

Impact of Lowari Tunnel on the Socio-Economic Lives of the People: A Case of District Chitral (Pakistan)

Nahida Noor*

Department of Applied Economics, Institute of Management Sciences
1-A, Sector E-5, Phase VII, Hayatabad, Peshawar, Pakistan

Muhammad Fawad Azam

Department of Applied Economics, Institute of Management Sciences
1-A, Sector E-5, Phase VII, Hayatabad, Peshawar, Pakistan

Faiza Nawaz

Department of Applied Economics, Institute of Management Sciences
1-A, Sector E-5, Phase VII, Hayatabad, Peshawar, Pakistan

Abstract

This study presents the Socio economics impact of Lowari tunnel on district Chitral. This study has been based on primary data as well as secondary data. For primary data survey design has been selected and for secondary data consulted old written articles, researches and internet websites. A total of 50 samples were taken for the data collection and used simple random sampling technique. After collecting the data statistical analysis has been done and shows the results in the form of frequency tables and bar graphs. This study helps to explore the positive and negative impact of Lowari tunnel on socio economic lives of people Chitral. This study concluded that in time completion and proper maintenance of Lowari tunnel will have a positive impact on the socio-economic lives of the people of the region. The Chitrali community believes that after completion of the Lowari tunnel project, it will lead to regional development and prosperity at large.

Keywords:Socio-Economic Impact, Regional Development, Lowari Tunnel, Chitral.

BACK GROUND OF THE STUDY:

Surrounded by some of the tallest mountains in the world, Chitral is Pakistan's northern-most district, situated just across the border from Afghanistan. According to the latest survey of BISP in 2010, the District of Chitral consists of 52067 Households having a total population of 402854. District Chitral being situated in the very north of KPK province, has been ignored by the government underdeveloped. The basic reason behind this is that although Chitral ranks second position in the province according to its area but the funds are raised on the basis of population. Since the population of Chitral is too short in the past and still yet. So the government has always ignored this District. It was the time when Chitral was an independent state as usual with its own culture and language, became part of British India in the late nineteenth century, acceded to Pakistan in 1947 as a princely state, and was merged with West Pakistan in 1969 becoming one of its districts. The Chitral valley, located in the northern region of Pakistan, has one of the most remarkable places in the world when it comes to natural scenic beauty. Its picturesque mountains, sulphur springs, Juniper forests, friendly people and rivers teeming with the famous Trout fish are truly spellbinding.

The negligence from government, the socio-economic life of Chitrali people has remained underdeveloped. For the first time in 1969, District MNA of that time Mr. Ataliq Jaffar Ali Shah in National assembly demanded to build a tunnel through Lawari for the people of Chitral. His Tenure as an MNA remained for 22 years. During all his tenure as an MNA Chitral he continued his struggle in almost every session. Finally as a result of his struggle the then Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto agreed to start work on the project in 1974, but due to unsuitable circumstances the work on Lawari tunnel was stopped in his own Tenure. To the unfortunate Chitrali people the work on Lawari tunnel remained postponed for the rest of 29 years.

It was a blessing for the people of Chitral when President General Pervaiz Musharraf gave a signal of hope to the Chitral community. President General Pervaiz Musharraf on 10 June, 2003 declared in categorical terms that construction work on much debated Lowari tunnel would commence within coming three to four months' time. He made this announcement while addressing a gathering held to inaugurate Kohat Tunnel in Kohat. So in this way due to personal struggle and personal interest of Pervaiz Musharraf the Lawari tunnel became possible. The mega project of Lowari tunnel was taken by SAMBU Construction Co. Ltd. which is a Korea-based construction company specialized in civil works, architectural works, housing development and others. Its civil works include the construction of dams, hydropower facilities, and tunnels. The Lawari Tunnel is an 8.6 km (8509 meters long, 6.9 meters high and 6.3 meters wide) tunnel, located between Dir and

Chitral District. This mega-project is ranked 5th out of top 20 development projects currently underway (according to President of Pakistan website). This 8.6 km long tunnel is expected to be completed at a cost of Rs.8 billion (\$133 million US). But very unfortunately the above mentioned project was again interrupted by the war on terror which caused a great damage to national as well as provincial infrastructure. The SAMBU Company being an international incorporation was unwilling to carry on the project due to lack of resources and threats by terrorists. Later on the funds deficiency and mismanagement by the authorities in Pakistan posed a great danger to the Lawari tunnel project and the dream of Chitralis seemed to come untrue. However, the Chitrali community and political leaders would not let such a mega project go undefined. Almost 35% of the project has been completed till yet.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

This study aims at preliminary finding of the socio-economic effects of Lowari tunnel on Chitral people that whether it benefitted local peoples or not. Its very important to analyze the socio-economic effects of Lowari tunnel and open ways for further elaborative studies.

OBJECTIVES:

- To explore the positive as well as negative impact of Lowari tunnel on the socio-economic lives of the people of Chitral
- To give an estimated overview of economic development in Chitral after the completion of the Tunnel project
- To identify the major stakeholders of the project e-g Chitrali community, Government of KPK and Pakistan, Tourism department KPK, Corporate sector etc.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

There was not enough study done on that topic. As Chitral is a northern area and too far from main cities of Pakistan. It's hard to collect the data so that's why there is non availability of research and working paper on this specific topic. These all are the secondary sources like different blocks and articles of news paper.

During the inauguration of Kohat Tunnel General Musharaf(2003) said that the tunnel of lawari has very importance and it will play an important role for the socio economic development and reduction in poverty and also benefits to common man of Chitral.

The Lawari tunnel is a precious gift for Chitrali community which improves up the socio economic lives for which it has a significant role said by Amman Ullah khan jadoon March, 2004. He further said that after successful completion of the Lowari tunnel, survey will be conducted in Chitral to provide them with the Sui gas facility not only for the people but also for its surrounding areas which will bring revolutionary changes with the establishment of trade links with other cities.

The Tunnel has economic significance as it helps to discover and promote the Natural resources of the area and it also has cultural and political importance said by Chairman NHA in July, 2005. After completion of the Lowari tunnel it will remain open throughout the whole year to keep links open between Chitral and rest of the country. The Chairman NHA observed that after completion the construction of dams will also be feasible as Chitral is rich of Natural minerals and reservoirs of silver. It will promote tourism and thus vastly enhance the socio economic life of the people of Chitral.

Dr Baber Zahir Uddin (Rawalpindi Punjab) in his article 'LOWARI TUNNEL, A BOON FOR THE PEOPLE OF CHITRAL' (2011) said that the expected date of completion was 2008 but due to financial and technical constraints the civil work is remaining to be completed. To open up the trade and logistic to Chitral, the government should take interest to complete this project as soon as possible.

Dr Arbab Almagir said that this project is important not only for Chitral but also for the entire country. This project will play a vital role in the development of the area by providing trade environment.

According to Altaf Chaudary, cost and maintenance issue the rail tunnel is converted to road tunnel because it is cheaper and easy way to maintain.

Mourine line in his article written to Dawn Newspaper on 13th November, 2008 said that during all the weather route, the Chitrali people have been hopeless and have been cut off from rest of the country even they are second class citizen having no other alternative routes.

METHODOLOGY:

Sample Design:

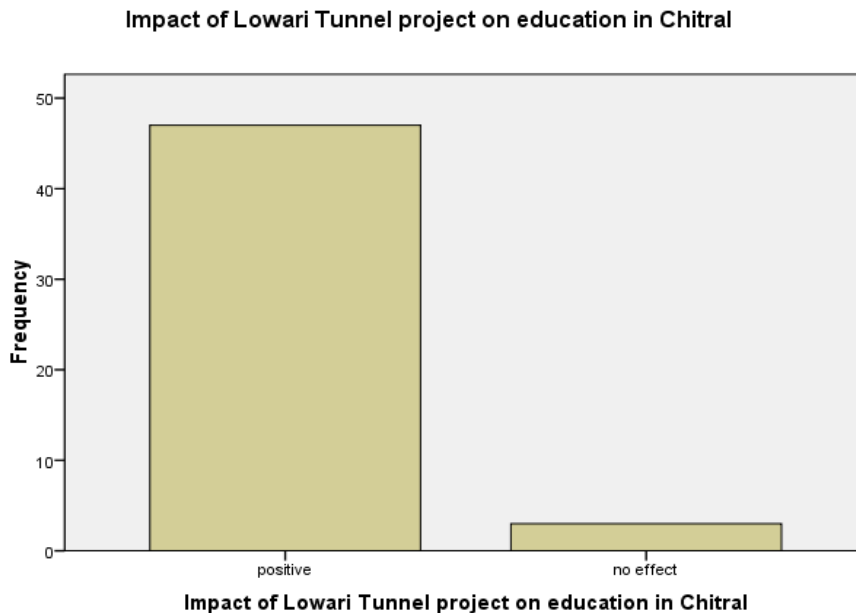
The universe of the study is District Chitral. The study is based on primary as well as secondary data. A pretest of questionnaire has been done on the selected respondents of Chitral community for collection of primary data and then the questionnaire has been distributed among the peoples by taking an appropriate sample size of 50 respondents. Among them 34 were males and 16 were females.

Data Analysis:

The data was analyzed through statistical techniques such as frequency tables and bar graphs. Mode explains the dominant opinion of the respondents of the area.

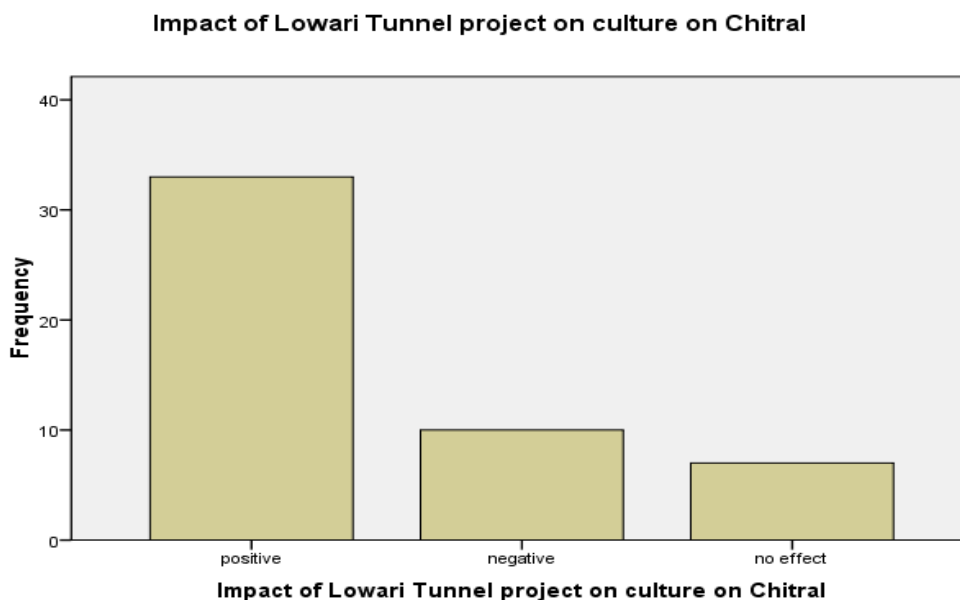
RESULTS:

- The impact of Lowari Tunnel Project on Education in Chitral:



94% of the respondents respond that the Lowari Tunnel project has a positive impact on education in Chitral and 6% respond that it has no effect on education in Chitral.

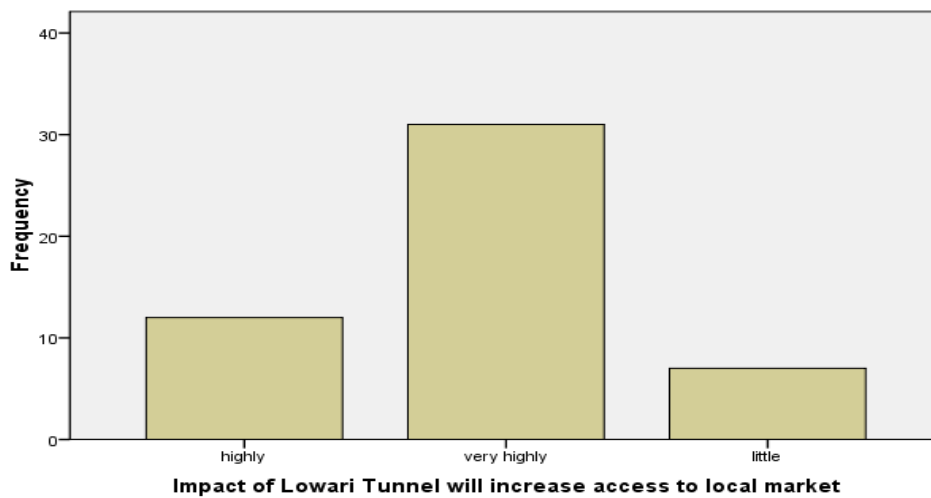
- The impact of Lowari Tunnel Project on Culture of Chitral:



66% of the respondents respond that the Lowari Tunnel project has a positive impact on culture of Chitral, 20% respond that it has a negative and 14% respond that it has no effect on culture of Chitral.

- The Lowari Tunnel will increase access to local market:

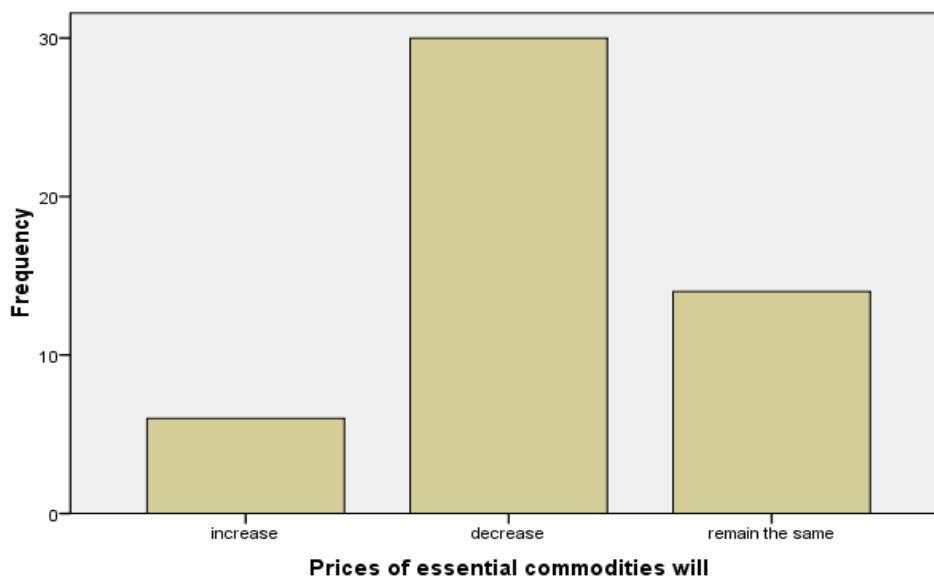
Impact of Lowari Tunnel will increase access to local market



24% respondents express their opinion that the Lowari Tunnel will highly access to local market, 62% respond that it will very highly increase and 14% respond that it will little access to local market.

➤ The prices of essential commodities will:

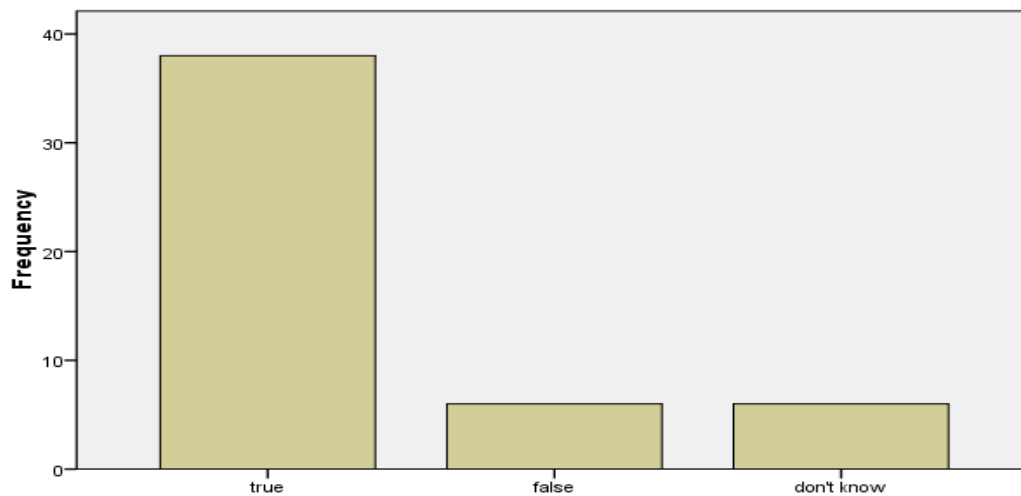
Prices of essential commodities will



12% respondents express their opinion that after competition of Lowari Tunnel the prices of essential commodities will increase, 60% respond that the prices of essential commodities will decrease and 28% respond that the prices will remain the same.

➤ The number of tourists will increase after completion of Lowari tunnel project:

The number of tourists will increase after completion of Lowari Tunnel

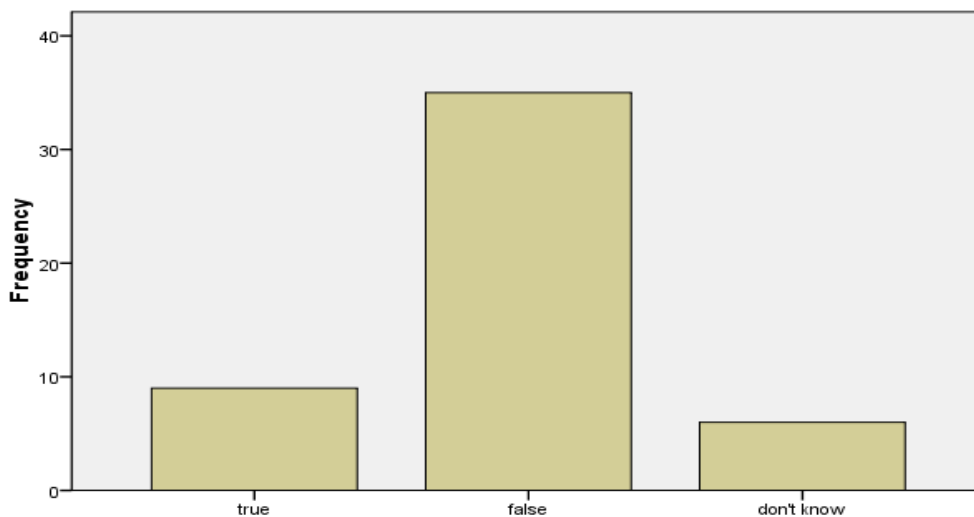


The number of tourists will increase after completion of Lowari Tunnel

76% respondents believe that after completion of Lowari Tunnel project the number of tourists will increase, 12% believe that it won't and 12% respond that they don't know about the impact on tourism and number of tourist.

- The culture of Chitral will no more keep its traditional identity:

The culture of Chitral will no more keep its traditional identity

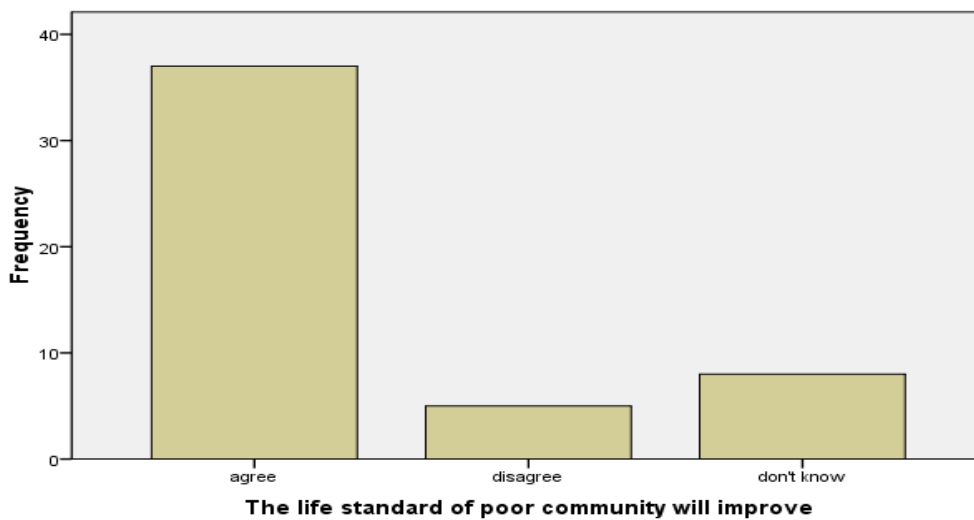


The culture of Chitral will no more keep its traditional identity

18% respondents believe that after completion of Lowari Tunnel project the culture of Chitral will no more keep its traditional identity, 70% believe that the culture of Chitral will keep its tradition and 12% respond that they don't know about the impact on traditional identity.

- The life standards of the poor community will improve:

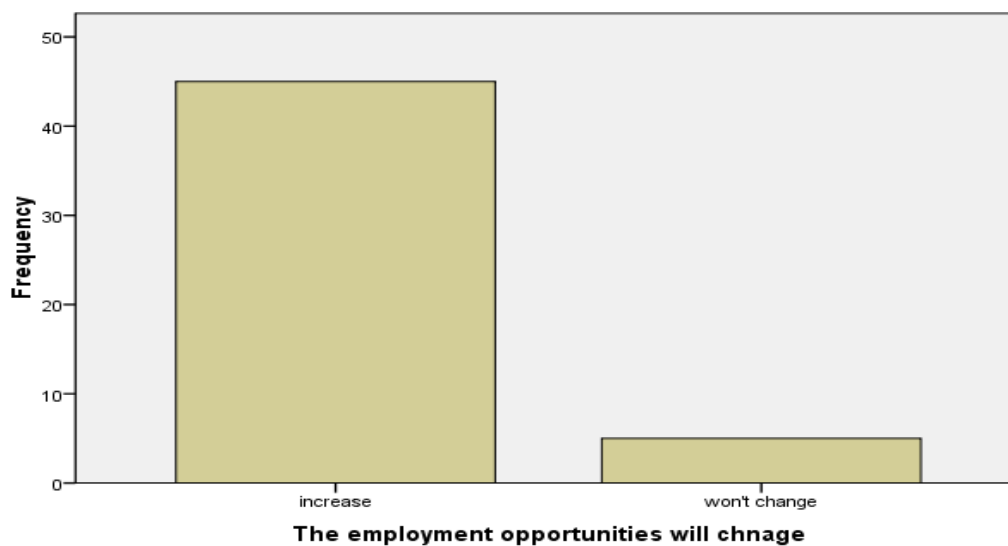
The life standard of poor community will improve



74% of the respondents believe that after completion of Lowari tunnel project the life standard of poor community will improve, 10% of the respondent are disagree with this statement and 16% respond that they don't know and they have no idea about the impact of the life standard of the poor community.

➤ The employment opportunities will change:

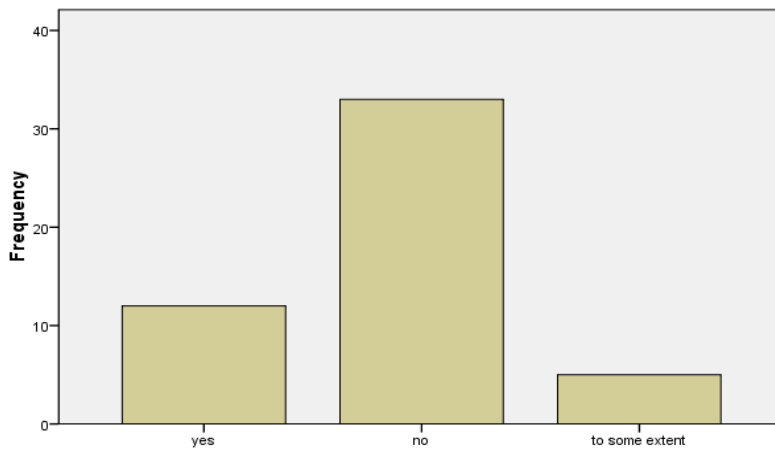
The employment opportunities will change



90% of the respondents are of the view that the employment opportunities will increase in Chitral after competition of the Lowari tunnel project and 10% view that it won't change.

➤ The natural resources in Chitral have been explored:

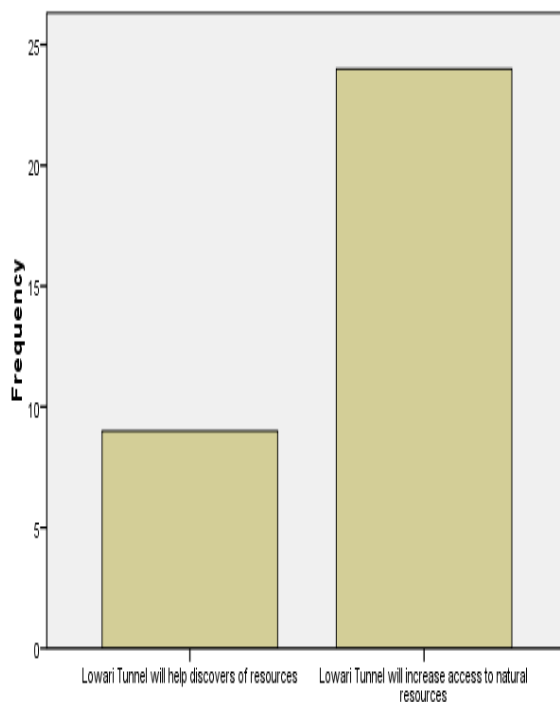
The natural resources in Chitral have been explored



The natural resources in Chitral have been explored

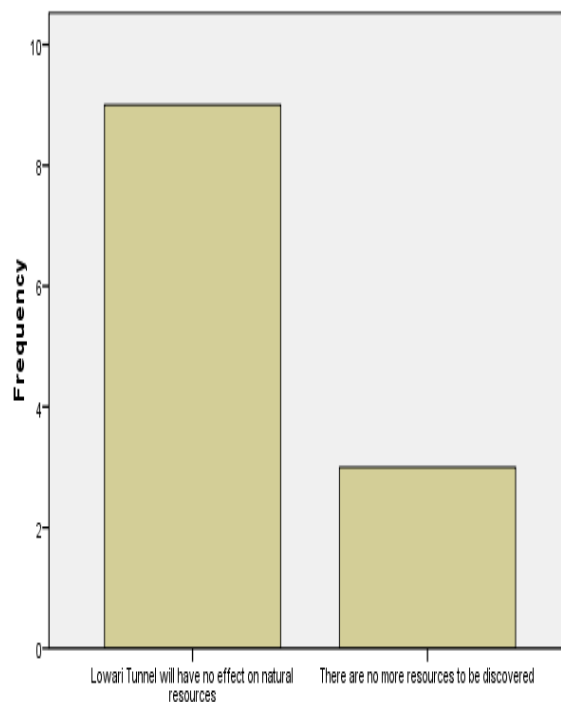
66% of the respondents are of the view that the natural resources in Chitral haven't been explored, 24% are of view that the natural resources have been explored and 10% are of view that they have been explored to some extent.

If no to question # 9



If no to question # 9

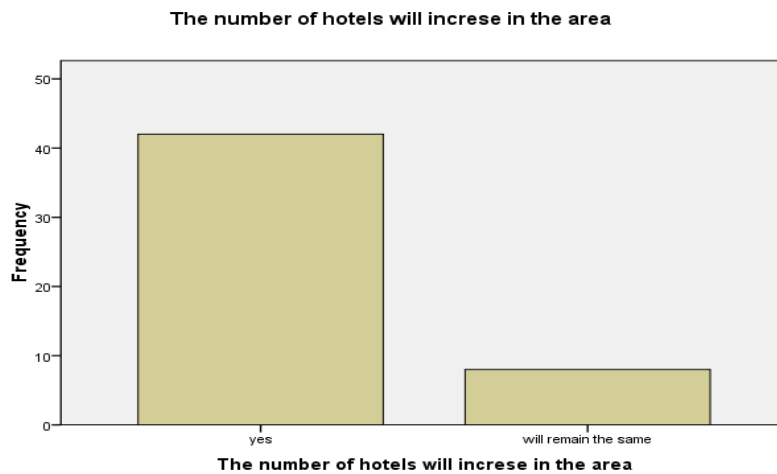
If yes to question # 9



If yes to question # 9

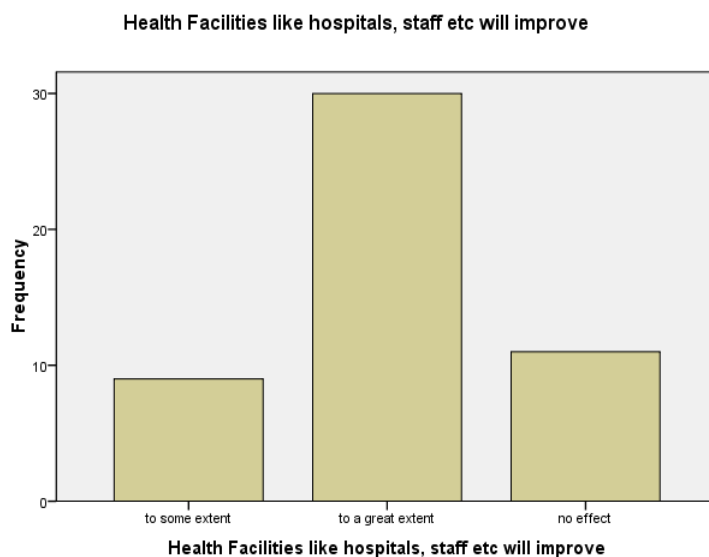
Among those respondent who believe that the natural resources of Chitral haven't been explored 72% are of view that Lowari tunnel will increase access to natural resources and 27% are of view that Lowari tunnel will help to discovers of resources. Among those respondent who believe that the natural resources of Chitral have been explored 75% replied that the Lowari tunnel will have no effect on natural resources and 25% replied that there are no more resources to be discovered.

➤ The number of hotels will increase in the area:



84% of the respondents believe that the number of hotels will increase in the area after competition of Lowari tunnel and 16% believe that it will remain the same.

➤ The health facilities e-g hospitals, staff etc will improve:



18% of the respondent are of view that the health facilities for example hospitals, staff etc will improve to some extent, 60% believe that it will improve to a greater extent and 22% are of view that it will remain the same and it has no effect.

CONCLUSION:

This study concluded that in time completion and proper maintenance of Lowari tunnel will have a positive impact on the socio-economic lives of the people of the region. Chitral has a unique traditional identity therefore it attracts the tourists all over the world, therefore after completion of the Lowari tunnel project, it will promote tourism and creates many employment opportunities in the area. The natural resources of Chitral haven't been explored so this project will increase the access to natural resources. This project also provides easy access to essential commodities at lower prices.

The people of the region will avail good education and the number of educational institutes will also increase. It increases the links between Chitral and rest of the Country in both summer and winter seasons. The life standard of poor community will improve and people of the area will have access to good health facilities like hospitals, medicines availability can be ensured both in summer and winter seasons. In short the Chitrali community believes that it will lead to regional development and prosperity at large.

POLICY RECOMMENDATION:

The study shows the importance of Lowari tunnel for people of Chitral so government should allocate the resource properly for its quick construction. It's been 41 years that working on the tunnel is started but yet not completed. The government should take concrete steps towards it. The proper resource allocation will help it out to complete quickly which will reduce the problems of people of Chitral.

REFERENCES:

Zia, Asad (2002), "Lowari tunnel will improve connections between the Chitral Valley and the rest of the country", <http://www.allvoices.com/contributed-news/5518306->
 Faizi, Inayatullah (2010) "Dad be Dad" in daily Mashriq news Page No 6, Date: 8 October
 Planning Commission, Govt of Pakistan (September 2001), "Ten Year Perspective Development Plan 2001-11 and Three Year Development Programme 2001-04".
www.chitraltimes.com/lowaritunnel22
www.chitralnews.com/lt2str

APPENDIX

Statistics

	Impact of Lowari Tunnel project on education in Chitral	Impact of Lowari Tunnel project on culture in Chitral	Impact of Lowari Tunnel will increase access to local market	Prices of essential commodities will	The number of tourists will increase after completion of Lowari Tunnel	The culture of Chitral will no more keep its traditional identity	The life standard of poor community will improve
N Valid	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	1.1200	1.4800	1.9000	2.1600	1.3600	1.9400	1.4200
Median	1.0000	1.0000	2.0000	2.0000	1.0000	2.0000	1.0000
Mode	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00
Std. Deviation	.47980	.73512	.61445	.61809	.69282	.54995	.75835

Statistics

	The employment opportunities will change	The natural resources in Chitral have been explored	If no to question # 9	If yes to question # 9	The number of hotels will increase in the area	Health Facilities like hospitals, staff etc will improve
N Valid	50	50	33	12	50	50
Missing	0	0	17	38	0	0
Mean	1.2000	1.8600	1.7273	1.2500	1.3200	2.0400
Median	1.0000	2.0000	2.0000	1.0000	1.0000	2.0000
Mode	1.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	2.00
Std. Deviation	.60609	.57179	.45227	.45227	.74066	.63760

Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	34	68.0	68.0	68.0
female	16	32.0	32.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 18 to 22	6	12.0	12.0	12.0
23 to 27	6	12.0	12.0	24.0
28-32	16	32.0	32.0	56.0
32 to above	22	44.0	44.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Occupation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Student	7	14.0	14.0	14.0
government servant	16	32.0	32.0	46.0
private servant	10	20.0	20.0	66.0
Landlord	4	8.0	8.0	74.0
family business	7	14.0	14.0	88.0
Unemployed	6	12.0	12.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The IISTE is a pioneer in the Open-Access hosting service and academic event management. The aim of the firm is Accelerating Global Knowledge Sharing.

More information about the firm can be found on the homepage:

<http://www.iiste.org>

CALL FOR JOURNAL PAPERS

There are more than 30 peer-reviewed academic journals hosted under the hosting platform.

Prospective authors of journals can find the submission instruction on the following page: <http://www.iiste.org/journals/> All the journals articles are available online to the readers all over the world without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. Paper version of the journals is also available upon request of readers and authors.

MORE RESOURCES

Book publication information: <http://www.iiste.org/book/>

Academic conference: <http://www.iiste.org/conference/upcoming-conferences-call-for-paper/>

IISTE Knowledge Sharing Partners

EBSCO, Index Copernicus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, JournalTOCS, PKP Open Archives Harvester, Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB, Open J-Gate, OCLC WorldCat, Universe Digital Library, NewJour, Google Scholar

