Zhou, Y., Yang, M., & Gan, X. (2023). Education and financial literacy: Evidence from compulsory schooling law in China. *The Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance*, 89, 335-346.
-