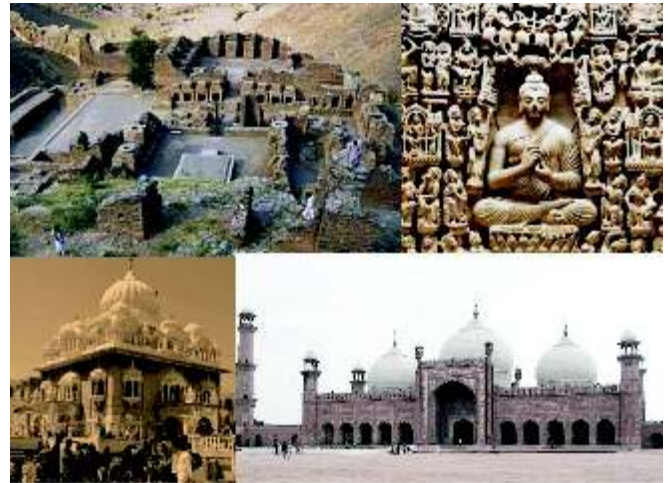


# 05 CORRIDORS, CULTURE & CONNECTIVITY

December, 2017

## CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (CPEC): AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL CONNECTIVITY



Anam Kuraishi  
Mustafa Hyder



**Pakistan-China Institute**



### **Corridors, Culture & Connectivity**

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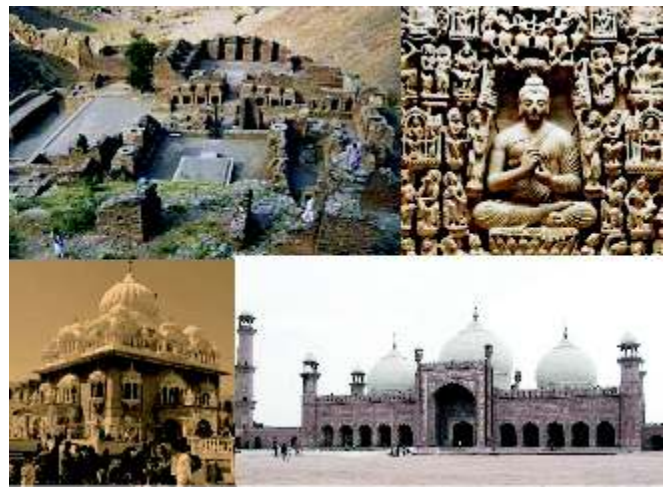
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## **ABSTRACT**

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is largely assumed to be restricted to being an economic entity, but the reality is greater than this restricted vision. The vision of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) extends to being an avenue for cultural engagement and cooperation for peaceful and harmonious co-existence which is a necessity for stable growth and development of the countries associated with the project. CPEC acts as a vote of confidence placed by the Chinese in Pakistan by investing a tremendous amount for development projects in Pakistan, demonstrating that Pakistan is a safe and friendly place for investment, along with promoting a positive image of the country. The purpose of this monograph is to illustrate the wide scope of CPEC under BRI as encapsulating cultural and educational dimension, providing opportunities for the development of Pakistan as well as being integral for the complete success of CPEC.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND EDITOR**

Anam Kuraishi is a recent graduate from the London School of Economics (LSE) with a MSc. in Comparative Politics (Democracy and Democratization). Her expertise lie within qualitative research and her research interests revolve around democracy, elections, discourse analysis and politics of South Asia. She has joined Pakistan-China Institute in the capacity of a CPEC associate where she has been involved with the institutes research portfolio and has been conducting and evaluating policy research on CPEC and its impact on various aspects of Pakistan's economy and society. The author is also performing the role of a project coordinator for collaborations and expansion of PCI's activities and subsequent mobilization of stakeholders for project activations through engagement with various government departments, institutions and private entities.

Mustafa Sayed is the Executive Director of Pakistan-China Institute. He is also the founder and CEO of CAN-Asian Synergies, a business consultancy that solicits and navigates foreign investors in Pakistan. Mr. Mustafa has been a Special Representative of the Asian Global Group. After graduating from Hobart and William Smith College in New York, Mr. Mustafa acquired extensive research and think-tank experience with working at the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars and the New America Foundation in Washington DC.

## FOREWORD

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Pakistan-China Institute's theme of 'Cultures, Corridors & Connectivity' (CCC) is closely aligned with the intricate link of Belt & Road with cultural engagement. The institute prides itself in continuing to be the focal platform in Pakistan for taking the Belt & Road initiative and CPEC forward, along with playing its role in supporting cultural engagement across the region.

This monograph is a progression in the institute's venture of initiating a cultural discourse on CPEC and promoting the cultural engagement aspect of the Belt and Road Initiative. I am sure this research report will play an integral role in discussing the broad scope of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and highlight the cultural and educational opportunities arising through this project, to facilitate people in better grasping the nuances of CPEC.

I am also grateful to KAS for their continued support of the significant discourse, research and dialogue in Pakistan, and being a significant partner of the Pakistan-China Institute, with the mutual goal of achieving a peaceful, progressive and globally-integrated Pakistan.

Mustafa Hyder Sayed

Executive Director, Pakistan-China Institute



## INTRODUCTION

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### **BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE: A DEVELOPMENT APPROACH**

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is not envisioned to be exclusively a trade route. Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is China's development vision for co-existence and peaceful cooperation of the greater South Asian region. The BRI is inclusive of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. As a counter strategy of waging wars to eradicate terrorism, BRI vision is to engage in cooperative development alliances whereby regional economic and technological integration can lead to stable growth and the socio-economic uplifting of the region. The 21<sup>st</sup> century being labelled as the Asian century is exemplary of the shifting of balance of political, economic and cultural power from the West to the East. Pakistan has welcomed the rise of China in the 21<sup>st</sup> century for being a source of stability and strength demonstrated via a strong and resilient leadership of China. The CPEC project is historically the first of its kind bi-lateral initiative whereby a tremendous amount, \$46 billion<sup>1</sup> have been invested in a country for development projects in another country. This project has placed a vote of confidence in Pakistan for being a safe and dependable environment for investment as well as for the people of Pakistan being highly accomplished and proficient in carrying out the implementation phase of the project.

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is the epitome of the all-weather strategic and cooperative partnership of China and Pakistan. Moreover, it is essential to discuss that CPEC is not only enriching this relationship through economic and development integration, rather is acting as a gateway for cultural and educational connectivity between the two countries. The scope of OBOR stretches to being a cultural corridor and not restricted to the economic element as is the popular perception. For the emergence of a greater South Asian region and sustenance of a powerful region, stable growth is part of the equation, strengthening cultural ties and facilitating education is the way forward. The peaceful co-existence of regional allies which are mutually benefiting from each other can result in a holistic steady development of the region.

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<sup>1</sup> Pakistan Economic Survey 2015-2016: [http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters\\_16/highlights\\_2015\\_16.pdf](http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters_16/highlights_2015_16.pdf).

The cultural connectivity aspect of OBOR is equally important to discuss for the successful implementation of CPEC. Although labelled as an economic corridor, CPEC embodies cultural connectivity and cooperation whereby mutual respect for cultures, societies and people is expected, along with promoting cultural exchange for the facilitation of growth, harmonious co-existence and development within Pakistan and regionally. CPEC is the actualization of the OBOR vision of acquiring stability and growth through economic and cultural integration. Therefore, there is a heightened effort for people-to-people contact through media, cultural exchange and educational opportunities carried forth via various cultural programs aimed at promoting Chinese and Pakistani culture and heritage.

In this backdrop, Pakistan-China Institute acts as a unique bridge between Pakistan and China in enhancing diplomatic ties by promoting cultural connectivity and institutional co-operation between the two countries.<sup>2</sup> The PCI also launched an initiative for ‘Corridors, Culture and Connectivity’ in 2015.

The purpose of this monograph is to illustrate the wide scope of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which is not restricted to an economic element, rather extends to encapsulate a cultural and educational aspect. This paper will provide insights and policy recommendations for exploring and expanding the cultural and educational horizon of Pakistan under CPEC. This paper will be divided into three sections. The first section will discuss cultural connectivity under CPEC through tourism: cultural, educational and religious, and highlight various alternate avenues for promoting cultural connectivity under CPEC. The second section will discuss CPEC being a gateway for educational and human capital development for the citizens of Pakistan whereby they can play an active role in CPEC. The third section will provide policy recommendations for expanding cultural and educational capacity of Pakistan under CPEC.

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<sup>2</sup>Pakistan-China Institute: <http://www.pakistan-china.com/index.php>.

## **CPEC: A CULTURAL CORRIDOR**

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The conversation about CPEC revolves around economy mainly because of the name which identifies the project as an ‘economic corridor’ coupled with the notion of economic growth being a national objective. Therefore, any discussion regarding the project, positive or negative is contingent upon discussing the impact and feasibility of the project in economic terms. There is rarely any discussion on the impact of CPEC politically, socially and culturally. For this paper, we will limit the discussion on the cultural impact of CPEC.

The interaction of Chinese residents in Pakistan, currently a little less than 20,000, will in the future have an impact culturally and socially. The heterogeneity introduced by their presence in the homogeneous neighbourhoods of Pakistan raises certain questions about the cultural shift and changing trends which may be visible in the future, in terms of cuisine, clothing, perception of gender roles, business ethics and so forth.

Historically, it has been suggested that an investment and encounter of this magnitude is bound to have political, social and cultural change. The Chinese imprint on the South Asian region is growing, and is not restricted to the confines of the economic realm, rather it is diffusing into the social and cultural spheres. The extent to which a cultural impact that CPEC has will unfold over time. However, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor can provide opportunities for positive cultural engagement between Pakistan and China which will prove to be beneficial for future cooperation and the development of Pakistan.

The regional connectivity provided through CPEC is opening boundaries between countries for trade and cultural engagement, an opportunity which can be utilized for promotion of Pakistani culture and sending a positive image of the country along with gaining economic benefits.

President Xi Jinping, in his speech at the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2015 held in China discussed achieving a common destiny and a new future for Asia whereby he emphasized the importance of cultural engagement for the successful implementation of CPEC. He stated that “China proposes a conference of dialogue among Asian civilizations to provide a platform

upon which to enhance interactions among the youth, people's groups, local communities and the media and to form a network of think-tank cooperation, so as to add to Asian people's rich cultural life and contribute to more vibrant regional cooperation and development.”<sup>3</sup> Similarly, President Xi Jinping in his speech at opening of Belt and Road forum held in Beijing, China in May 2017 highlighted the need for establishing a multi-tiered mechanism for cultural and people-to-people exchanges, building more cooperation platforms and opening more cooperation channels.<sup>4</sup>

The achievement of a common development goal of CPEC is not only restricted to the economic and political sphere but also extends to the cultural sphere whereby people to people connections will foster growth and prosperity in the regions associated with this project.

## 1. CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT THROUGH LANGUAGE PROMOTION

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Language is a key element for cultural engagement, and is fundamental to the expression of culture. OBOR envisions people to people contact and cultural connectivity and language is a means through which collaboration is made possible. Language serves as a means of communicating a society's values, beliefs and customs, fostering a group's identity, as well as preserving culture and traditions.

Pakistan-China Institute along with the Confucius Institute is the primary institute for initiating Chinese classes for students and professionals.<sup>5</sup>



**Image 1: Chinese Language Classes conducted at Pakistan-China Institute's Islamabad Centre | Source: pakistan-china.com**

<sup>3</sup> President Xi Jinping, “Full text of Chinese President's speech at Boao Forum for Asia,” China.org (March 2015).

<sup>4</sup> President Xi Jinping, “Full text of President Xi's speech at opening of Belt and Road forum,” Xinhua (May 2017).

<sup>5</sup> Pakistan-China Institute: <http://www.pakistan-china.com/pci-chinese-language-classes.php>.

The provincial government of Punjab has increased its efforts in promoting Chinese and other foreign language experts who can reap the benefits of CPEC to the fullest. Having a pool of foreign language experts can assist Pakistan in reaching untapped export markets, attracting investors who converse in their local language. The Provincial Higher Education Minister Syed Raza Ali Gillani, has confirmed “a program of Rs. 2.28 billion being set up for sending 500 Pakistani students abroad to acquire new languages, including Chinese.”<sup>6</sup> According to the Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training, Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman, “there is a total of 28 universities across Pakistan who are teaching Chinese language courses, and 197 institutes catering to 50,000 students for CPEC-specific training of 38 different traits, aiming at increased employment through the mega projects.”<sup>7</sup> There is a growing demand for learning the Chinese language, an example is of the “20 students who are learning Chinese at the Chinese language at Sukkur’s leading business university, IBA Sukkur, because of Sukkur’s involvement in CPEC which has various projects planned in Sindh, including the motorway that passes from Sukkur itself.”<sup>8</sup>

Various institutes have taken the responsibility for setting up language and cultural facilities in collaboration with their Chinese counterparts. For instance, “a group of 50 teachers travelled to Beijing to acquaint themselves with Chinese language and culture on the invitation of the Chinese government, an initiative sponsored by the Chinese embassy, China Culture Centre in Islamabad and Beijing Language and Culture University.”<sup>9</sup> The mutual exchange of language, literature and culture, can influence people’s mind and, promote harmony and well-being of people which is the core of OBOR initiative. In this context, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) in collaboration with Beijing Institute of Graphic Communication (BIGC) will set up a Chinese Language and Culture Centre in Gwadar, and a China’s Confucius Centre at the AIOU’s main Campus. As per an agreement, BIGC will reciprocate by setting up Urdu learning centre at their respective institution in Beijing as well. Both universities plan to initiate joint academic

<sup>6</sup> Staff Reporter, “Punjab Government Allocates Rs2.28 Billion for Foreign Languages Program,” *Pakistan Today*, April 2017.

<sup>7</sup> Pakistan-China Institute, *cpecinfo*, January 2017.

<sup>8</sup> Sarfaraz Memon, “20 students learning Chinese language at Sukkur IBA,” *The Express Tribune*, March 2017.

<sup>9</sup> Obaid Abrar Khan, “50 Pakistani teachers left for Beijing to learn Chinese language,” *The News International*, July 2016.

programs for teachers training and the printing technology.<sup>10</sup> AIOU is also collaborating with China's Yunnan Open University, Sichuan University of China and Beijing Open University in establishing a partnership in educational exchange programs for strengthening their respective faculties and promoting language.<sup>11</sup>

The promotion of language is a continued effort on part of both countries for strengthening friendly relations and being deeply connected through culture. There is a need for the youth of Pakistan to learn Chinese language to become global citizens in the evolving regional dynamics. The breakdown of language barrier will result in cross border cultural and professional integration, opening a world of opportunities and personal growth.

## 2. TOURISM

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The cultural dimension of CPEC is closely associated with the promotion of Pakistani and Chinese culture which can be facilitated through the three major categories of tourism: cultural, religious and educational. The tourism industry is one of the most fast growing economic sector which is closely linked to development of a region, driving socio-economic progress. The global spread of the tourism industry is contributing to integrated economic growth resulting in employment opportunities in related sectors such as telecommunications, infrastructure and transport industry. The heightened competition for tourist destinations acts as an incentive for countries to develop this sector to attract tourists which can contribute to economic growth. The contribution of tourism to economic growth, however, is contingent upon the quality of service, sustainability and revenue generation. The growth in tourism has a potential for fostering inclusive and sustainable development, by creating jobs, improving livelihood, fostering investment and development of infrastructure.

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<sup>10</sup>Obaid Abrar Khan, "AIOU to set up Chinese Language Centre in Gwadar," *The News International*, June 2017.

<sup>11</sup>APP, "AIOU inks accord with Chinese varsity to uplift learning activities," *Daily Times*, June 2016.

## 2.1 RELIGIOUS TOURISM

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Religious tourism is also referred to as faith tourism, whereby people travel as individuals or in groups for pilgrimage, missionary or leisure purpose. Religious tourism has a vast scope in Pakistan with various religious sites spread across Pakistan. According to UNWTO data, 300 million tourists visit the world's major religious sites each year.<sup>12</sup> Religious tourism promotes a culture of peace by fostering intercultural and interfaith dialogue, along with acting as a source for generating revenue and opening Pakistan as a religious tourism spot.

Religiously motivated travel, including pilgrimage, has grown tremendously during the past fifty years.<sup>13</sup> Religious or faith-based tourism has a wide scope: "Religious tourism does not only refer to tourism with a strong single-minded religious motivation of pilgrimage but also to non-religious tourist activities, traveling to religious site for sightseeing, cultivation and recreation."<sup>14</sup> China, for instance, is significantly promoting religious tourism as a means of cultivating a culture of peace and generating revenue. Its Dengfeng City in Henan Province is host to the Shaolin Temple on Mount Song which is famous for religious and cultural tourism and internationalization of Shaolin martial arts and Shaolin culture. Similarly, Vatican City holds special meaning for Catholic followers but many non-Catholics visit for its architectural beauty, therefore it is not wise to restrict the market to a certain segment of the faith, age group or economic sector. Religious tourism is also a profitable venture, which is why Pakistan needs to promote this type of tourism as faith-based tourists are committed to travelling for special occasions and religious obligations, which can bring forth a steady stream of income even during unstable economic times.

<sup>12</sup> [http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/nrt\\_proposal\\_flyer-14july2016-lowres.pdf](http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/nrt_proposal_flyer-14july2016-lowres.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> Daniel H. Olsen and Dallen J. Timothy, "Tourism, Religion and Spiritual Journeys," *In Tourism and religious Journeys*, Routledge: 2006, 1-22.

<sup>14</sup> Zhang Mu Huang et al., "Religious Tourism and Cultural Pilgrimage: A Chinese Perspective," *In Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Festivals Management: An International Perspective*, CAB International, 2007: 98-112.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANDING RELIGIOUS TOURISM IN PAKISTAN**

Pakistan has a tremendous potential for growth in religious sites, especially those related to Buddhism and Sikhism which needs to be exploited by the Tourism Ministry. There is a need to conserve the religious sites along with providing the facilities to tourists to visit these sacred sites. The Tourism Development Corporation of Pakistan (TDCP) is planning on launching ‘religious tourism’ to attract tourists from across the world to their revered sites in Pakistan.<sup>15</sup> The development of mechanisms whereby proper hospitality is provided to religious devotees can facilitate in improving the soft image of the country apart from generating revenue, and with CPEC underway which envisions cultural integration and harmonious co-existence, this aim can be facilitated.

### **❖ BUDDHISM**

Pakistan is home to many cultures and civilizations. The remains of ancient civilizations and sacred sites are scattered all over the country. The most popular out of all is the Indus Valley and Gandhara civilizations. Gandhara, the ancient Peshawar Valley is the foundation for Gandhara Art. The sites and antiquities of Takht-e-Bahi, Sahri Bahlol, Jamal Garhi, Rani Gat, Aziz Dheri, Butkara, Saidu Stupa, Andan Dheri, Chat Pat, Dam Kot, Khanpur and the monasteries in the Taxila Valley have provided the richest collection of Gandhara Art to the Peshawar, Taxila, Swat, Dir and Peshawar University museums.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>The Newspaper's Staff Correspondent, “TDCP to promote Religious Tourism in Pakistan,” *The Dawn*, February 2017.

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.tourism.gov.pk/religious\\_tourism.html](http://www.tourism.gov.pk/religious_tourism.html).



## Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

The province hosts some of the most important Buddhist relics, arts and sculptures which is an attraction for Buddhist monks, scholars of Buddhism and students of history. The Buddhist Ruins of Takht-i-Bahi and Neighbouring City Remains at Sahr-i-Bahlol are one of the most imposing relics of Buddhism in the Gandhara region of Pakistan. The ruins of Takht-i-Bahi, a Buddhist monastery located northeast of Mardan, comprise a main stupa court, votive stupas court, a group of three stupas, the monastic quadrangle with meditation cells, conference hall, covered stepped passageways and other secular buildings. The ruins at Sahr-i-Bahlol are the remnants of a small ancient fortified town of the Kushan period.<sup>17</sup>

## Punjab

Taxila abodes many magnificent Buddhist establishments and is the main centre of Gandhara civilization which was the cradle of Gandhara culture, art, learning and spirituality. There are over 50 archaeological sites scattered around Taxila, which include some of the most important sites: Dhamarajika Stupa and Monastery, Bhir Mound, Sirkap, Jandial Temple and Jaulian Monastery.<sup>18</sup>

## ❖ SIKHISM

Punjab abodes five most important pilgrimage sites for Sikhs. The founder of Sikh religion, Guru Nanak, is believed to be born in Nankana Sahib, one of the holiest cities for Sikhs. The town of Hasan Abdal, near Rawalpindi has been associated with Mughals and Sikhs. It hosts the Sikh Gurdwara (temple) known as Panja Sahib. The temple has a sacred rock with the handprint of Sikhs religious leader, Guru Nanak. And is known to be the pilgrimage centre for the Sikh Community. The Sikhs gather at Gurdwara Panja Sahib in April every year for the annual '*Baisakhi*' festival. The Gurdwara itself shows the Sikh architecture along with their cultural heritage. The economic implications of the quota system and deficient visa administration process provides hindrance for many Sikhs who fail to make the pilgrimage.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/140>.

<sup>18</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/139>.

<sup>19</sup> Amin Ahmed, "World Bank keen to help Pakistan boost Religious Tourism," *The Dawn*, June 2016.

## ❖ SUFISM

Pakistan is also known as the land of saints. Sufism is Islam's mystical tradition, known for preaching love, peace and brotherhood. The Qawwali, preaching of Sufis through music, started in this region and forms a highly attractive part of cultural activities in Pakistan. The shrines of the saints are among important landmarks and hold importance for locals and regarded with reverence. The mystical folk songs, *Qawwali*, has been brought in the region by these saints. Each shrine of the saint has a festival (urs) on the death anniversary of the saint, where the shrine becomes a ground for mystical folk songs and performances. These shrines attract many who come to pray and make offerings.<sup>20</sup>

The conservation and preservation of these sacred sites, as well as promoting religious tourism can provide a boost to the tourism industry along with showcasing a softer side to the country which is much needed. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has provided the opportunity for cultural integration which needs to be utilized by Pakistan in promoting its cultural and religious locations.

## 2.2 CULTURAL TOURISM

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Tourism plays an integral role in the development of various destinations and sites around the globe. Culture is presumed to be the primary beneficiary and an asset for the development and promotion of tourism in a country. The scope of cultural tourism is broad and can range from tangible elements like cultural heritage sites, museums to intangible elements like gastronomy cultural festivals. Therefore, the diversity involved in defining culture proves difficult in defining the scope of cultural tourism and identifying the cultural values integral to tourism. There are two components to defining cultural tourism: conceptual (core meaning of tourism) and technical (evaluating and measuring the value of tourism).<sup>21</sup>The blurred lines between culture and tourism

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<sup>20</sup> [http://www.tourism.gov.pk/religious\\_tourism.html](http://www.tourism.gov.pk/religious_tourism.html).

<sup>21</sup>Seyed Sina Mousavi et al., "Defining Cultural Tourism," International Conference on Civil, Architecture and Sustainable Development, December 2016.

tourism is defined as “visits by persons from outside the host community motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, scientific or lifestyle/heritage offerings of a community, region, group or institution.”<sup>24</sup> The diverse scope of cultural tourism is a result of “the changing landscape of cultural tourism consumption, and the forms of culture being consumed by cultural tourists.”<sup>25</sup>

The conceptual definition encompasses “the movement of persons to cultural attractions away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs” whereas the technical definition encompasses “the movements of persons to specific cultural attractions, such as heritage sites, artistic and cultural manifestations, arts and drama outside their normal place of residence.”<sup>26</sup> The United Nations World Travel Organisation provides us a narrow (movement of people for essentially cultural motivations) and a broad (all movements of person which satisfy the human need for diversity and cultural encounter) understanding of the term cultural tourism.<sup>27</sup>

Cultural tourism can be categorized as: art tourism (aesthetic product-theatre, concert), heritage tourism (historical monuments, preserved buildings) and place-specific tourism (common set of values of a social group).<sup>28</sup> Cultural tourists can be categorized according to the importance placed on culture as being the motivation for travel and their depth of experience: purposeful, sightseeing, serendipitous, casual and incidental.<sup>29</sup>

For the purposes of this paper cultural tourism will be defined as “that activity which enables people to experience the different ways of life of other people, thereby gaining at first hand an understanding of their customs, traditions, the physical environment, the intellectual ideas and those places of architectural, historic, archaeological or other cultural significance which remain

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<sup>23</sup>John Urry, "The Tourist Gaze. Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies," *Collection Theory, Culture & Society*, (London: Sage Publications, 1990).

<sup>24</sup>Ted Silberberg, “Cultural tourism and business opportunities for museums and heritage sites,” *Tourism Management* 16, 1995: 361-365.

<sup>25</sup>Greg Richards, "The scope and significance of cultural tourism." *Cultural tourism in Europe*, 1996: 19-45.

<sup>26</sup>ATLAS Cultural Tourism Research Project, 2009: <http://www.tram-research.com/atlas/presentation.htm>

<sup>27</sup><http://americas.unwto.org/event/international-seminar-tourism-and-culture-0>.

<sup>28</sup>Gregory Jones Ashworth, “Managing the Cultural Tourist,” *CAB International*, 1995.

<sup>29</sup>McKercher, Bob, and Hilary Du Cros, “Cultural tourism: The Partnership between Tourism and Cultural Heritage Management,” Routledge: 2002.

from earlier times. Cultural tourism differs from recreational tourism in that it seeks to gain an understanding or appreciation of the nature of the place being visited.”<sup>30</sup>

Pakistan is blessed with a rich historical heritage, diverse cultures, traditions, language and ethnicities, all amalgamating to form a vibrant multicultural society. It’s rich culture stems from the Indian sub-continent which was once part of the Indus Civilization which stretches from the Indus River Valley (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and spreads to Calcutta (India) and Bangladesh. Pakistan is home to the historical Indus valley settlements, Mohenjodaro, Harappa and Taxila. Similarly, Gandhara Culture and Art, underpinnings of the Buddhist civilization originated in this region as well, and Swat, Peshawar, Taxila are abode to this culture. The occupation of the Indian subcontinent by the Mughals and British have enriched Pakistan with exquisite art and architecture which is prominent throughout Lahore.

Cultural Tourism in Pakistan will involve the consumption of a diverse range of cultural manifestations like heritage, art, traditions, cuisine etc. by the tourists, and facilitate the connectivity between people belonging to different social and value systems, resulting in the exchange and acquiring mutual respect for cultures. The opportunity of expanding cultural tourism in Pakistan under CPEC can arise through the promotion of **heritage tourism** and **place-specific tourism**, which can attract sightseeing, casual and purposeful tourists. Pakistan, will be exporting its culture and earning currency through cultural tourism, as tourists will be visiting Pakistan and paying to attend a festival, museum or participating in a cultural event. Therefore, cultural tourism in Pakistan is not restricted to treating culture as a product, that is focusing on sites and monuments. Instead, the expansion of tourism in Pakistan is contingent upon defining culture more qualitatively in terms of the experience of the cultural tourist in relation to the lifestyle and culture of people when visiting a destination.

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<sup>30</sup> ICOMOS Charter for Cultural Tourism, 1997: <http://www.icomos.org/tourism/>.

## ❖ A FEW HERITAGE SITES IN PAKISTAN

<b>PUNJAB</b>	Badshahi Mosque, Lahore
	Wazir Khan's Mosque, Lahore
	Tombs of Jahangir, Asif Khan and Akbari Sarai, Lahore
	Hiran Minar and Tank, Sheikhpura
	Tomb of Hazrat Rukn-e-Alam, Multan
	The Salt Range and Khewra Salt Mine
	Archaeological Site of Harappa
	Tomb of Bibi Jawindi, Baha'al-Halim and Ustead and the Tomb and Mosque of Jalaluddin Bukhari
	Tomb of Shah Rukn-e-Alam
	Derawar and the Desert Forts of Cholistan
	Rohtas Fort
	Fort and Shalamar Gardens in Lahore
	Katasraj Temple, Chakwal
<b>SINDH</b>	Rani Kot Fort, Dadu
	Historical Monuments at Makli, Thatta
	Shah Jahan Mosque, Thatta
	Chaukhandi Tombs, Karachi
	Port of Banbhore
	Nagarparkar Cultural Landscape
<b>BALUCHISTAN</b>	Archaeological Site of Mehrgarh
	Hingol Cultural Landscape
	Karez System Cultural Landscape
	Ziarat Juniper Forest
<b>KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA</b>	Archaeological Site of Ranigat
	Shahbazgarhi Rock Edicts
	Mansehra Rock Edicts
	Archaeological Site of Rehman Dheri
<b>GILGIT-BALTISTAN</b>	Baltit Fort
	Central Karakoram National Park
	Deosai National Park

## 2.3 EDUCATIONAL TOURISM

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Educational tourism is an evolving concept but the core idea behind educational tourism involves travel which combines leisure and learning. The tourists engaged in educational tourism attend classes, guided tours and achieve certain learning goals for relaxation and self-improvement, therefore, educational tourism can come in a variety of forms. It is an avenue which can generate income for the host country, and an opportunity which can be utilised under CPEC for engaging tourists for educational excursions.

Some of the opportunities which can be explored for educational tourism under CPEC includes:

- Educational trips arranged through the collaboration of universities and governments for participation of scholars and students in educational activities and development of youth cooperation amongst various participating countries. For instance, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Youth Camp included lectures and workshops on One Belt, One Road, along with engaging the youth in critical discourse over CPEC. Similarly, the Asian-African Conference aims at promoting the solidarity, friendship and cooperation between Asian and African youth.



**Image 2: 2<sup>nd</sup> Asian-African Youth Festival, China | Source: Pakistan-China Institute**

- Study abroad experiences arranged through cooperative **university exchange programs** which can provide students the opportunity to engage in an intensive study program along with the opportunity for a cultural and linguistic immersion. Pakistan and China institutes and governments have initiated programs for cross-border exchange programs and promoting this initiative through the provision of scholarships to students. Currently there are 22,000 Pakistan students studying in China with 5000 on Chinese government scholarships.<sup>31</sup>

## 2.4 CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH TOURISM IN PAKISTAN

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There are several challenges associated with the promotion of tourism industry in Pakistan:

- Security situation
- Transportation infrastructure
- Development and capacity building
- Lack of tour guides who can speak Chinese language
- Lack of information brochures in Chinese

The lack of attention towards preserving historical and archaeological sites has resulted in the degeneration of cultural sites in Pakistan, in addition to the lack of initiatives taken on part of educational institutes in engaging in educational tourism. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor can provide the opportunity for overcoming these challenges and facilitating Pakistan in becoming a tourist destination.

Under the framework of CPEC, an emphasis is placed upon cultural integration. Till date, CPEC has enhanced infrastructure development in various regions of Pakistan resulting in regional integration within Pakistan. The upgradation of the road and railway networks will facilitate easy accessibility to tourism sites in Pakistan, improving the tourism outlook of Pakistan. The security situation of Pakistan has been improved ever since the inception of CPEC due to the additional security measures taken for implementation of the projects. Moreover, to accommodate Chinese tourists, it is essential that information portals and brochures are made available in Chinese

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<sup>31</sup> Staff Report, "China's role pivotal for peace in Asian century: Weidong," *Daily Times* (October 2017).

language. Similarly, multi-lingual information portals and tour guides are essential to attract tourists to Pakistan and expand Pakistan's tourism industry.

## 2.5 TOURISM AND ECONOMIC GROWTH OF PAKISTAN

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The tourism industry can flourish under CPEC and contribute to the economic growth of Pakistan, by easing accessibility and fostering regional integration. CPEC has contributed to the growth observed in the tourism industry in the recent years by providing a resolution towards the challenges associated with tourism as well as providing the platform for further growth of the industry. An improved network provided through transportation infrastructure projects and an improved security outlook of the country has attracted many tourists in the recent years. Additionally, the role of young entrepreneurs who have taken the initiative to promote tourism in the region by providing a one-window facility needs to be credited, for example Find My Adventure.<sup>32</sup>

There is an improvement in the ranking of Pakistan by one point in 2017, according to the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index 2017 released by the World Economic Forum: 124/136 as compared to 125/141 in 2015. The total receipts per arrival of tourists in Pakistan has been amounted to \$317 million, with travel and tourism having a share of 2.8% of GDP.<sup>33</sup> The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) Policy and Promotion Manager Mukhtar Ali has stated that “the growth in tourists visiting northern areas increased by 25% as compared to last year due to measures taken by the government to improve law and order situation in those areas.”<sup>34</sup> In line with the OBOR vision of regional integration through cultural connectivity, the AJK President Masood Khan announced the development of a tourism corridor under CPEC to facilitate the tourists in accessing the region.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.findmyadventure.pk/>.

<sup>33</sup> Pakistan Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017, “Country Profiles,” *World Economic Forum*.

<sup>34</sup> The Express Tribune Correspondent, “More than One Million Tourists Visited Northern Areas of Pakistan this Season,” *The Express Tribune*, August 2016.

<sup>35</sup> The Express Tribune Correspondent, “AJK Plans Tourism Corridor along CPEC,” *The Express Tribune*, April 2017.



### 3. INSIGHTS FROM EXPERTS: SIGNIFICANCE OF CULTURE AND OPPORTUNITIES ARISING THROUGH CPEC

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#### ❖ **Jamal Shah, Director General Pakistan National Council of Arts**<sup>36</sup>

Mr. Jamal Shah alluded to the fact that the Ancient Silk Route served as a cultural exchange corridor and the revival of this route in the form of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is an opportunity for China, Pakistan and the entire Asiatic region to engage in a relationship for trade, development as well as promotion of culture exchange. Culture is an integral component of an identity of people and a country, therefore it becomes crucial that concrete steps are taken to develop the cultural sphere of Pakistan to strengthen the identity of our people. Moreover, development of this culture and arts is necessary to sensitize our people of the rich cultural heritage of Pakistan. The strengthening of our cultural identity is bound to play an important role in the economy, acting as a catalyst for transformation. Art and culture is a necessity for engaging individuals intimately with their environment, and has the ability to inform and empower people- make them informed citizens. Therefore, it is crucial that the government play an important role in developing a national cultural policy to promote culture and arts in Pakistan in all forms.

CPEC is providing an opportunity for expansion of cultural exchange between the two countries, and this needs to be taken advantage of to preserve and promote the rich culture of Pakistan. Furthermore, it is also an opportunity for Pakistan to enhance its cultural infrastructure to be equal in this cultural exchange. Mr. Jamal Shah emphasized that the government of Pakistan needs to take stringent measures in promoting culture and arts to preserve the rich culture of Pakistan and prevent challenges associated with its expansion by developing a national cultural policy and promoting arts and culture education. The government, individuals and private institutions in their own capacity should explore possible cultural exchange opportunities in engaging with China, for the successful implementation of CPEC and gaining the maximum from this huge opportunity.

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<sup>36</sup> Interview: Jamal Shah, Director General Pakistan National Council of Arts, 26 October 2017.

PNCA for instance has recently launched a Cultural caravan program whereby a creative caravan of a 60-member troupe comprising Chinese and Pakistani artists, musicians, dancers, photographers, anthropologists, writers and filmmakers will be riding on 15 fully equipped vehicles reaching Gwadar, the starting point in Pakistan travelling across the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and documenting Art and Culture en-route in 30 days. This initiative compliments the Belt and Road initiative of cultural exchange and regional connectivity. According to him, the corridor need not be considered as being one-dimensional and focusing on trade and development, instead it is crucial that cultural exchange and people-to-people connections are promoted as well so that this initiative does not lose impact. The development and progression of a country is contingent upon the strengthening of arts and culture.

❖ **Dr. Daojian Zhang, Director of Confucius Institute, Islamabad<sup>37</sup>**

For Dr. Zhang, CPEC has a greater scope than serving as an economic corridor- the Corridor being both real and metaphorical, and is important for cultural and educational exchange. He further elaborated on this by providing the example of the number of Chinese language learners increasing rapidly: in the year 2015 Confucius Institute had 671 Chinese language test takers and this year the number has been up to 3659.

Moreover, he believed people- to- people connections have been greatly increasing since the initiation of CPEC on various levels. The first level being governmental, where there is promotion of scholarships exchange and other projects, such as international delegations, conferences and all kinds of co-operations. The second level is international trade which is totally natural and spontaneous and the business partners contact each other. The third level which requires more attention is cultural and educational, where we need to require both governments to sign MoUs or enact policies to maximize the exchange meanwhile encourage the inter-institutes and inter-universities projects for exchange programs.

There are many challenges associated with expanding the cultural and educational exchange between the two countries which are hindering educational exchange. For instance, the educational systems are different. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) does not admit some of the Chinese Universities' record of formal schooling, which presents students from

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<sup>37</sup> Interview: Dr. Daojian Zhang, Director of Confucius Institute, Islamabad, 26 October 2017.

availing higher educational opportunities. For example, there is no equivalent standards for physician qualifications. These challenges provide hindrances for both Chinese and Pakistani overseas students to fully avail the educational opportunities present in both countries, and this is an area whereby China and Pakistani governments should negotiate such issues and make improvements for enhancing the educational connectivity.

Educational exchange has become necessary for people involved within the CPEC program as they have to learn each other's language and culture, to communicate with each other. Therefore, the most important thing is to maximize the cultural and educational opportunities to get more and more people involved. I mean to motivate more people to take part in the CPEC program.

❖ **Sheryar Khan, Owner Hunza Darbar Hotel, Karimabad<sup>38</sup>**

Mr. Sheryar Khan is in the hospitality business which is witnessing a boom with the influx of tourism in Hunza, especially Chinese tourists which has been unprecedented before. He indicated that the credit goes to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor which has connected two countries and increased people-to-people connections. The corridor is playing an important role in bringing together people, and the Chinese tourists visiting are curious about the culture of Pakistan and what the country can offer. Therefore, it is essential that CPEC is utilised for cultural tourism to its utmost. It is an opportunity for developing our tourism industry and capacitating it to foster economic growth.

The Karakoram highway is serving as a significant route for connecting Pakistan and China and promoting access for tourism. But to expand this further, it is essential that emphasis is placed upon improving the access and internet communication facilities in the region, for instance, creation of an international airport and providing wi-fi access. He believes the promotion of cultural tourism is integral for boosting the economy of Pakistan, as well as placing forth Pakistan as a tourist hub and preserving the rich culture of Pakistan. The economy of the region will significantly benefit with increasing employment opportunities and hospitality infrastructure.

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<sup>38</sup> Interview: Sheryar Khan, Owner Hunza Darbar Hotel, Karimabad, 26 October 2017.

He shed light on a one-day conference which their hotel recently organized, where a delegation from the Hunza community interacted with the Chinese delegation from Xianjing Province. The purpose of the conference was to highlight the tourism opportunities prevalent in Pakistan and the means to enhance the cultural exchange between the two countries. He further commented that such initiatives are important in promoting cultural connectivity which resonates with the Belt and Road initiative which emphasizes on people-to-people connections.

#### **4. OTHER AVENUES FOR CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT**

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Other avenues for promotion of cultural tourism under CPEC is through publications of travelogues, cultural magazines and collaboration between media and film industries of the China and Pakistan. Through these ventures, a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Chinese and Pakistani culture among the people of both countries. Pakistan-China Institute is playing an integral role in promoting cultural connectivity through these avenues.

##### **❖ MEDIA**

Media is an integral component for cultural engagement in a digital world. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is an inclusive project which involves multiple stakeholders, whereby it has become a significant discussion topic across the globe.

The Pakistan-China Institute in collaboration with the People's Republic of China, launched the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Media Forum on 17 November 2015, to discuss the role of media in promoting the CPEC initiative along with serving as a platform for establishing media collaboration between China and Pakistan to promote cultural exchange. The second Media Forum was held in Beijing, China on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2016. The third Media Forum is scheduled to take place on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017 in Serena Hotel, Islamabad.

The purpose of the forum is to deepen media cooperation and establish an information platform which will facilitate the people and institutions of both the countries to remain acquainted with the CPEC project. The bi-lateral exchange of journalists will facilitate in better reporting and understanding of the initiative as well as foster a cooperative, win-win relationship between the two countries to ensure a sound development of CPEC. Moreover, the establishment of the CPEC Media Forum has paved a path for not only international information sharing and news collaboration, but also for people-to-people connections whereby the people from both countries can exchange and learn of each other's cultures.



**Image 3: The Dance of Huayao Dai, South-Central University for Nationalities Art Troupe from Wuhan, Hubei at National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Islamabad| Source: Youlin Magazine**

Furthermore, the role of media in promoting cultural exchange has intensified with the initiation of CPEC. At the 6<sup>th</sup> Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) meeting held in December 2016 in Beijing, China, the “People to People Exchanges” project was included in the ambit of CPEC. The project aimed at enhancing the people to people contact, media and cultural exchanges

(including movies, drama, theatre) conducted through agreed yearly programs to promote Chinese and Pakistani culture and heritage.<sup>39</sup>

## ❖ CULTURAL MAGAZINES AND TRAVELOGUES

Pakistan-China Institute has published two travelogues and is the pioneer of the first bi-lingual cultural magazine. The cultural magazine Youlin<sup>40</sup> promotes deeper understanding of the rich Chinese civilization and history among the people of Pakistan, featuring a range of articles on the Chinese society and culture, in addition to promoting the cultural dynamics of Pakistan. The magazine's primary objective is to promote the contemporary Pakistani and Chinese culture and society. It also promotes a positive and soft image of Pakistan and its people. 'Youlin', literally translates into 'friendly neighbours', appropriately reflecting the close-knit relationship that the venture looks forward to pursuing.

The travelogue on China's Xinjiang Region titled, "From Lahore to Yaqand," by Pakistan's most celebrated travelogue writer, Mustansar Hussain Tarar accounts his journey across various cities in Xinjian, interactions with the locals, and narrates the diversity of culture.<sup>41</sup>

Similarly, the travelogue by Professor Li Xiguang of Tsinghua University, titled "Travels Across the Silk Road," recorded his experiences on a teaching seminar across the Asian borderlands with his colleagues and students.<sup>42</sup> The purpose of the seminar is to encourage intercultural dialogue through a journey through the Inner Asian borderlands. The learning caravan aims at deconstructing myths about the people living in these areas through interactions between the students and the local communities. Moreover, this travelogue highlights the cultural heritage prevalent in these areas for instance, Professor Li Xiguang documents discovering Chinese

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<sup>39</sup> China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, "CPEC Projects," *Ministry of Planning and Development Reform*, <http://cpec.gov.pk/project-details/61>.

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.youlinmagazine.com/>.

<sup>41</sup> Mustansar Hussain, "From Lahore to Yaqand," Pakistan-China Institute.

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.pakistan-china.com/mn-publications.php>.

inscription on the ancient rocks of Hunza.<sup>43</sup> These travelogues allow for attaining a better understanding of the cultural landscape and values of the people.

## **CPEC: AN EDUCATIONAL CORRIDOR**

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The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is also providing an avenue for educational and vocational cooperation between Pakistan and China. This cooperation is taking place through the technological skills transfer, vocational training, publication of policy research and engaging in critical discourse over China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

### **1. VOCATIONAL AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRES**

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With CPEC underway, collaboration for establishing educational and training institutions is vital for the capacity building of local industries and the training of the workforce associated with CPEC projects. Institutions whereby the transfer of technology, education and skills training is provided, can facilitate in the development of skill set of workers who need to adapt to the advanced industrial sectors. There is a growing emphasis on teacher exchange programs and establishing technical institutions under CPEC for provision of skilled labour for the ongoing technical projects and for Chinese firms.

Under the Social Sector Development Projects of CPEC, various educational programs have been formulated. The “Transfer of Knowledge in Different Sectors” aims at bringing together experts from China and Pakistan from Industrial zones, rural and urban development, job creation & SMEs, water resources management & treatment and agriculture to conduct training workshops.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Professor Li Xiguang, “Travels Across the Silk Road: Lessons from the Asian Borderlands,” Pakistan-China Institute.

<sup>44</sup> China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, “China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, “CPEC Projects,”. *Ministry of Planning and Development Reform*, <http://cpec.gov.pk/project-details/62>.

These workshops are meant for transferring knowledge and technological skills to better equip and capacitate the people of Pakistan in acquiring industry specific skills. So far, training workshops on industrial zones have been held from 11-18<sup>th</sup> October 2017. China is supporting the development of various vocational training sections at Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) to enhance and capacitate the youth of Pakistan for technical and employable skills required for CPEC projects. The National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) and Chinese Think Tank Association of Special Economic Zones are collaborating on skill development to enhance cooperation on vocational education, teacher training and the development of CPEC.<sup>45</sup>

Provincial governments have also taken up the mandate for upgrading and establishing vocational training centres due to increasing demand for Pakistani workforce, an initiative integral for future employment of Pakistani citizens, shifting focus from Chinese skilled labour to a local workforce, beneficial for socio-economic uplift of the country. The Punjab TEVTA signed an agreement with the Tianjin University of Technology and Education to establish a university of technical and vocational training in Punjab which will offer 50 courses, along with providing PKR 1000 stipend to students of Punjab, and introducing new courses in the fields of hospitality, construction and mechanics.<sup>46</sup> For a diverse workforce, TEVTA is focusing on increasing the female enrolment in training courses which will be useful for CPEC projects,<sup>47</sup> an important move for empowering women and improving the labour market potential through engagement of women into skilled jobs.

Establishment of Chinese educational institutions in various provinces is promoting technological transfer, capacity building courses, and teaching Chinese language. Huawei has played an integral role in promoting ICT skills among the Pakistani youth. For enhancing the technological expertise of Pakistan, technological centre like the China-South Asia Technology Transfer Centre (CSTTC) have been established. Through this centre, the development of

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<sup>45</sup>APP, “NAVTTTC and Chinese Think Tank: Working to Enhance Vocational Study,” *The Express Tribune*, June 2017.

<sup>46</sup>Intikhab Hanif, “Vocational Education: Chinese Varsity” *The Dawn*, August 2017.

<sup>47</sup>Staff Reporter, “TEVTA to Increase Female Enrolment in Training Courses,” *Daily Times*, May 2017.



technology and transfer of technological skills can facilitate the capacity building of local industries in being efficient and sustaining quality.

The emphasis on human resource development and creating a consortium of universities, training centres and think tanks for joint educational and training projects will ground for enhanced academic collaboration under CPEC. The expansion of vocational training centres across Pakistan are meant to capacitate and facilitate the acceleration of training for skilled and semi-skilled workforce, resulting in cost savings per annum, in addition to providing employment opportunity for locals upon completion of CPEC projects. Vocational training and professional development emphasized by firms and companies engaged in CPEC projects is to ensure that the Pakistani workforce is well-capacitated with advanced technology and have acquired the requisite technical skills for working on a specified project. The diversification of skilled labour will add to the economic growth of Pakistan.

## 2. EDUCATION AND RESEARCH CONSORTIUM

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CPEC is paving path for joint ventures in the fields of research and education. To gain a holistic understanding of CPEC, the evolving regional dynamics of the South Asian region and the implications of CPEC, universities across Pakistan have established CPEC focused research facilities. These centres are promoting policy research on CPEC and creating a discourse on CPEC related themes.

There is an increasing consortium of think tanks and research centres which are collaborating on research relating to various aspects of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. For instance, Pakistan-China Institute and ACCA Global are collaborating on conducting research for understanding the evolution of Pakistan's financial sector under CPEC.<sup>48</sup> Pakistan-China Institute launched its Monograph Series: Corridors, Culture and Connectivity, in 2015 as an initiative under its Research and Education portfolio as a collaboration with Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS). The monograph series aims at encompassing topics ranging from regional

<sup>48</sup>Global, "ACCA and PCI Collaborate to Work on the Emerging Financial Opportunities Arising from CPEC and OBOR," *ACCA*, February 2017.

economic and development integration to geo-strategic significance and socio-cultural dynamics within and of the Asian region, along with international developments impacting Pakistan-China relations as well as the whole region.<sup>49</sup>

Furthermore, the Pakistan-China Institute has taken on several other initiatives for promoting Pakistan-China bi-lateral relations in terms of cultural engagement and educational cooperation.

- The Salaam-Confucius Cultural Exhibition organized through collaborations between Pakistan-China Institute, China's Tsinghua University and the Bolin Cultural Group was held in the Pakistan-China friendship centre, Islamabad, on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2015. The exhibition acted as a platform for initiating a cultural corridor under CPEC to support and strengthen the project with a focus on educational and cultural connectivity.<sup>50</sup>



**Image 4: Salaam-Confucius Cultural Exhibition | Source: Youlin Magazine**

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.pakistan-china.com/mn-research-and-education.php>.

<sup>50</sup> <http://pakistan-china.com/wb-pci-pci/newdesign/2017/02/09/salaam-confucius-exhibition-press-release/>.

- Pakistan-China Institute hosted Professor Li Xiguang at their office, who led a 30 member Chinese youth delegation for a Friendship Cultural Exhibition to expose the young generation of China about the hospitality of the people of Pakistan and promote friendship between Pakistan and China. The delegation visited Hunza and Islamabad.<sup>51</sup>



**Image 5: Professor Li Xiguang, Director of the Pakistan Study Centre for Culture and Communication Tsinghua University, Beijing along with his team of scholars and researchers at Pakistan-China Institute | Source: pakistan-china.com**

Along the same lines, Punjab university in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan will establish a China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Integrated Study Centre at Punjab University to highlight the opportunities for development of Pakistan through media and counter negative propaganda against the CPEC project<sup>52</sup>. Various other ventures of CPEC specific research centres include the establishment of a China-Pakistan Joint Research Centre on Earth Sciences which aims to improve resilience to natural hazards is underway through the collaboration Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) and Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC).<sup>53</sup> Similarly, the Centre of Excellence-China Pakistan Economic Corridor, a

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.nihao-salam.com/interview-Prof-Li-Xiguang.php>.

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.pu.edu.pk/home/section/exam/7257>.

<sup>53</sup> "Establishment of China-Pakistan Joint Research Centre on Earth Sciences proposed," *The News International*, August 2016.

joint initiative of Pakistan Institute of Development Economics and Ministry of Planning Development and Reform, Islamabad is engaged in effective implementation of CPEC portfolio.<sup>54</sup> The National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) has established a Chinese Study Centre for multidisciplinary research of Chinese society, cooperation for enhancing educational facilities, preparing a well-trained human resource to work on CPEC projects and Chinese multinational companies, along with offering Chinese language proficiency programs for students to qualify for Chinese university scholarships.<sup>55</sup> The “Transfer of Knowledge in Education Sector through Consortium of Business Schools” is a project for establishing a consortium of top Business Schools from Chinese and Pakistan Side where the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) is leading the project for enhanced academic collaboration under CPEC.<sup>56</sup>

Since the initiation of CPEC, an emphasis on **student exchange programs** has taken root, and both the governments of China and Pakistan have initiated programs for students to acquire scholarships in Chinese universities. In 2016, the number of Chinese scholarships to Pakistani students increased to 600 per year,<sup>57</sup> which are largely provided through universities. In this context, Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pervez Khattak has approved the proposal for setting up Chinese language centres in Peshawar, Abbottabad, Haripur and Mansehra in the first phase, and made more than 100 scholarships available for Pakistani students in the Chinese Universities for higher education.<sup>58</sup> The government of China has also established various scholarship programs to sponsor international students, and researchers, to promote mutual understanding, cooperation and exchanges in politics, economy, education, trade and commerce, and culture between China and other countries.

CPEC has provided the opportunity for educational integration of Pakistan and China to enhance academic facilities as well as provide an avenue whereby the students of Pakistan can excel in education. The scholarships provided for students are facilitating students in gaining higher education so they can contribute to the growth of the country. On the other hand, the creation of

<sup>54</sup> <https://cpec-centre.pk/>.

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.nust.edu.pk/INSTITUTIONS/Schools/S3H/Departments/CSC/Pages/default.aspx>.

<sup>56</sup> <http://cpec.gov.pk/project-details/83>.

<sup>57</sup> “Chinese scholarships for Pakistani students increased to 600 a year under CPEC,” *Associated Press of Pakistan Corporation*, December 2016.

<sup>58</sup> Bureau Report, “Chinese Language Centres to be set up in four KP Districts,” *The Dawn*, August 2017.

research centres is leading the way for policy research on CPEC which can inform Pakistan's domestic and international policy in light of the changing geo-strategic dynamics of Pakistan.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE TOURISM INDUSTRY**

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The development of cultural tourism in Pakistan under CPEC as a generator of income and a recognized form of tourism is an opportunity which needs to be realised by heritage institutions and tourist operators across Pakistan. The degradation of cultural sites in Pakistan requires adequate attention in preserving Pakistan's culture and heritage along with improving approaches to attract tourists.

### **❖ IMPROVING THE INFORMATION SERVICE FOR TOURISM**

- Improvement in information service on mobility of tourists and volunteers in the cultural field. The development of programs to support movement of cultural tourists, addressing visa issues and taking initiatives in measuring mobility of cultural tourists in Pakistan on an annual basis can facilitate in improving the ranking of Pakistan as a favourite cultural destination.

### **❖ IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF THE CULTURAL PRODUCT**

- Capacity building and enhancing the tourism products. The cultural products like cultural institutions, heritage opportunities and events can all be linked in an area, making it the focal point for special events which can attract tourism. The organizational capacity of tourism operators and heritage management authorities needs to be improved to facilitate tourism in the region.
- Improvement in museums and heritage sites approach of solely meeting their heritage preservation and educational mandates. There needs to be an additional entrepreneurial

approach to attract tourists for generating income and increasing attendance levels which can come from collaborating with tourism operators for packaging opportunities, improving customer service and creating awareness. This is to re-invest in the preservation of the cultural and heritage site and making the cultural product unique for attraction of tourists. Cultural tourism products like institutions, heritage opportunities, lifestyles and events need to be moved in the right direction from being 'export-willing' to 'export-ready' to 'export-able', to become a significant tourist attraction.<sup>59</sup>

- The tourism operators need to take notice of cultural attractions and festivals as being part of their tourism packages. A one-window facility can enhance the tourism capacity of Pakistan whereby the quality and uniqueness of the cultural product is advertised.
- For the promotion of religious tourism in Pakistan, secondary industries in the country need to be integrated with faith-based tourism, which means lodging, transportation and hospitality industries collaborate with the art and cultural communities and religious sites authorities to develop a holistic religious product which can be export-able.
- Development of management mechanisms with the collaboration from private entities, religious sites authorities and governments to conserve and preserve the sacred sites through rigorous repair and conservation programs. Some of the threats facing religious sites include uncontrolled vegetation, inadequate drainage and pollution leading to decaying. Additionally, the lack of security to prevent unauthorized animal and human encroachment, and illegal digging and excavation is adding to the deterioration of the site. An appropriate professional and technical staff with a steady stream of annual budget is required for the maintenance of these sites.

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#### ❖ EXPANSION OF CULTURAL MARKET AND DESTINATIONS

- Development of strategies for widening the cultural appeal for visiting heritage and cultural sites to participating in cultural events and festivals. This can be accomplished through partnership opportunities where cultural and non-cultural opportunities are a part

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<sup>59</sup>Ted Silberberg, "Cultural Tourism and Business Opportunities for Museums and Heritage Sites," *Tourism Management* 16, 1995: 361-365.

of the tourism package, for instance, adventure tourism and participation in a cultural festival.

- The packaging, partnership and marketing collaboration is necessary for creating a cultural tourism destination for both casual and purposeful tourist, whereby cultural tourism can be capitalized as a business opportunity. There is a need to involve public and private stakeholders in planning, organizing and implementation of tourism plans to increase tourism turnover.
- The collaboration between non-cultural tourism partners like hotels, retailers and tour operators, and heritage organizations and facilities can facilitate in improving the branding and marketing of a tourist site. This collaboration is a lucrative venture for non-cultural partners because of the socio-economic and demographic profile of the cultural tourist being targeted.

#### ❖ **ALTERNATIVE CULTURAL TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES**

- Under the non-governmental organizations voluntary programs which are designed to attract volunteers for working on a welfare project in various regions of a country, can promote voluntary tourism. The people visiting for voluntary work on a project can experience the culture and lifestyle of people through intense interactions with the local population, resulting in a genuine and a new narrative being created for the host and the tourist. This can be an alternative type of cultural tourism which is sustainable and generate a positive image of Pakistan.

#### ❖ **CREATION OF CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS**

- An initiative needs to be taken by art and cultural institutions to develop cultural centres which can act as a forum for cultural engagement and act as a source for enriching the cultural context of the country. An example if the Chinese Cultural Centre initiated by Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA), Islamabad to act as a forum for cultural engagement between China and Pakistan for promoting people to people contact, sharing values and enriching the cultural context of Islamabad. An expansion of such initiatives

can provide for understanding of cultural values and engage people in a discourse over the significance of cultural integration.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING VOCATIONAL AND TRAINING CENTRES**

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### **❖ EXPANSION OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

- The collaboration of various educational and training institutions between Pakistan and China for incorporating technological innovation in curriculums and trainings can stimulate new thinking and enhance technological expertise of Pakistan. The continuous support of learning and innovation can aid in Pakistani youth in gaining skill required for advancing in the evolving technological industry. The training systems need continuous evolution to respond effectively to the needs of the labour market. Furthermore, these facilities should engage a blend of teachers with strong pedagogical skills and industry experts for providing an enhanced educational experience.
- The professional and vocational training programs need to ensure adequate numeracy and literacy skills alongside occupation-specific skills. This is necessary for the overall educational development of the individual who will be employed in the industry.
- Opportunities for students from upper secondary vocational programs to pursue higher-level vocational and academic qualifications.
- Ensure flexible modes of study such as modular learning, distance learning and part-time learning.

### **❖ OVERCOMING INSTITUTIONAL AND FUNDING BARRIERS**

- The collaboration between various professional and educational training centres on formulating an institutional framework for coordinating training programs, engaging stakeholders and organized labour for effective delivery of training and improving accessibility. Furthermore, develop mechanisms for consistent funding and market relevant short-cycle programs, for quality and effective training.



## CONCLUSION

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China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is not limited to being an economic corridor as the name suggests, rather it is an opportunity for cultural integration and educational enhancement. The vision of One Belt, One Road is that of shared responsibility, whereby everyone involved in the project can benefit and prosper. It is essential to highlight the advancements made in promoting cultural and educational cooperation between Pakistan and China under CPEC, in addition to illustrating the way forward for Pakistan in these realms. CPEC has paved path for various opportunities for Pakistan to benefit, an aspect discussed in this monograph. The educational advancement is necessary for the evolving market whereby advanced skills, reduction in language barrier and adaptability to evolving technological landscape can facilitate in tapping into export markets, as well as add to the overall human resource development in Pakistan. The cultural engagement aspect of CPEC acts as a foundation for harmonious co-existence through people to people contact. A peaceful and harmonious relationship between the involved parties is essential for stable growth. The understanding and knowledge of various cultures facilitate in widening mindsets, personal growth as well act as a business opportunity which can lead to economic growth. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has provided enormous opportunities for cultural and educational integration between the two countries for the prosperity of Pakistan. This monograph has illustrated the initiatives taken for enhancing cultural and educational integration along with providing policy recommendations for further improving the cultural and educational outlook of Pakistan.

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