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Development of new cultural trends, paradigms and perspectives: A case study on China Pakistan Economic Corridor

Abstract

China and Pakistan economic corridor has become the talk of the town from the early 2015 which is a game changer for both the countries- China and Pakistan. It is under way with great projects of roads, infrastructures, power and energy and railways. The CPEC has its cultural impacts on both the nations. This paper is an effort to explore the major cultural trends, paradigms and perspectives, with an idea that China Pakistan economic corridor is not only a trade and business project, but it will bring forward new cultural patterns which are long lasting. This will increase people to people contacts and the activities between the Chinese and Pakistani nationals. The common cultural activities including learning languages, matrimonial relations, and direct contacts in business and friendships will be materialized. Further, all these activities, either cultural or economic, will help produce a new world view and better understanding of the respective societies.

Key words: cultural exchange, China Pakistan economic corridor, cultural change, cultural amalgamation, matrimonial relations.

Introduction

China Pakistan economic corridor has become a new phenomenon of multinational trade and connectivity. The main aim of the project was regional connectivity, with a new layer of trade and development in Pakistan. Pakistan and China are friends from very long time. China Pakistan economic corridor is a new phase of development through the Ancient Silk Road. With the emergence of this cooperation on the front of the china Pakistan economic corridor will make the bonds of both the countries stronger.¹In this manner, the honorable Chinese president Xi Jinping in April 2015, visited Islamabad to inaugurate the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a \$46 billion investment in Pakistan's energy and transportation sectors. As part of China's One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative, CPEC is designed to promote regional connectivity among Pakistan, China, and Eurasia similarly, With the belt and initiative plate form china and Pakistan economic

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corridor is a large investment with the combination of infrastructure, rail and road constructions, power generation, and other projects along with new arena of business and trade. That is, believed, both the nations and countries will equally benefit from this project.² Up till now the project is having extend its worth up to &66 billion dollars. Meanwhile, the common foes of both china and Pakistan are struggling hard to stop this project and deteriorate the relations of Pakistan and china to eradicate this project totally.³ It has seen that most of the china Pakistan economic corridor are completed and new small and big projects are being started by both the Chinese and Pakistani authorities. This project is devised to be completed in 2030.⁴ The politics of the China—Pakistan economic corridor. Now, that is, this project is not confined these development projects rather its domain has increased to cultural exchange and people to people contact. This project not only brings with it, economic development for both countries but it has widened the relation of both the countries. From 2015, it has seen that the number of Chinese citizens, coming to Pakistan has increased.⁵ Not only this, Chinese and Pakistani national are make matrimonial relations, which has seen very less before the advent of china Pakistan economic corridor. Historically, there has been a very different perspectives and ideologies of both the nations, on the one side there is Islamic thought and system which is totally different from communist china.⁶ Some of the anthropologists has considered it a new trend in the development of the new world order. With this many questions arise, does the ideology of a country matters for making its relations with other countries? From this, it can be concluded that the economy is the most important interest of a country and the world has changed its dimension. Definitely, this trend will develop new cultural paradigms. With all this, a new culture is emerging from the people to people contact between Chinese and Pakistanis. Within a short period of time, only in five years, more than 3000 matrimonial engagements have been seen among both nations. For Pakistan, this corridor is viewed as a symbol of the indomitable relationship it shares with China.⁷

Language is one of the main factors of culture, on the linguistic front, both the nations have different dialects and languages, now, in both the nations are trying to fulfill this gap as well. In Pakistan the leading universities have started teaching Chinese language.⁸ There are several centers for learning Chinese with the name of Confucius centers- The University of the Punjab Confucius center, Karachi University Confucius center, and many others. These all activities, either cultural or economic are making a new pattern of society, because both the countries have different societal norms, values and philosophy of life.⁹ Chinese philosophy of life is attached with the state notion of secularism and as Pakistan is an Islamic country where people follow Muslims pattern of philosophy of life. This will not be wrong to say, it's a development of a new culture, with a cultural amalgamation and cultural fusion.¹⁰

Theoretical framework

The concept of sociological and anthropological theory of amalgamation provide idea of two culture interaction and become merged to make a new culture, China is pursuing through its Belt and Road Initiative the Soft Power model suggested by political scientists to achieve its goals. As an honest evaluation, in case an aid was prearranged without any interactions captivating. This soft power is applied on several nation for mutual trade and business. The main motive of the project can be

on economic front but in truth this is falling in the theory of amalgamation due to which new cultural trends and values are emerging.¹¹ Cultural change may come from many sources but most of them comes through contact with other culture, inventions and internal adjustment of culture.¹²

Methodology

For this research study the appropriate method is the qualitative method with analytical and historical research method. Both the primary and secondary sources are utilized, the primary sources are the interviews, newspapers and the direct field work, the secondary sources are the books and the other documents. Interviews are undertaken both in China and Pakistan, the main focus was on the cultural interactions of the people to people.

Language and the development of cultural norms

Language is the main source through which a culture can be evaluated and understood.¹³ China and Pakistan have two different cultures with different notion and philosophy of life but knowing both the languages this issue can be solved. History tells that the Chinese language has a significant worth as is spoken by the largest population of the world and 2nd largest economy of the world. Now it is going to be the largest economic partner of the world.¹⁴ It is assumed that establishing a context will facilitate the reader to understand the coherent association of linguistic expression across a given text. This analysis is based on the context of Pakistan-China economic corridor. For learning Chinese, now, in Pakistan, there are many institutions which are teaching Chinese to Pakistani nationals.¹⁵ These institutions are present in all big and small cities of Pakistan. Not only this, but some of the schools are also teaching Chinese language to the students from the age of 11 to onward. One of the major examples is from the Sindh province where the government announced the plans to make Chinese compulsory in schools. Today, still some of the schools are teaching Chinese language, this is from one of the governments initiatives to teach Chinese to the people of Sindh.¹⁶

Similarly, some of the private schools in Balochistan province, most importantly in provincial capital Quetta and the port city of Gwadar. Almost more than 10000 primary and secondary schools going students are learning Chinese language on school levels.¹⁷

Chinese language is not only being taught in schools, presently, all the leading universities are teaching Chinese language to Pakistani students and scholars.¹⁸ In every public school there is one institution which is only responsible to teach Chinese language like “The University of The Punjab” has a confusions center, with its major aim to promote Chinese culture and language in the world, this institute not only provide language courses but ask the students to perform several cultural activities, Quaid e Azam University Islamabad has a Chinese language center which is sponsored by Beijing institute of Genomics in 2017, Confucius institute at Karachi university was established in November 29, 2013 and Peshawar Confucius university established on 5th June 2017.¹⁹

These all the institutes have given their services to Pakistani students to learn Chinese language and working to promote Chinese language and culture.²⁰The

Pakistani students are preferring to go to china for their higher education, as it is mentioned in dawn newspaper and according to the government record Balochistan now more than 30 thousand students are enrolled in china in several universities. Chinese government provide different national full scholarship for undergraduates, masters, and PhD classes. Pakistani students learn Chinese language and culture living in china, which includes the Chinese cultural norms and values. Along with learning, the Chinese language and culture those Pakistani students also promote the cultural outfits of Pakistan.

The learning of languages is not confined to Pakistani side, there are many Urdu learning centers in different parts of china. The companies which are working under the banner of china Pakistan economic corridor needs skilled Chinese both in languages and other fields, although Urdu is difficult for the Chinese national, they are more eager to learn it. It is not the first time for the Chinese to learn Urdu language as the first institute as Urdu department was established at Peking university in 1951.²¹

With the passage of time more institutes were established in other cities of China like Xian and Guangzhou. Another Urdu learning institute was established the Beijing foreign studies university, which has been teaching since 2007. Pakistani university along with teaching Urdu in Pakistan, now, have developed several centers in china to teach the Chinese nationals. Similarly, Allama Iqbal Open University with the coordination of Yunnan Open University to open Urdu language center in the university. A five-member academic delegation of Yunnan Open University visited Allama Iqbal Open University where they signed a MoU to promote the concept of China-Pakistan educational corridor, by undertaking joint ventures in different educational sectors.²²

Similarly, one of the great scholars Ms. Zhou Yuan, Head of Urdu Department at BFSU said *“Urdu language has been taught in the department since 2007. Currently 22 Chinese students were learning Urdu language. She mentioned that her department has been organizing competitions like Urdu Calligraphy, Urdu speech contest and cultural activities to introduce Pakistan to the Chinese students. She thanked the Government of Pakistan and the Embassy for its continued support to the Center.”*²³

Chinese interest in learning Urdu increased with the established of china Pakistan economic corridor, as it would open doors for them for doing business and other activities in Pakistan. This doctrine of learning language was not only confined to Chinese national, Pakistani students and business many were having the same thinking to get a better job or to do a better business. On the other hand, this language and intercommunication promote and develop cultural understanding on both the sides, which leads to a neo-cultural paradigm. The Chinese students and the businessman living in Pakistan are adopting many Pakistani cultural outfits.²⁴

Chinese language and cultural centers in Pakistan

Name of institute	City, Province	Number of students
Confucius center the university of the Punjab	Lahore	3000
Karachi university Confucius center	Karachi, Sindh	2500
Peshawar university Chinese learning center	Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	1000
Quaid e Azam university Islamabad, Chinese learning center	Islamabad, Capital	600
National University of Modern Languages	Islamabad, Capital	2000
University of Central Punjab	Lahore, Punjab	3000
Other private language centers in Lahore	Lahore, Punjab	5000
Private languages in Karachi	Karachi, Sindh	3000
Pak-China Government school Gwadar	Gwadar, Balochistan	300
Private languages in Peshawar	Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	

Source devised by the author.

Urdu language and cultural centers in China

Name of institute	City, province	Number of students
Urdu Department Peking University	Beijing, Capital	1000
Beijing Foreign University	Beijing, Capital	300
Shanghai international University	Shanghai, Economic zone	100
Xian Jiao tong university	Xian, Shannxi	200

Source devised by author.

Matrimonial relations: Chinese and Pakistani nationals

Human being living in this world is not a single identity, it is divided on geographical bases, geography is the main determinant of the culture, almost people living in same geographical area follow a similar culture.²⁵ In this age of globalization and modernization human culture is going towards a single identity and pattern. Indeed, still, there is difference in thought and ways of life, but in new world these are resolved through mutual understanding.²⁶ For the economic development and similar ideas of the countries and states are trying to connect with each other, which is a great channel to understand and adopt the cultural outfits of other countries. Similarly, China and Pakistan economic corridor which apparently

is an economic and business deal, but it has cultural impacts on both the countries.²⁷ It is the example of the British who came to south Asia for trade and business, ruled south Asia for 200 years and make the people westernize in thinking and outlook. British had used several means to impact the south Asian, as their main purpose was trade and business, British and the English people make matrimonial relations is a lesser quantity, because they think that their culture and civilization was better than that of south Asian and give a new cultural trends to the people of south Asia.²⁸ Meanwhile, now, the world powers have changed their process of making colonization, it had directly affected the live and ideology of the country with its strong economy. Up till, now China is showing its policy of soft power and a friendly relation with Pakistan. Nevertheless, a cultural transformation is seen between both the nation in the shape of matrimonial connections. Before the contract of China Pakistan economic corridor, Chinese and Pakistan nations have been in contact but there were very less matrimonial alliances and relations.²⁹

With the advent a china Pakistan economic corridor a new wave of Chinese nationals towards Pakistan and Pakistani nationals towards China from early 2015 till today. According to the records more than 2000000 Chinese visited Pakistan for business, education and tourism. Similarly, more than 200000 Pakistani nationals visited China for the purpose of education and business. With these interactions several matrimonial relations between Pakistanis and Chinese has been developed.

Although there were some difficulties for both the nations when the news erupts, about the problems faced by both the Pakistanis and Chinese. Only in 2018 and 2019 more than 1000 fake marriages were seen, as the Pakistani girls reported that the Chinese boys misused them in the name of marriage, even some cases of human Trafficking were also reported. This issue was tackled by both the Pakistani and Chinese authorities, with which the criminals and the culprits were arrested by the police³⁰.

This problem was most prominent in early phase of china Pakistan economic corridor which is one side of the coin. As there were hundreds of successful matrimonial relations between Chinese who are living a happy and prosperous life, both living in china and in Pakistan. when there was no concept of CPEC, there was concept of marriage among Chinese and Pakistani students. Most of the couples lived in China and earning money together. This was a good sign for Pakistan economic development along with cultural exchange, now the opportunity is bigger and Chinese nationals are working in Pakistan which will make bonds between Chinese and Pakistani citizens.³¹ This is new cultural wave taken place in China and Pakistan. Punjab the most populated province which is politically and has less security issues has been the center of these matrimonial relations where the number of Chinese are relatively more than other provinces. In these five years, more than 3000 marriages were registered in local courts and other relevant places of only in Punjab most of them are living a successful life, living in china and Pakistan. Both Pakistan and China have a number of married couples who have made compromises on dress, food and religion, for the fulfilment of legal requirements the Chinese nationals embrace Islam, even they change their names. As for this article more than ten successful couples have been interviewed, who have common cultural trends. Similarly, a couple living in Pakistan, the girl is from china and the boy is from Pakistan, they are living in capital city of Punjab, province Lahore. They have their

own model of living, as when they live in Pakistan, they adopt the culture of Pakistan both in dress and food, while living in China they use Chinese food and other cultural outfits. Nonetheless, the Chinese girl has changed her name to Arfa. They have one son and have two names; his Muslim name is Muhammad Musa and he was born in Pakistan. This case is comparatively a compromise to live together with the clash of two different cultures. Similarly, the boy living with them, has to adopt two cultures which make him a multicultural being, not only multicultural but he will live a new culture which will be much global and liberal.³²

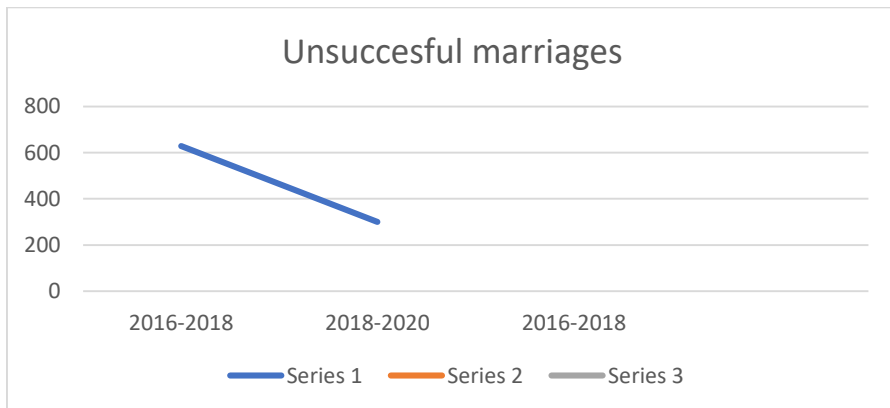
Unsuccessful marriages between Chinese and Pakistani's

No of marriages in 2016-2018	629
No of marriages in 2018-2020	300
Total	929

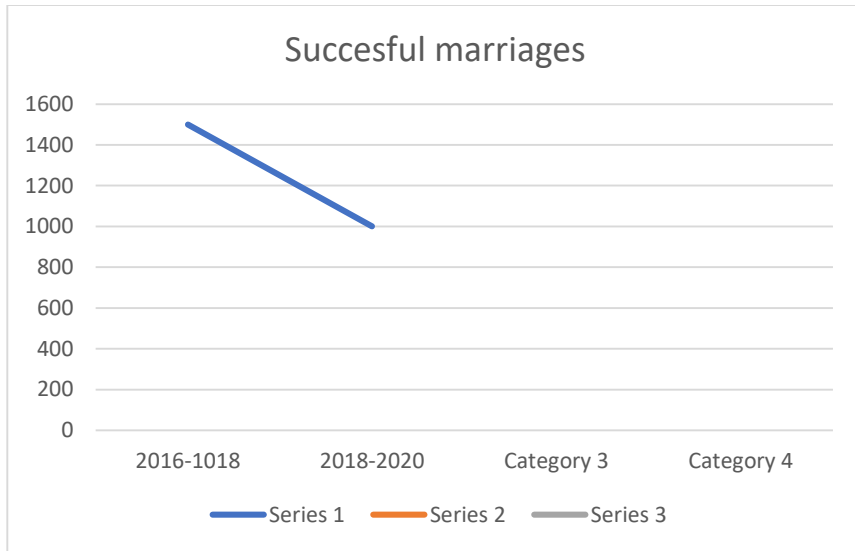
Successful marriages between Pakistani's and Chinese

No of marriages in 2016-2018	1000
No of marriages in 2018-2020	1500
Total	2500

The dilemma of these matrimonial relations, the media of both the countries has focused on unsuccessful marriages rather than successful marriages. It is clear from the above data; the successful marriages are a far greater than the unsuccessful Chinese Pakistani interaction which is playing a great part in cultural amalgamation.³³



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Development of cultural trends and patterns

Human cultural traits—behaviors, ideas, and technologies that can be learned from other individuals—can exhibit complex patterns of transmission and evolution, and researchers have developed theoretical models, both verbal and mathematical, to facilitate our understanding of these patterns.³⁴ Many of the first quantitative models of cultural evolution were modified from existing concepts in theoretical population genetics because cultural evolution has many parallels with, as well as clear differences from, genetic evolution. In addition, cultural evolutionary theory is a natural component of studies in demography, human ecology, and many other disciplines. This pattern of cultural evolution is visible in the context of China Pakistan economic corridor, as it’s a constant contact of the people which is given the name “people to people contact”.³⁵

Culture is the way of life of a group living in a society which includes how the dressing, marriage customs, language, family life, their patterns of work, religious ceremonies and leisure pursuits.³⁶ China and Pakistan economic corridor brings with it a cultural interaction between Chinese and Pakistani people. As Chinese culture is different from Pakistani culture and living style, religious problems. From the ingredients of culture dress is different Pakistani dress is according to the code of the Islam which ask women to dress full and to hide specific parts of body and it is similar for the Muslim man too. Verily, this problem has been solved by two distinctive methods. Pakistani manage to wear the modern globalized dress to make a new approach to be comfortable with the Chinese culture.³⁷ The Chinese man and women living in Pakistan wear reliable clothes according to the ethics of Islam and culture of Pakistan. The second ingredient of culture is the marriage custom which brought new trends for both the cultures, it is depends on the time and place of marriage, marriage in china follow the Chinese customs, similarly, if in Pakistan, Pakistani marriage customs followed. Chinese language has replaced English as the language of job opportunities in Pakistan. Chinese language and history are also

getting strong attention in Pakistani academic courses. However, Food is a pillar in cultural and people to people relation between China and Pakistan. Chinese who are living in Pakistan, enjoy Pakistani food and spices.³⁸ Even in some cases both the Chinese and Pakistani's have ignored the religious matter and married with changing their basic ideas. The tendency of sharing cultural activities between China and Pakistan is increasing day by day like a storm.³⁹ During a field survey, a respondent had the view, "He is too much inspired by Chinese work ethics and working hours. They care for the life security of the local labor, working hours are the same as Chinese labor, if they work extra time, they are paid extra money for the extra work". Pakistani students are making progress in China's best universities and carrying their cultural traits, patterns, norms and values. Every year on cultural days, Pakistani student present their culture. Now, every Pakistani is aware about China and Pakistan friendship and love Chinese and to work with them.⁴⁰

Conclusion

Within only seven years, on the plate form of China Pakistan economic corridor, the first phase of development has been completed- in the form of infrastructure, construction of roads, and works on power generation. Although the present government has shown less concerns about the projects of Cpec but there are signs that Cpec is the project which will boost up the economy of Pakistan. Along with all these development project an interaction between the people of china and Pakistan has also developed- in the form of business, people to people contact, tourism, educational scholarships- which has more importantly promoted cultural exchange between China and Pakistan. These interactions between china and Pakistan are making a new arena in the field of culture. All the cultural activities are bringing both Pakistani and Chinese together, with new world politics and globalization patterns it's going to become a new horizon of cultural development and mutual understanding. As language is one of the most import part of a culture, the Chinese language is making its footprints in Pakistan very rapidly which will hope to overcome English as the second language after Urdu. The matrimonial alliances and the relationship between both the nations youths are on peak and China is going to be top country where Pakistani national are attaching and have marriage relationships. With this it is clear that for people to people interaction the ideologies are not necessarily to be same, but economy is the main connecter of the nations and the people. It is concluded with a great hope that China Pakistan economic corridor will be prosperous on both the fronts culture and the other development in relations.

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